



Reflections

*A Monthly Newsletter of the
Spotswood Reformed Church*

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Serving the community since 1821

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May/June 2017

From the Pastor's Desk

This message originally appeared in the May 2014 issue of the Reflections.

Easter Faith

The Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John all have accounts of post-resurrection appearances of the Risen Christ; stories of Jesus encountering his disciples after his resurrection. One such story recounts the gathering of the disciples on Easter evening. And the disciples are having difficulty believing the reality of the events that have just occurred earlier in the day. One might think that these disciples of Jesus, having had him appear to a number of their company, might be racing through the streets of town shouting, "He is risen!"

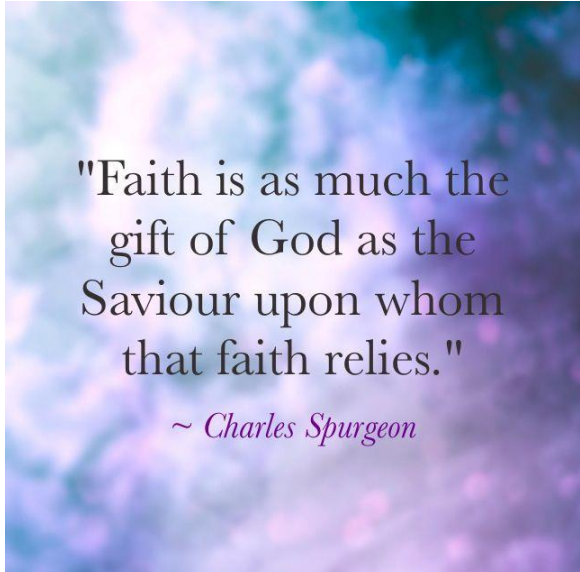
But no, there they are behind locked doors, full of fear, not faith.

Then the risen Christ comes and stands among them. But even then in John's Gospel, he does not say that this confirmed the faith of them all. Here we have the story of Thomas, who was not with the rest of them earlier in the day. He declares that he can't believe unless he has visible, tangible, reasonable proof. And Jesus stands before him and offers Thomas what he needs to believe. And Thomas believes; he has faith.

Thomas said that he needed tangible, irrefutable evidence. And Jesus offered to give him that evidence: "Go ahead. Stick your fingers into my wounded side, or my pierced hands." Interestingly, the story doesn't say Thomas took Jesus up on his offer. Jesus' presence – there in the room, standing before Thomas, not rebuking him for his doubt but rather lovingly offering to give him what he needed to believe – was all that Thomas needed to be able to say, "My Lord, and my God!"

I think that's the best "evidence" that any of us can have to motivate our belief – the presence of Christ among us. Like Thomas, we believe on the basis of the presence of Christ. You need evidence in order to believe? Well, many of you could testify that you have

received undeniable evidence right here in our church. You have come feeling alone and bereft, only to have a deep sense that Jesus was beside you, with you, and that you were indeed not alone. You came with questions and misgivings and somehow in worship – in the community of your fellow believers, in the prayers, hymns, and songs, maybe even in the sermon – you moved beyond your questions. You weren't always given straightforward answers, but you were given a sort of answer – you were given an "encounter with the figure of Jesus Christ, as I meet him in the gospels, in the witness of the church and in the sacraments," and it was enough. You had faith.



"Faith is as much the
gift of God as the
Saviour upon whom
that faith relies."

~ Charles Spurgeon

Faith, the church has always contended, is a gift. It is a gift that comes with the return of Christ on Easter evening to the very disciples who had so betrayed and disappointed him. He breathed on them. He forgave them. He blessed them and so became for them the evidence they needed to be able to respond in the depths of their being, "My Lord and my God!"

So be it for us,

JER

With Heartfelt Thanks

Dear Spotswood Reformed Church Family,

Megan and I would like to thank you all so much for choosing us to receive our beloved Reverend Jim Ribbans' china collection. Megan and I have been taking it one day at a time after the sudden passing of our beloved Reverend. I was just so lifted when Megan called me and said, "Sweetheart, our church family gave us Reverend Ribbans' china collection!"

Words cannot describe our sincere gratitude of this very beautiful gift from all of you! When Megan and I move in, we will be displaying this beautiful collection in our dining room in memory of our beloved Reverend James E. Ribbans!

Thank you so much from both of our hearts.

Paul Thomas Rosato and
Megan Kathleen Farmer

Worship Team

Worship Recap

A special thank you for all who helped in preparing worship and worshipful space during Lent, Holy Week and Easter Sunday. May the energy and joy exhibited during this season continue to flow from God through us in the Spotswood Reformed Church!

