

# Reflections

## In A Monthly Newsletter of the Spotswood Reformed Church

429 Main Street, Spotswood, NJ 08884

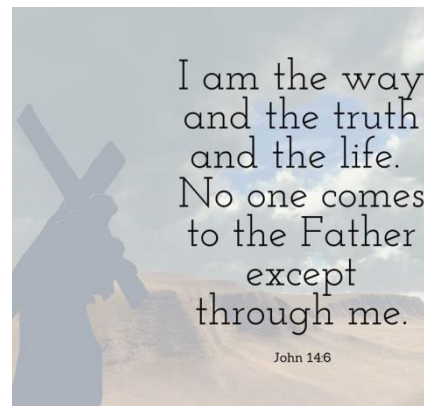
Serving the community since 1821

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## April 2016

### From the Pastor's Desk

#### **Thoughts About Easter**

As many of you know, we will be celebrating the season of Easter throughout April. This joyous season will continue on into May and end on Pentecost Sunday, May 15. Here are some thoughts and reflections about Easter.

If another man dies so that I can live, it imposes a burden or expectation on my life. From that point on, I cannot live any longer just for myself. I have got to live also somehow for him, as though in some sense he lives through me now as, in another sense, I live through him. If what he would have done with his life is going to be done, then I have got to do it. My debt to him is so great that the only way I can approach paying it is by living a life as brave and beautiful as his death. So maybe I would have prevented his dying if I could, but since it is too late for that, I can only live my life for what it truly is: not a life that is mine by natural right, to live any way I choose, but a life that is mine only because he gave it to me, and I have got to live it in a way that he also would have chosen.

We have heard so much tragic news during this fantastic young century for ours that when the news is good we cannot hear it. It seems to be overshadowed by bad news. But the proclamation of Easter Day is that all is well. And as a Christian, I say this not with the easy optimism of one who has never known a time when all was not well but as one who has faced the Cross in all its obscenity as well as in all its glory, who has known one way or another what it is like to live separated from God. In the end, his will, not ours, is done. Love is the victor. Death is not the end. The end is life; his life and our lives through him, in him. Existence has greater depths of beauty, mystery and benediction than the wildest visionary has ever dared to dream. Christ our Lord has risen!

Now, why do I believe in the risen Lord? Not because I have seen him, but because others have told me of him; my parents, teachers, friends, as well as preachers, speakers and writers. Because of them, I believe. How important it is to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus! We

talk about church conflicts and other such problems, but a simple, direct announcement of the resurrection of Jesus is seldom heard, except from pulpits and other such "safe" places. Just as our love for others grows cold when we no longer declare this love to them, so our faith in the risen Jesus gradually fades if we remain silent about him. We have to keep saying to each other, "The Lord is risen, he is risen indeed!" We need to say it far more often than once a year, so that our faith in the risen Christ can be kept alive and we can live that faith always more deeply.

Our short lives on earth are sowing time. If there were no resurrection of the dead, everything we live on earth would come to nothing. How can we believe in a God who loves us unconditionally if all the joys and pains of our lives are in vain, disintegrating into the earth along with our mortal flesh and bones? No, life on earth is the time when the seeds of the risen body are planted. Paul says, "What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown in a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body." (1 Corinthians 15:42-44) This is wonderful knowledge, that nothing we live in our bodies is lived in vain. This holds a call for us to live every moment as a seed planted for eternity.

The life that burst forth from the tomb on Easter Sunday is more than any of us can fully understand. We don't even fully understand life itself, much less this *new life* of the Resurrection. No wonder the women were perplexed, no wonder the apostles found it difficult to believe their story. We can understand sin and death, but what is this *new life* of Easter morning all about? Not to worry, the Risen Lord will teach us this, too, as we open our hearts to the new life he has to offer.

May this Easter Season deepen our faith and trust in the One who brings us *new life* right here, right now. "For behold, I make all things new."

O Lord, with the choirs of angels and all the heavenly host we say, "Alleluia!"

