

# Reflections

In A Monthly Newsletter of the  
Spotswood Reformed Church

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Serving the community since 1821

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May 2016

## From the Pastor's Desk

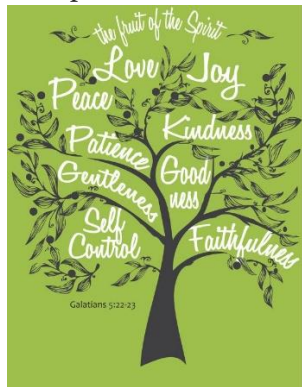
### **What is Pentecost and Why Does it Matter?**

On May 15th we will celebrate the Day of Pentecost.

### **The Presence and Power of the Spirit**

On the day of Pentecost, seven weeks after the resurrection of Jesus, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon those followers of Jesus who had gathered together in Jerusalem. What happened on the first Pentecost continues to happen to Christians throughout the world today, though usually not in such a dramatic fashion. We rarely get a heavenly wind and tongues of fire anymore. Nevertheless, God pours out the Spirit upon all who put their faith in Jesus Christ and become his disciples (see Romans 8:1-11).

Christians are meant to live in the presence and power of the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit helps us to confess



Jesus as Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3), empowers us to serve God with supernatural power (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), binds us together as the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), helps us to pray (Romans 8:26), and even intercedes for us with God the Father (Romans 8:27). The Spirit guides us (Galatians 5:25), helping us to live like Jesus (Galatians 5:22-23).

**Personal Implications:** Pentecost presents us with an opportunity to consider how we are living each day. Are we relying on the power of God's Spirit? Are we an open channel for the Spirit's gifts? Are we attentive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit? Is the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, etc.) growing in our lives? Most Christians I know, including me, live in the presence and power of the Spirit, but only to an extent. We are limited by our fear, our sin, our low expectations, not to mention our tendency to be distracted from God's work in us. Pentecost offers a chance to confess our failure to live by

the Spirit and to ask the Lord to fill us afresh with his power.

### **The Central Role of the Church in God's Work in the World**

On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended on individual followers of Jesus as they were gathered together in Jerusalem. This gathering became the first Christian church. New believers in Jesus were baptized as they joined this church. They, along with the first followers of Jesus, shared life together focusing on teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. They shared their belongings so that no one was hungry or needy. As these first Christians lived out their new faith together, "the Lord added to their number those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). Thus we speak of Pentecost as the birthday of the church.

In theory, the Spirit could have been poured out on the followers of Jesus when they were not gathered together. There are surely times when the Holy Spirit touches an individual who is alone in prayer, worship, or ministry to others. But the fact that the Spirit was given to a gathering of believers is not incidental. It underscores the centrality of the church in God's work in the world. The actions of the earliest Christians put all of this in boldface. The Holy Spirit is not only given to individuals, but also, in a sense to the gathered people of God. Thus, in 1 Corinthians 3, the Apostle Paul observes that the church is God's temple and that the Spirit dwells in the midst of the church (3:16-17; in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 we find a complementary emphasis on the dwelling of the Spirit in individual Christians).

**Personal Implications:** Many Christians, especially those of us who have been influenced by the individualism of American culture, live as if the church is useful but unnecessary. We seem to believe that as long as we have a personal relationship with God, everything else is secondary. But Pentecost is a vivid illustration of the truth that is found throughout Scripture: the community of God's people is central to God's work in the world. Thus, Pentecost invites us to consider our own participation in the fellowship, worship, and mission of the church. It is a time to renew our commitment to live as an essential member of the body

of Christ, using our gifts to build the church and share the love and justice of Christ with the world.