While we are currently searching for a contract pastor to fill in some of the pastoral duties on a part-time and possibly interim basis, we continue to be blessed to have George Sliker and Mark Ruckdeschel leading worship and preaching each month, Margaret Tierney leading lectionary worship, along with the wonderful pastors and seminary students who have made themselves available to preach for us. God is good.

During May we are still worshipping in the season of Easter! Alleluia, He is risen – He is risen indeed! May 25th is the Ascension of our Lord. Then June will find us celebrating one of the four most special days of the Christian Year – Pentecost – on Sunday, June 4th. The day when Christ sent his Holy Spirit to his church – to live within each of us every day, impelling us out into the world to be Christ's body to all whom we meet and in every situation we find ourselves. Please remember to wear red on Sunday, June 4th!



The Worship Team also wants to remind you to join in the ministry of greeting on Sunday mornings. The bright smiles and welcomes are the first thing people who come

to worship see and it sets the tone of our loving Christian community! So, one and all – sign up to greet some Sunday!



We are continuing to ask for volunteers to serve in the Children's Room when we have younger than Church School ages kids attending. The more volunteers the

better – and remember the quote from *Field of Dreams* – "If you build it, they will come." And don't we WANT more kids to be a part of our church community!!! If you are willing to volunteer, please contact the church office.

Choir Corner

The Chancel Choir will be finishing up their plan year rehearsing and singing during worship in the middle of May. Our last rehearsal as a full group is Wednesday, May 3rd, at 7:15 PM. The sopranos will have a rehearsal on Wednesday, May 10th, at 7:15 PM, and the Praise Team will rehearse on Wednesday, May 17th, as they prepare to begin leading worship on the third Sundays of each month.

A very heartfelt thank you goes out to each of the individuals who have been so faithful in rehearsing and adding to our worship through the Ministry of Music since last August! You guys are the best.



And for those of you wondering whether you might want to become part of this group here are some excerpts from an article titled "You Want to Age Better? Join a Choir!" The data was collected over a period of a year on choirs in Finland.

Twenty years ago, when academic researcher Julene Johnson wanted to study how music might help the aging process, she couldn't get funding. Johnson, a professor at the Institute for Health & Aging at the University of California, San Francisco, suspected that music might improve memory, mood and even physical function.

And, she thought, what could be more perfect than choral music? Your instrument is already in your body, and you are bathed in beautiful sound by fellow music makers. Singing in a group is fun, so there's plenty of reason to come back week after week: You get to see your friends and exercise your vocal cords and brain all at once.

Fast forward to 2010, when Johnson won a Fulbright scholarship to study the impact of

singing in the quality of life of older adults in Finland.

Music as a Force for Good

In Finland, Johnson saw the effects up close, including how making music together can build group cohesion toward a common goal.

Vocal music even played a pivotal role in Finnish history, Johnson notes. "Music was used as a political force," she says. When Finland was ruled by Russia, citizens would meet and talk about politics. They planned how to change the future at singing festivals, which eventually led to the country's independence.

Measuring Outcomes

Each choir met once a week for a year, and performed three to four times in public. The average age was 71, females represented 76% of participants, and two-thirds were non-white. Researchers collected data about falls and the use of health care services every three months, and focused on three primary outcomes:

- *Cognitive function.* Attention and executive function were tested.
- *Lower body strength.* Participants were given a timed sit-to-stand test to assess their ability.
- *Emotional well-being.* Participants were rated on the frequency of depressive symptoms including feeling down, having little interest in things, trouble sleeping, being tired, having poor appetite, feeling bad about themselves, having trouble concentrating or moving slowly.

Participants were also tested for verbal learning and memory, social engagement, social support, loneliness, walking speed, balance and falls.

Another key attribute was measured — self-efficacy — which Johnson defined as "people feeling like they have the power to do things for themselves." In addition to literally building strength to sing louder, Johnson notes that singing can help people find their voice metaphorically speaking.

