

# BELL TOWER NEWS

College Hill Presbyterian Church – FEBRUARY 2025

513.541.5676 | 5742 Hamilton Ave. | Cincinnati, OH 45224 | chpc.org

SAVE THE DATE

## CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH

*Free Lunch—A Taste of Heritage*

### “A TASTE OF HONEY”

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 12 NOON**  
after a single 10:30 AM worship service

Food is a universal love language, particularly in the Black community, where this love runs deep. It stems from a desire to nourish others, spend quality time together, uphold traditions, and live within their means. Known as “soul food,” African- American cuisine closely connects to African and Southern American food traditions.

### Learn to cook Soul Food! SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22

8:30 AM to 12 Noon

Men & Women— bring your aprons, come join the fun, and prepare food for Sunday’s luncheon.

*(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)*



## DEAR FRIENDS, LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER...

... for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God because God is love.

—1 John 4:7-8 (NIV)

In February, we see a vast celebration of love as many parts of the Western World celebrate Valentine’s Day—hearts and candy everywhere and lots of talk about LOVE. The story is that *Valentinus* was a priest who went against the law to marry soldiers to their sweethearts – the military were not supposed to marry at that time. He married couples in secret, was found out, and martyred. After centuries, his commitment to love has turned into our holiday. I love it that our

tradition was founded through the church and clergy’s commitment to marry couples. That seems like a good start and something worth a risk for *Valentinus* back in the day.

\* \* \*



Almighty God, what do you set before us to sacrifice for love’s sake? Please lead us to speak words that are Apples of Gold, do gifts of service in secret and love the folks you place in our little world in ways that are healing and reconciling. God, You demonstrated YOUR love for

us by coming to earth and sacrificing Jesus for our lives with you. Please open our hearts to your gift and grant us love in our world that makes a difference for your glory in Jesus. Amen

BY ELDER CHRISTY ROEDIGER

“Many thanks to everyone for your generous gifts that allow us to maintain this wonderful campus for the future generations of Christ’s disciples.” GREG FISCHER —Capital Projects



After operating his own construction company, Greg Fischer joined the CHPC Staff as Facilities Director of CHPC’s multi-million dollar campus. He “retired” in 2023, but continues to be a passionate steward of the church’s buildings and grounds as Capital Projects Manager. Here’s his current challenge: CHPC Campus Roofing Projects

UPDATES BY GREG FISCHER

Fine buildings need care. New building materials and techniques have emerged. Anyone who has faced the destructive effects of roof leaks needs no convincing as to the importance of their timely care. Two complex roofing projects are nearing completion.

The CHPC Learning Center, formerly known as the Barnabas Center for Spiritual Growth, was built in 1983. It is two floors high at the north end and one floor at the south end. A new roof has been installed over the one-story 3C’s Nursery School’s classrooms. That roof is over twice the size of the Atrium floor...it’s big!

TECHNOLOGY CHANGES —The old roof was made of a single-ply roofing fabric or membrane which was held in place by a layer of gravel (stone ballast). The roof was nearly flat and the stone allowed it to retain a lot of water. As it aged, cracks and leaks occurred. So the old roof was completely removed down to the concrete deck.

The new roof is a more durable design with three layers of roofing:



PICTURED IS THE SOUTH END OF CHPC’S “LEARNING CENTER.” THE REPLACED ROOF AREA IS SURROUNDED BY TEMPORARY WOODEN SAFETY RAILINGS.

BELOW, THE 6300 FT.<sup>2</sup> FLAT ROOF’S COVERING WAS TOTALLY REPLACED. PICTURED BELOW IS THE ROOF’S CONCRETE BASE EXPOSED.



- (1) primer applied to the concrete deck,
- (2) a roll of asphalt-base vapor barrier material and finally
- (3) tapered, insulation boards with a fiber-board base sheet and two more layers of roll asphalt-base material. All of these layers were cemented together with hot asphalt with the exception of the top layer that has a dedicated cement adhesive.