### ***The Multilingual Nature and Mission of the Church***

On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit empowered believers in Jesus to praise God in many languages that they had not learned in the ordinary manner (Acts 2:5-13). Symbolically, this miracle reinforces the multilingual, multicultural, multiracial mission of the church. We are to be a community in which all people are drawn together by God's love in Christ. As Paul writes in Galatians 3:28: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

*Personal Implications:* Although there are some glorious exceptions, it seems that the church has not, in general, lived out its multilingual mission. We are often divided according to language, race, and ethnicity. Pentecost challenges all of us to examine our own attitudes, to reject and repent of any prejudice that lurks within us, and to open our hearts to all people, even and especially those who do not share our language, culture, life style or race. Yes, I know this is not easy. But it is central to our calling. And it is something that the Spirit of God will help us to do if we are available.

### ***The Inclusive Ministry of the Church***

After the Holy Spirit fell upon the first followers of Jesus, Peter preached a sermon to help folks understand what had just happened. In this sermon he cited a portion of a prophecy from Joel:

'In the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike—and they will prophesy.' (Acts 2:17-18; Joel 2:28-29)

Later, Peter explained that the Spirit would be given to all who turned from their sin and turned to God through Jesus (Acts 2:38).

This was a momentous, watershed event. For the first time in history, God began to do what he had promised through Joel, empowering all different sorts of people for ministry. Whereas in the era of the Old Testament, the Spirit was poured out almost exclusively on prophets, priests, and kings, in the age of the New Testament, the Spirit would be given to "all people." All would be empowered to minister regardless of their gender, age, or social position.

Although this truth would not mean that every Christian would be gifted for every kind of ministry, it did imply that all believers would be empowered by the Spirit. The church of Jesus Christ would be a place where every single person matters, where every member contributes

to the health and mission of the church (Ephesians 4:11-16).

*Personal Implications:* Each Christian needs to ask: Am I serving God through the power of the Spirit? Am I exercising the gifts of the Spirit in my life, both in the gathered church and as I live for God in the world? Pentecost is a time to ask God to fill us afresh with the Spirit so that we might join in the ministry of Christ with gusto. And it is a time to renew our commitment to fulfilling our crucial role in the ministry of God's people in the world.

So be it for us,  
JER

### ***Deacons***

Mother's Day flower baskets, which are 8" hanging baskets, can be purchased for \$10 each and may be ordered from any Deacon. The flower baskets will be available for pick up a few days before Mother's Day or on that Sunday itself. Please see Sharon Farmer, Carrie Lawrence, Kevin Styles or Michelle Tennill to place an order. We request that you pay when you place your order.

### ***Men's Group***

The Men's Group will honor the women of our church on Mother's Day by serving breakfast at 8:30 AM. The group will be finalizing plans at their meeting on Tuesday, May 3rd, at 7:00 PM. Anyone who would like to join them at their meeting, please come.



### ***Worship Team***

Worship in May finds us in the Easter Season on the first two Sundays of the month and then Pentecost on the third Sunday! **Remember to WEAR RED on Pentecost!!** Trinity Sunday is the fourth Sunday and then we are in common time until Advent! It is good to always remember, that He is risen, He is risen, indeed! Alleluia! We are Easter people!

This month the Chancel Choir will sing during worship, we will have a soloist for Communion Sunday, and the Praise Team will lead worship on Pentecost, which will also encompass Confirmation.

Since the Chancel Choir will be taking a well-deserved break for the summer, I would like to take this time to publicly acknowledge and thank each member of our small, but mighty, group. The level of commitment to always being present at rehearsal and worship – to leading our congregation in song and worship – is very deep indeed. Thank you so much Nancy, Carole, Michelle, Jan, Carrie, George, Alice, Mark and Margaret for your willingness to use your gifts and talents for the glory of God!



Also, we are asking *everyone* to remember to bring a CUP pantry food donation on the first and third Sundays of the month! One thing that is ***always, always*** needed and much appreciated is cereal. I am told this item literally flies off the shelves. Wouldn't it be cool to fill the shelves for a week from our congregation?

Finally, a couple members of our Team had the privilege of attending a worship workshop at the New Brunswick Theological Seminary in April. We heard deep and rich presentations on the liturgies surrounding baptism and the Lord's table, we learned some Taiwanese hymns, and worshipped together in the beautiful, new worship center at the seminary. It was a beautiful day.