Easter Blessings to all,  
JER

## Worship Team

April finds us in the Easter Season...for all of us April is a celebration of the resurrection! It is good to be reminded of the event that changed all of us – and which continues day by day to be our only salvation!

**As you know** our congregation has been in the practice of bringing donations for our food pantry – Alice's CUP – on Communion Sundays – the FIRST and THIRD Sundays of the month! Thank you for your generous participation in this outreach!

The Chancel Choir will be singing some new, old, music on the 2nd Sundays of the month – it is music made up of all the old traditional hymns, most of which have been reset to new music – very meditative music. The Chancel Choir will be including this music by *Indelible Grace* in our services beginning this month. The Chancel Choir will again be singing Psalter music on the 4th Sundays of each month. That is until May. At that time, the Chancel Choir will be getting a well-deserved time of rest and rejuvenation. They will sing on May 22nd, and then be off until September.



The Praise Team and service is back! From now until Advent our 3rd Sundays of the month will be celebrated with lots of music and joyful singing!

The Worship Team will hold its last meeting for this plan year on Tuesday, May 10th at 7:30 PM. The topic for this meeting is Plan Year-end preparations. Going forward, please let us know if you desire to be part of planning worship and/or participating in the leading of worship through liturgy or a word for the children for the next plan year! You can speak to any member of the team: Carole George, Kathy Romero, Margaret Tierney, or Sherry Ruckdeschel.

## ***Our Gathered Community Comes Together for April and May***

### ***Sunday, April 3***

Second Sunday of Easter – Communion Sunday  
Chancel Choir sings  
Please remember your CUP Offering

### ***Sunday, April 10***

Third Sunday of Easter  
Chancel Choir sings *Indelible Grace* music  
Coffee Hour following Worship Service

### ***Sunday, April 17***

Fourth Sunday of Easter  
Praise and Communion Sunday  
Please remember your CUP Offering

### ***Sunday, April 24***

Fifth Sunday of Easter  
Psalter Sunday – Psalm 148  
Chancel Choir sings

### ***Sunday, May 1***

Sixth Sunday of Easter – Communion Sunday  
Chancel Choir sings  
Please remember your CUP Offering

### ***Thursday, May 5***

National Day of Prayer Service and Ice Cream Social

### ***Sunday, May 8***

Seventh Sunday of Easter  
Mother's Day  
Chancel Choir sings *Indelible Grace* music

### ***Sunday, May 15***

Pentecost Sunday – **Wear red today!**  
Confirmation and Communion Sunday  
Praise Team leads worship  
Please remember your CUP Offering  
Coffee Hour following Worship Service



### ***Sunday, May 22***

Trinity Sunday  
Psalter Sunday  
Chancel Choir sings

### ***Sunday, May 29***

Second Sunday after Pentecost

## ***We Need Your Help***



We want to have a Pot Luck dinner in May for our church family and perhaps some in our community, such as those who visit the CUP food pantry. The thought is to have it in late May or early June outside in our parking lot. We would like to put an ad hoc team together to plan this. Please contact Kathy Romero if you can help plan and prepare for this event. If we get enough volunteers, we can have a really great dinner with community outreach!

## ***Calling for People to Sign Up as Greeters***

Please check the Greeter sign-up sheet in the Narthex and put your name on it!! This is an important ministry that everyone can be a part of...and what better way to say we are a welcoming church!

**LITURGISTS**

- 4/3 Margaret Tierney  
 4/24 Dave Sliker  
 5/1 Jan Ortt  
 5/22 Pat Hampson

**CHILDREN'S SERMONS**

- 4/10 Pat Hampson  
 4/24 Carole George  
 5/8 Rev. Ribbans  
 5/22 Mark Ruckdeschel

**GREETERS**

- 4/3 Bob Lawrence  
 4/10 Junetta Bunce  
 4/17 Volunteer Needed  
 4/24 Larry Tennill  
 5/1 Volunteer Needed  
 5/8 Volunteer Needed  
 5/15 Volunteer Needed  
 5/22 Volunteer Needed  
 5/29 Volunteer Needed



If you are unable to serve on any of the dates listed above, please find someone to cover for you. Please let Sherry Ruckdeschel know of any changes to this schedule. Thank you!