Our Gathered Community Comes Together for May and June

Sunday, May 7

Fourth Sunday in Easter
Rev. Paul Walther Preaches
Chancel Choir Sings
Communion Service
Please remember your CUP Offering

Sunday, May 14

Fifth Sunday in Easter
Lectionary Prayers and Hymns
Mother's Day Breakfast Hosted by the Men's Group



Sunday, May 21

Sixth Sunday in Easter
Mark Ruckdeschel Preaches
Praise Team Leads Worship
Walk-Up Communion Service
Please remember your CUP Offering
Congregational Meeting After Worship

Sunday, May 28

Seventh Sunday in Easter
George Sliker Preaches



Sunday, June 4

Pentecost
Please remember to wear red!
Communion Service
Please remember your CUP Offering

Sunday, June 11

Trinity Sunday
Soles4Souls Kickoff

Sunday, June 18

Second Sunday after Pentecost
Praise Team Leads Worship
Walk-Up Communion Service
Please remember your CUP Offering

Happy
Father's
Day

Sunday, June 25

Third Sunday after Pentecost

LITURGISTS

- 5/14 George Sliker
 5/28 Chuck Hager
 6/11 Margaret Tierney
 6/25 Mark Ruckdeschel

CHILDREN'S SERMONS

- 5/14 Pat Hampson
 5/28 Mark Ruckdeschel
 6/11 Carole George
 6/25 Kathy Romero

GREETERS

- 5/7 Gary Wallace
 5/14 Kevin & Ella Styles
 5/21 Sherry Ruckdeschel
 5/28 **Volunteer Needed**
 6/4 **Volunteer Needed**
 6/11 **Volunteer Needed**
 6/18 **Volunteer Needed**
 6/25 **Volunteer Needed**

If you are unable to serve on the date assigned, 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

Kathy Romero for
 The Worship Team

The Lectionary for May and June

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

May 7 – Fourth Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:42-47; **Psalm** 23; **1 Peter** 2:19-25;
John 10:1-10

May 14 – Fifth Sunday of Easter
Acts 7:55-60; **Psalm** 31:1-5, 15-16; **1 Peter** 2:2-10;
John 14:1-14

May 21 – Sixth Sunday of Easter
Acts 17:22-31; **Psalm** 66:8-20; **1 Peter** 3:13-22;
John 14:15-21

May 25 – Ascension of the Lord
Acts 1:1-11; **Psalm** 47 or 93; **Ephesians** 1:15-23;
Luke 24:44-53

May 28 – Seventh Sunday of Easter
Acts 1:6-14; **Psalm** 68:1-10, 32-35;
1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; **John** 17:1-11

June 4 – Pentecost
Acts 2:1-21 or **Numbers** 11:24-30; **Psalm** 104:24-35;
1 Corinthians 12:3-13 or **Acts** 2:1-21;
John 20:19-23 or **John** 7:37-39

June 11 – Trinity Sunday
Genesis 1:1-2:4; **Psalm** 8; **2 Corinthians** 13:11-134
Matthew 28:16-20

June 18 – Second Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7); **Psalm** 116:1-2, 12-19;
Exodus 19:2-8; **Psalm** 100; **Romans** 5:1-8;
Matthew 9:35-10:8, 9-23

June 25 – Third Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 21:8-21; **Psalm** 86:1-10, 16-17;
Jeremiah 20:7-13; **Psalm** 69:7-10, (11-15), 16-18;
Romans 6:1-11; **Matthew** 10:24-39

Pastoral Search Team

The Pastoral Search Team is in its final stages of candidate vetting. We will be meeting on Thursday, May 4th, to discern, after all of our interviewing and getting to know the candidates, who God is calling to this position. We, as a nine-member team, have to be unanimous in our decision, and once made we will present our recommendation to the Consistory for a vote.

We continue to covet your prayers to cover those on this Team and in their work of prayerful discernment and walking with the Holy Spirit throughout this process. The HOPE (House of Prayer Equipping) Team has also conducted a weekly prayer meetings in this regard. The formal prayer time has finished, but we still ask all of our members to cover the process in prayer.

Kathy Romero for
 The Pastoral Search Team

Self-Study Team

Work is on hold until we have a Pastor under contract.

Kathy Romero for
 The Self-Study Team

Mission & Outreach Team**Soles4Souls Shoe Collection to Begin June 11th**

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 2017 Shoe Drive on Sunday, June 11th, 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.