*Please note that the Worship Team will not be meeting on May 10th as previously scheduled.*

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

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

Sixth Sunday of Easter – Communion Service  
Please remember your CUP Offering  
Soloist

#### ***Thursday, May 5 at 7:30 PM***

National Day of Prayer Service and Ice Cream Social

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

Seventh Sunday of Easter – Mother's Day  
Mother's Day Breakfast hosted by the Men's Group  
Chancel Choir sings *Indelible Grace* music

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

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

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

Trinity Sunday – One Sunday Special Offering  
Psalter Sunday – Psalm 8  
Chancel Choir sings

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

Second Sunday after Pentecost



#### ***Sunday, June 5***

Third Sunday after Pentecost – Communion Sunday  
Please remember your CUP Offering  
Day of Prayer for General Synod which convenes  
June 9th – 14th  
Coffee Hour following Worship Service

#### ***Sunday, June 12***

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost – Youth Sunday  
Soles4Souls Kickoff

#### ***Sunday, June 19***

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – Father's Day  
Communion Service  
Please remember your CUP Offering  
Praise Team leads worship

#### ***Sunday, June 26***

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost



### ***One Sunday – Special Offering***

We will be collecting a Special Offering on May 22nd for *One Sunday*. One Sunday celebrates church planting in the RCA by providing resources and taking an offering to support planting efforts in our community. The RCA has planted 50 new churches since the start of Transformed and Transforming in 2013—churches that proclaim God's love and that are transforming lives and communities all over North America. What is Jesus calling you to do so that more churches will be planted this year? Your gifts to One Sunday will be multiplied and shared to support local church planting efforts in our Classis.

\* \* \* \* \*

***Answers to the Just for Kids puzzle on page 6:*** ant, flies, gnat, bees, worms, locust, grasshopper, hornet, maggots, flea, moths, spider, katydid, cricket. (NIV Translation)

## Call for Greeters

We now have a sign-up sheet for greeters for dates through the summer! Please, please, please check out the open dates and let's try to have all the days covered in the next couple of weeks!



**SERVING THE  
LIVING GOD**

## LITURGISTS

- 5/1 Jan Ortt  
5/22 Pat Hampson  
6/5 Chuck Hager  
6/26 Mark Ruckdeschel

## CHILDREN'S SERMONS

- 5/8 Rev. Ribbans  
5/22 Carole George  
6/12 Pat Hampson  
6/26 Carole George

## GREETERS

- 5/1 Junetta Bunce and Linda Soley  
5/8 Gary Wallace  
5/15 Volunteer Needed  
5/22 Barb Sliker  
5/29 Betty Duffy  
6/5 Ruth Miller  
6/12 Kevin Styles  
6/19 Judie Nicol and Peggy White  
6/26 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

We get to know God  
through reading the Bible.

## The Lectionary for May

**May 1** – Sixth Sunday of Easter  
**Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5;**  
**John 14:23-29 or John 5:1-9**

**May 8** – Seventh Sunday of Easter

**Acts 16:16-34; Psalm 97;**

**Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21; John 17:20-26**

**May 15** – Pentecost

**Acts 2:1-21 or Genesis 11:1-9; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b;**  
**Romans 8:14-17 or Acts 2:1-21; John 14:8-17, (25-27)**