**“Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth!  
 Worship the Lord with gladness!” Psalm 100:1-2**

Kathy Romero for  
 The Worship Team

**The Lectionary for April**

Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105

**April 3** – Second Sunday of Easter  
**Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 118:14-29 or Psalm 150;**  
**Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31**

**April 10** – Third Sunday of Easter  
**Acts 9:1-6, (7-20); Psalm 30; Revelation 5:11-14;**  
**John 21:1-19**

**April 17** – Fourth Sunday of Easter  
**Acts 9:36-43; Psalm 23; Revelation 7:9-17;**  
**John 10:22-30**

**April 24** – Fifth Sunday of Easter  
**Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21:1-6;**  
**John 13:31-35**

**Mission and Outreach**

The Mission and Outreach Team would like to ask the congregation's assistance in our effort to help our Spotswood High School Band students with their May 7th clothing drive fundraiser.

**Clothing Drive****What's in your closet?**

Please donate any old clothing and textiles (towels, linens, stuffed animals, pocketbooks, etc., no matter the condition usable or not) and donate them to the band. Bags of items which are manageable that you'd like to donate can be brought to the church Narthex between April 10th and May 1st. Or you can call Laura or bring items to the Woodmere office at 250 Crescent Avenue in Spotswood any time between now and May 6th.

Please make bag donations of a transportable size (store shopping bags or small garbage bags). If you have a large volume of items or if you can't bring the items in to church please call Laura to make arrangements at 732-251-3242 ext. 103.

Under the direction of Sarah M. Carino, the Spotswood High School Band is comprised of Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band and Pep Band. The bands have competed state-wide and performed along the East Coast in parades, festivals and competitions. To raise funds for travel to the competition trip the band does fundraisers. This April the band students will be competing in Washington DC.

**The HOPE Team****21 Days of Prayer and Fasting**

The Hope Team is participating in the RCA's 21 days of prayer and fasting for the Council members who have been given a mandate to address the questions of discerning "a constitutional pathway forward for the Reformed Church to address the questions of human sexuality as it relates to ordination and marriage." These questions have been on the RCA's agenda for some time, but has never been acted upon.

This is an issue that has been forced upon the church and we need to pray that the Holy Spirit will be present with members of the



Council as they struggle to find answers to these questions. Please consider adding this prayer to your daily devotionals.

The council will be in session from March 29th until April 18th.

*Sincerely,  
The Hope Team*

### **National Day of Prayer and Ice Cream Social**

The HOPE Team invites you to attend the National Day of Prayer Service on Thursday, May 5th at 7:30 PM in our sanctuary. Immediately following the service, the Team will host an Ice Cream Social in Fellowship Hall. We'll share more information next month in the May *Reflections*. Hope to see you all there!

**NATIONAL  
DAY OF  
PRAYER**

### **Elizabeth Circle**

#### **Mark Your Calendar - Rummage Sale**

The Annual Rummage Sale sponsored by the Elizabeth Circle is scheduled for Friday, June 3rd, from 4 PM to 8 PM and Saturday, June 4th from 8 to 10 AM. Please save good clothing and other usable small appliances and household items for this event. Please don't bring large furniture as we have no space for it. If you can donate items, please bring them to the church beginning Thursday, June 2nd after 4 PM and/or all day Friday, June 3rd. Thank you so much for your help in the past with this fundraiser and we hope you can participate again this year.



*Junetta Bunce for  
The Elizabeth Circle*

### **First Reformed Church of New Brunswick**

#### **Lunchtime Recital Series**

The First Reformed Church of New Brunswick's Downtown Lunchtime Recital Series has begun. The two events in April are:

**April 6 Luciano Minetti, piano**  
Luciano's performance will draw on his Italian musical roots and on his passion and love for jazz. The performance will bridge the gap between the various Italian songs and jazz standards that mean the most to Luciano.