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 in 2015, and 663 pairs of shoes were collected last year. Hopefully, with your outreach to friends, work colleagues, relatives and neighbors, we can increase our 2017 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*

Sponsoring a Child

As many of you know, Judie Nicol has participated in several mission trips over the last few years. She has helped to spread God's love by working with others to assist those in need. Judie has now found another way to spread God's love—through sponsoring a child in Haiti. Last year, Judie traveled to Haiti for a week with Poverty Resolutions, an organization whose mission is to combat spiritual, economic, and familial poverty by providing hope to the people of Haiti. On that trip Judie was exposed to the needs of the children in that country and it touched her heart. In wanting to make a difference, Judie made the decision to sponsor a child in Haiti through Poverty Resolutions. She is sponsoring a little boy,



Delvinki Jean Baptiste. Delvinki will turn 9 years old in July. He loves to draw and play with marbles. He is learning to speak French. Sadly, he recently lost his father. Judie's giving helps to provide Delvinki with education, daily meals, clothing, shoes, medical care and more...many of the things we often taken for granted. In addition to financial giving,

Judie prays for Delvinki—for his time in the Child Development Program and for his future.

If God is leading you to sponsor a child, you can get more information on sponsorship through Poverty Resolutions at www.povertyresolutions.org.

Thank you, Judie, for all you are doing for Delvinki and for continuing to be an inspiration.

Elizabeth Circle

Rummage Sale

The Annual Rummage Sale sponsored by the Elizabeth Circle is scheduled for Friday, May 12th, from 4 PM to 8 PM and Saturday, May 13th from 10 AM to Noon. 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, May 11th after 4 PM and/or all day Friday, May 12th. 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*

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 4th 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/June Reflections*. Hope to see you all there!

*Sincerely,
The Hope Team*

Pixie Preschool

Spring has finally sprung and there's a lot happening at Pixie in May and June. We are busy getting ready for our annual Family Day on Sunday, April 30th. Our Scholastic Book Fair begins and our students and their families enjoy craft making, refreshments, games and meeting Clifford the Big Red Dog. The book fair is held all week in the Big Room. On Thursday, May 11th, is Pixie's Annual Tricky Tray. We are still accepting donations and tickets are available in the Pixie office. Hope to see many of you there. It is our biggest fundraiser of the year and we're hoping to raise enough money to complete our school rejuvenation project. Finally, Monday, May 15th, we will be having our St. Jude Trike-a-Thon. The children learn about bike safety and then have the opportunity to show their parents what they have learned. Over the years, we have raised over \$57,000 for this incredible hospital and we hope to be able to send them a large donation this year. If you would like to donate please let us know.

Our teachers and students are also busy practicing for their end-of-year programs and graduation. I'm happy to say that it has been a successful school year and we're getting ready for our camp program and registrations for the fall.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER

*Gail Parizman, Director
Pixie Preschool*

Just for Kids...

BIBLE WORD SEARCH:

NAMES AND TITLES OF JESUS

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

CHRIST

KING (of the Jews)

LORD

RABBI

SON OF DAVID

EMMANUEL

LAMB (of God)

MASTER

REDEEMER

SON OF GOD

JESUS

LIGHT (of the World)

NAZARENE

SAVIOR

SON OF MAN



Prayer Requests

Donald Allen (Melanie Miller's grandfather) – at Princeton Medical Center in Princeton; *Janet Applegate* – at home in Old Bridge; *Rena Baker* (Fay Knox's sister) – at home with Fay and Luke in Spotswood; *Deanna Bobash* (Kelly Ortt's mother) – at home in Sayreville; *Shirley Bonnell* (Kelly Ortt's cousin) – at a hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida; *Chris Broschious* (Sharon Farmer's son) – at home in Kentucky; *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.; *Annmarie George* (Carole George's daughter-in-law) – at home in Monroe Twp.; *Carole George* – at home in Helmetta; *Dave Holzman* (Kelly Ortt's friend) – at home in South River; *Anthony Martinez* (Nancy Goretzkie's grandson) – at home in Morganville; *Susan Osieja* (Kelly Ortt's stepsister) – at RWJ Hospital in New Brunswick; *Francis Ortt* (Kelly Ortt's father) – at home in Rockford, Illinois; *Linda Rodriguez* (Shirley Leary's and Barbara Jagemann's niece) – at home in Florida; *Gloria Uhl* – at home in Spotswood; *Louise Woods* – at the Reformed Church Home in Old Bridge; *Cindy Ziloo* (Eunice Harrigfeld's daughter) – at home in South Amboy; *Beverly Jawidzik* and *Marie Riddle* – residents at the Reformed Church Home in Old Bridge.