**May 22** – Trinity Sunday

**Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31; Psalm 8; Romans 5:1-5;**

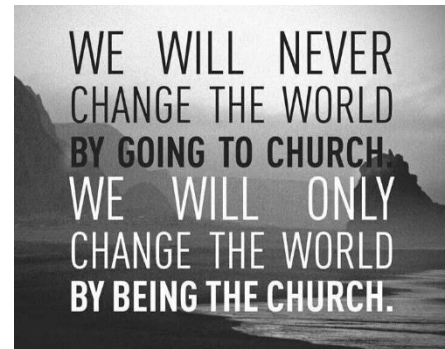
**John 16:12-15**

**May 29** – Second Sunday after Pentecost

**1 Kings 18:20-21, (22-29), 30-39; Psalm 96;**

**1 Kings 8:22-23, 41-43; Psalm 96:1-9;**

**Galatians 1:1-12; Luke 7:1-10**



## Mission and Outreach

### **The Bunupuradah Family to Visit on June 5th**

Rawee and Nui Bunupuradah, RCA mission personnel serving in Thailand, along with their children will be visiting us on Sunday, June 5th. All are welcome to join the Mission and Outreach Team after Worship that day for coffee hour. Please join us and get acquainted with our missionaries!

### **Soles4Souls Shoe Collection to Begin June 12th**

Attention anyone with a closet: Those shoes you no longer want are desperately needed to fight the human tragedy of global poverty. The Mission & Outreach Team will launch its 2016 Shoe Drive on June 12th to collect shoes to help the

poor. Please ask your friends, people at your workplace, relatives, and neighbors for any shoes they no longer want and bring them to church. The shoes that we collect will be delivered to Soles4Souls, an international anti-poverty organization that distributes the shoes to people in need in the United States (in our inner cities and reservations) and to people around the world.



CHANGING THE WORLD  
ONE PAIR AT A TIME

Thanks to all of you, the Mission & Outreach Team collected 483 pairs of shoes in 2013, 619 pairs of shoes in 2014, and 555 pairs of shoes were collected last year. Hopefully, with your outreach to friends, work colleagues, relatives and neighbors, we can increase our 2016 donation! If anyone would like a collection box to take to their workplace, please see a Mission & Outreach Team member.

*Carrie Lawrence for  
The Mission & Outreach Team*

### **Thank You for Your Generous Donations**

The Mission & Outreach Team would like to send out a big "thank you" to everyone for their generous donations to the Spotswood High School Band clothing drive fundraiser.

*Thank You for your Support!!*

The Wind Ensemble and Concert Band will present their award-winning performances at the annual Spotswood High School Spring Concert on Thursday, May 12th at 7:00 PM.

### **The HOPE Team**

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

In recognition of the annual National Day of Prayer, the Hope Team is hosting an ecumenical worship service on Thursday, May 5th at 7:30 PM. This service is followed by an Ice Cream Social held in Fellowship Hall.

Everyone is invited to come and share with us, and other denominations, in the joy of knowing that we are participating in prayer with so many other churches in our nation at the same time. To God be the Glory!

*Please see page 7 for more information. Hope to see you all there!*



### **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 will hold its last event of the season this month.

**May 4** **Maureen Hurd Hause, clarinet, and Allison Brewster Franzetti, piano**

The program will include lyrical contemporary works by living composers Evan Huse (Sunken City, originally a song setting of the poem "Diving Into the Wreck" by Adrienne Rich) and Allen Shawn (his work for solo clarinet Candles). Alan Hovhaness's solo clarinet work Lament will be among other works performed.

The recital begins at 12:15 PM. There is no charge for this event and a free lunch will follow the recital. There is a barrier-free entrance to the church at 9 Bayard Street.

### **Pixie Preschool**

#### **Annual Tricky Tray**

*Date:* May 12, 2016

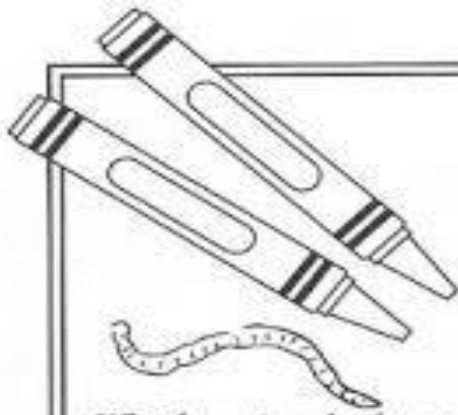
*Doors Open:* 6:00 p.m.

*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.