**April 20 Tim Brown, piano, John Kormanski, clarinet, and Katrina Kormanski, cello**

The trio will perform works for this instrumentation, including a trio by Max Bruch and Chick Corea's "Spain," and works for piano and cello by Weber and Rachmaninoff.

The recitals begin at 12:15 PM. There is no charge for these events and a free lunch follows each recital. There is a barrier-free entrance to the church at 9 Bayard Street.



### **Pixie Preschool – Tricky Tray**

#### **Annual Tricky Tray**

**Date:** May 12, 2016  
**Doors Open:** 6:00 p.m.  
**Calling Begins:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Knights of Columbus  
30 Crescent Avenue  
Spotswood

Our Annual Tricky Tray is fast approaching. We are still looking for volunteers to assist in planning the event, going to local businesses to ask for donations, and working the night of the event. We are also still in need of prize donations. The deadline for donations is Thursday, May 5th. Please mark any donations with the name and address of the giver, so that we can thank them. All funds raised will help fund our Rejuvenation Project.



Tickets for the event are on sale now. At the door, tickets will be \$20, but you can save \$5 per ticket by purchasing them in advance. To pre-order tickets, please contact Pixie Pre-School at 732.251.3130.

Hope to see you all there!

**JUST  
FOR  
KIDS**

## *The Lord's Prayer*

T A R D S Y D K H D  
 E E O E R I I X A K  
 V T M O H N N E L R  
 I E L P G T R S L E  
 L G J D T B A X O W  
 B Q O O Y A V F W O  
 R M Q L Q I T M E P  
 E V I G R O F I D Q  
 X A X W I L L K O G  
 D L J G F H B A J N

FATHER

DAILY BREAD

EVIL

HALLOWED

FORGIVE

GLORY

KINGDOM

SINS

POWER

WILL

TEMPTATION



### Prayer Requests

*Dennis Adamic* (Mae Vaughn's grandson) – at home in Spotswood; *Janet Applegate* – at home in Old Bridge; *Ann Bailey* – at home in Spotswood; *Deanna Bobash* (Kelly Ortt's mother) – at home in Sayreville; *Chris Broschious* (Sharon Farmer's son) – at home in Kentucky; *Florence Cano* – in Twining Village, Holland, PA; *Jacque Chica and her newborn daughter, Esmee* (Pat Hampson's grand-daughter and great-granddaughter) – at home in Colonia; *Kyle Davidson* (Barbara Brain's great nephew) – at home in Oregon; *Pat DeFazio* – at home in Monroe Twp.; *Teresa Dunlop* (Margaret Tierney's sister) – at home in East Stroudsburg, PA; *Megan Farmer* – at home in Monroe Twp.; *Sharon Farmer* – at home in Monroe Twp.; *Eunice Harrigfeld* – at home in Spotswood; *Shirley Leary* – at home in Spotswood; *Susan Piltz* (Pat Hampson's daughter) – at home in Green Brook; *Patty Reisert* (Nancy Goretskie's sister) – at home in Spotswood; *Linda Rodriguez* (Shirley Leary's and Barbara Jagemann's niece) – at a rehabilitation facility in Sebastian, FL; *Tracy Suchcicki* – at home in Monroe Twp.; *Mae Vaughn* – at RWJ Hospital in New Brunswick; *Joan Worthington* – at home in Toms River; *Beverly Jawidzik*, *Scottie McTaggart*, and *Marie Riddle* – at the Reformed Church Home.

### Prayer for the Power of Forgiveness

*Father, bless me with the wonderful power of forgiveness—giving me the grace to unconditionally forgive those who have hurt me. Give me the strength to let go of all ill-will toward others, and to forgive myself of my own failings and sin—knowing that you have already forgiven me. Grant me your favor wherever I go so that if I have done wrong to anyone that I may receive forgiveness from them. Free me of all emotional entrapments: anger, bitterness, hate and unforgiveness. I love you, Lord, and know You are faithful and just to forgive me of all my sins. Through the power of forgiveness, I am released from the past and healed. I pray this all in Jesus' name. Amen.*