May and June Anniversaries

May 21	Peter & Rose Urbanowicz
May 26	Harvey & Gloria Uhl
May 30	Eric & Krista Scheid
June 7	George & Barbara Sliker
June 9	David & Barbara Sliker
June 14	Peter & Wendy Siano
June 20	Joseph & Louise Woods

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

May and June Birthdays

May 1	Deana Goretzkie
May 2	Al Goretzkie
May 2	Charlie Uhl
May 5	Tom Genthe
May 8	Elizabeth Goretzkie
May 8	Jan Stubbs
May 10	Ruth Miller
May 14	Lyn McCauley
May 18	Barbara Kampf
May 24	Norm Bailey
June 1	Barry George
June 1	Pammie Halbert
June 1	Krista VanWageninge
June 1	Krystal VanWageninge
June 3	Joseph Woods
June 4	Peter Siano
June 7	Kayla VanWageninge
June 8	Alice Ryan
June 9	Harvey Uhl
June 10	Junetta Bunch
June 13	Wendy Siano
June 16	Kelly Ortt
June 16	Bill Tierney
June 19	Kayleigh Jagemann
June 19	Mark Ruckdeschel
June 19	Sherry Ruckdeschel
June 20	Braeden Appleton
June 23	Laura Woods
June 24	Ida Gonzalez
June 27	Megan Farmer
June 28	Michael Redline
June 30	Andie Beth Genthe
June 30	Joseph Soley

Reformed Church Home Friends Birthdays

May 10	Julie Alam
May 12	Eleanor Fentiman
May 15	James Young
May 16	Edna Ryan
May 17	Gladys Pieters
May 18	Rebecca Delellis
May 19	Irene Holmes
May 20	Yetsu Yu
May 24	Frances O'Keefe
May 24	Jeanette Rusin
May 25	Kosta Yanef
May 27	Helen McCorry
May 29	Elizabeth Maciorowski
May 30	William Macielyanez
June 9	Mary Matlosz
June 10	Woodis Booraim
June 11	Grace Hoenes
June 15	Rosemarie bagnalo
June 16	Evelyn Hendershot
June 17	Paul Stec
June 20	Esther Crothers
June 20	Vincenza Marone
June 21	Patricia Schultz
June 26	Florence McCreedy
June 28	Anne Donaldson
June 29	Antoinette Prohaska

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

Joseph W. Woods, Pastor Emeritus
 Kathryn Romero, Minister of Music, Alternate Elder Delegate to Classis
 Linda Soley, Church Treasurer
 Charles Uhl, Financial Secretary
 Sherry Ruckdeschel, Administrative Assistant, Clerk of Consistory, Newsletter Editor
 George Berry – Elder
 Junetta Bunce – Elder, Interfaith Network of Care
 Nancy Goretskie – Deacon
 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 – Elder, Vice President of Consistory, Second Elder Delegate to Classis
 Alice Ryan – Alice's CUP Food Pantry Coordinator for SRC
 Kim Miller - Deacon
 Kevin Styles – Deacon
 Michelle Tennill – Deacon
 Margaret Tierney – Cemetery Chair
 Peggy White – Elder, Elizabeth Circle President

TEAM MEMBERS

Building & Grounds Team

Kevin Styles – Team Chair
 Nancy Cano
 Kim Miller
 Kelly Ortt
 Charlie Romero

Christian Education Team

Mark Ruckdeschel – Team Chair
 Nancy Goretskie
 Marcia Halbert
 Victoria Halbert
 Rita Hussey
 Cassidy Ortt
 Janice Ortt
 Nikki Ortt

Finance Team

George Berry – Team Chair
 Chuck Hager
 Linda Soley
 Michelle Tennill
 Charlie Uhl
 Ken VanWageninge

HOPE Team

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

Mission & Outreach Team

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

Parsonage Task Force

Sherry Ruckdeschel – Team Chair
 Nancy Cano
 Carole George
 Judie Nicol
 Linda Soley
 Kevin Styles

Pastoral Search Team

Kathy Romero – Team Chair
 Carrie Lawrence
 Kelly Ortt
 Nikki Ortt
 Mark Ruckdeschel
 Sherry Ruckdeschel
 Linda Soley
 Margaret Tierney
 Ken VanWageninge

Self-Study Team

Kathy Romero – Team Chair
 Junetta Bunce
 Nancy Cano
 Rita Hussey
 Jim Lockwood
 Mark Ruckdeschel
 Mia Styles

Worship Team

Kathy Romero – Team Co-Chair
 Carole George – Team Co-Chair
 Mandi Miller
 Carol Maluchnik
 Sherry Ruckdeschel
 Margaret Tierney

***If you are interested in joining a Team, please contact that Team's Chair.
 Team Chairs, please contact the church office with any changes to Team memberships.
 Thank you!***