# Just for **KIDS**

## Bugs in the Bible



Whether at a picnic, on the beach or playing outdoors, it seems like we're always joined by uninvited guests – bugs!

Bugs and other little creatures are mentioned in the Bible.



*Fill in the blanks with the little creatures mentioned in each verse.  
Circle them in the puzzle below.*

Proverbs 6:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 16:20 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 78:45 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Sam. 24:14 \_\_\_\_\_

Matt. 23:24 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 50:9 \_\_\_\_\_

Judges 14:8 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 59:5 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 12:23 \_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 11:22 \_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 11:22 \_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 11:22 \_\_\_\_\_

Leviticus 11:22 \_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 7:20 \_\_\_\_\_



M	O	T	H	S	G	N	A	T	B	H
A	N	T	A	L	L	C	H	P	E	O
G	R	A	S	S	H	O	P	P	E	R
G	F	C	R	I	C	K	E	T	S	N
O	L	S	P	I	D	E	R	S	B	E
T	E	C	L	O	C	U	S	T	D	T
S	A	E	F	K	A	T	Y	D	I	D
G	F	L	I	E	S	W	O	R	M	S

Be sure to use a New International Version Bible – answers are on page 3.

## *Spotswood Celebrates...*

The 65th Annual National Day of Prayer Service

Thursday, May 5th at 7:00 a.m.

at the

Spotswood High School Flagpole

*In the event of inclement weather –  
we will meet in the Media Center*



*You are invited to our...*

National Day of Prayer Worship Service

Thursday, May 5th at 7:30 p.m.

in our sanctuary

Immediately following the service, the  
HOPE Team will host an Ice Cream Social



*Please come and help us celebrate  
our church, our families and our country*



**Prayer Requests**

Janet Applegate – at home in Old Bridge; Ann Bailey – at home in Spotswood; Deanna Bobash (Kelly Ortt’s mother) – at home in Sayreville; Chris Broscious (Sharon Farmer’s son) – at home in Kentucky; Florence Cano – in Twining Village, Holland, PA; Esmee Chica (Pat Hampson’s 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.; Dave Holzman (Kelly Ortt’s friend) – at JFK Hospital in Edison; Maggie Miller – at home in Spotswood; Linda Rodriguez (Shirley Leary’s and Barbara Jagemann’s niece) – at home in Florida; Tracy Suchcicki – at home in Monroe Twp.; Andy Tooker – in Wyoming; Beverly Jawidzik, Scottie McTaggart, and Marie Riddle – at the Reformed Church Home.

**2 Chronicles 7:14**  
 If my people,  
 who are called by my name,  
 will humble themselves  
 and pray  
 and seek my face  
 and turn from their wicked ways,  
 then will I hear from heaven  
 and will forgive their sin  
 and will heal their land.



**May Birthdays**

- May 1** Deana Goretskie
- May 2** Al Goretskie
- May 2** Charlie Uhl
- May 5** Tom Genthe
- May 8** Frank Corace
- May 8** Elizabeth Goretskie
- May 8** Jan Stubbs
- May 10** Ruth Miller
- May 13** Diane Zuniga
- May 14** Lyn McCauley
- May 18** Barbara Kampf
- May 24** Norm Bailey

**Reformed Church Home**

**Friends Birthdays**

- May 1** Pauline Parkinson
- May 10** Julie Alam
- May 10** Elizabeth Angelitus
- May 16** Edna Ryan
- May 17** Gladys Pieters
- May 19** Irene Holmes
- May 20** Alexandra Badia
- May 20** Yetsu Yu
- May 22** Daphne Morgan
- May 23** Barbara Jamieson
- May 24** Jeanette Rusin
- May 24** Frances O’Keefe
- May 25** Kosta Yanef
- May 27** Helen McCorry
- May 27** Christine Scher
- May 29** Elizabeth Maciorowski



**May Anniversaries**

- May 21** Peter & Rose Urbanowicz
- May 26** Harvey & Gloria Uhl
- May 30** Eric & Krista Scheid

*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  
 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.*