### April Birthdays

April 2	Shane Genthe
April 4	Kevin Styles
April 7	Fay Knox
April 11	Charlotte Genthe
April 11	Carrie Lawrence
April 11	Linda Soley
April 14	Bobby George
April 14	David George
April 16	Eric Walker Scheid
April 16	Barbara A. Sliker
April 16	Michael Testa
April 17	David Kampf, Jr.
April 21	Carole George
April 22	Kim Miller
April 23	Bob Suchcicki

### Reformed Church Home Friends Birthdays

April 2	Irene Kiefer
April 5	Ruth Carmeli
April 6	Marion Sands
April 7	Barbara Sue Hermann
April 10	Richard Jones
April 14	Mary Jane Gregor
April 14	Genevieve Konopka
April 15	Catherine Pitt
April 18	Helen Lebiedz
April 22	Michael Muros
April 25	Marie Borichewski
April 26	Sam LaCava
April 28	Rosemary Donahoe
April 28	Gabrielle Weinstein
April 29	Peggy Dolan

## *Happy Anniversary!*

### April Anniversaries

April 25	Gary & Janice Malanowski
April 27	Tom & Lynda McCauley
April 27	Bob & Tracy Suchcicki
April 27	Bill & Margaret Tierney

*If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please contact the church office.*

***For further information, and how to become involved in our church life, please call on one or more of the following people:***

James E. Ribbans, Pastor  
 Joseph W. Woods, Pastor Emeritus  
 Kathryn Romero, Minister of Music, Elder  
 Linda Soley, Church Treasurer  
 Charles Uhl, Financial Secretary  
 Sherry Ruckdeschel, Administrative Assistant, Clerk of Consistory, Newsletter Editor  
 Junetta Bunce – Elder, Interfaith Network of Care  
 Sharon Farmer – Deacon  
 Carole George – New Circle Chair  
 Rita Hussey – Sunday School Superintendent  
 Carrie Lawrence – Deacon, COHM Board Member  
 James Lockwood – Interfaith Network of Care  
 Jennifer Mullen-Sommer – Elder Delegate to Classis  
 Janice Ortt – Elder  
 Mark Ruckdeschel – Vice President of Consistory, Elder  
 Alice Ryan – Elizabeth Circle Chair, Alice's CUP Food Pantry Coordinator for SRC  
 Kevin Styles – Deacon  
 Michelle Tennill – Deacon  
 Ken VanWageninge – Cemetery Chair  
 Peggy White – Elder

**TEAM AND TASK FORCE MEMBERS**

**Building & Grounds Team**

Nancy Cano  
 Kelly Ortt  
 David Sliker  
 Kevin Styles

**Christian Education Team**

Mark Ruckdeschel – Team Chair  
 Elizabeth Goretskie  
 Marcia Halbert  
 Victoria Halbert  
 Rita Hussey  
 Janice Ortt  
 Nikki Ortt  
 Tracy Suchcicki  
 Michelle Tennill

**Finance Team**

Kevin Styles – Team Chair  
 George Berry  
 Chuck Hager  
 Linda Soley  
 Charlie Uhl  
 Ken VanWageninge

**HOPE Team**

Junetta Bunce  
 Joanne Dombroski  
 Carole George  
 Rita Hussey  
 Judie Nicol  
 Kathy Romero  
 Mark Ruckdeschel  
 Sherry Ruckdeschel  
 George Sliker  
 Tracy Suchcicki  
 Peggy White

**Mission & Outreach Team**

Carrie Lawrence – Team Co-Chair  
 Laura Swiderski – Team Co-Chair  
 Pat DeFazio  
 Sharon Farmer  
 Eunice Harrigfeld  
 Pat Hilman  
 Judie Nicol  
 Alice Ryan  
 Barbara Sliker  
 Mae Vaughn  
 Peggy White

**Pixie Task Force**

David Sliker - Chair  
 Kelly Ortt  
 Barbara Sliker

**Worship Team**

Carole George – Team Co-Chair  
 Kathy Romero – Team Co-Chair  
 Sherry Ruckdeschel  
 Margaret Tierney

*Please contact the church office with any change to Team memberships.*