The new white roof has a factory-applied granule surface plus a

(PICTURED ABOVE) built-in slope (1/4” per foot of roof pitch) to allow for proper drainage. We should see some energy savings from the white reflectivity and newer, more efficient insulation. The roof has a 20-year warranty, but its life can be as long as 30 or 40 years. In the future an additional top layer can be installed on top of the existing materials.

The 1953 Sanctuary building’s north-facing roof was also repaired.

That roof is made from clay tiles. Each tile is secured to the roof deck by nails. Just like asphalt shingles, a tile roof is completed by starting at the bottom or lower most part of the roof, securing a row of tiles, then overlapping the next or second row of tiles over the first. The individual roof tiles hang by special nails. The old nails were too short, so the tiles were slipping down the roof. The tiles were removed and reused, but fastened in place with longer nails so that they would be secure.

A few other small areas have been repaired. In the spring or early summer of 2025, we also will replace the Sanctuary’s three roof areas that are covered with asphalt shingles. *Thanks to all who made these vital repairs possible.*



# CHRISTIAN SEXUALITY

FOR ADULTS WHO INFLUENCE YOUNG PEOPLE

BY SHARLYN STARE, BTN EDITOR

Having attended the exciting January 17th “overview” class of CHPC’s Christian Sexuality Series, I wrote to several people, endorsing the series and including a historical perspective. I thought *BTN* readers might be interested as well.

**YOU’RE NOT TOO LATE.** The class is video-driven and has extensive support materials. Nikki McKenna is the leader and facilitator. She and the Family Ministries Team will bring new attendees up to speed and provide materials that they might have missed.

Here’s the lineup of the classes:

1/24/25 - 6:30-8:30 PM - *God’s Love Story/ Authority of God in Scrip-ture/ Shame & Forgiveness;*

2/21/25 - 6:30-8:30 PM - *Sex & Marriage/ Singleness & Intimacy/ Porn & Masturbation;*

3/21/25 - 6:30-8:30 PM - *Same-Sex Sexuality/ Transgender Identities/ LGBTQ+ Questions;*

5/02/25 - 6:30-9:30 PM - *Dating & Friendships/ Sex in the World/ Following Jesus in Our Sexualized Age.*

Register for the class online at [www.CHPC.ORG/CS](http://www.CHPC.ORG/CS) (Christian-Sexuality training for adults) or call 513-491-5571 or email [NMckenna@chpc.org](mailto:NMckenna@chpc.org).

The series addresses real sexuality issues and balances *grace and truth*. The Church must no longer ignore or stifle sexuality issues. This is an opportunity to wake up and equip believers to understand the Good News within the context of Christian Sexuality. The series shares content in a way that can attract non-believers and empower followers of Jesus Christ.

## CHPC’S HISTORY AND ANSWER

**TO PRAYERS.** Our congregation has been seeking helpful and healthful Christian sexuality resources for nearly 50 years. In 1978, Jerry Kirk’s book, *The Homosexual Crisis and the Mainline Church* (Nelson Publishing) began to codify CHPC’s understanding of the issues and need for action. The book and related preaching and teaching provided the impetus for

asking for our denomination to develop Christian Sexuality resources for congregations and parents.

In 1990, CHPC’s Session with Rev. Pat Hartsock as Moderator adopted a Resolution—*The Witness for Biblical Morality*—drafted by Rev. Gary Sweeten, Rev. Greg Callison, and Elder Hal Schell in consultation with Jerry Armelli. Hundreds of churches in the PC(USA) adopted our document and echoed our appeal. The denomination acknowledged the need but was in an irreconcilable theological flux itself. By 2013, when CHPC transferred to the ECO denomination, the need accelerated. CHPC kept asking.

In 2024, CHPC’s Session with Rev. Drew Smith as Moderator diligently reviewed the “Christian Sexuality” curriculum proposed by CHPC’s Family Ministries. Developed by the Center for Grace, Truth and Gender (<http://www.centerforfaith.com>) the series is both an answer to prayer and worth praying for as it is used to equip the Church here in College Hill and across the nation.

**WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT TO ME PERSONALLY ?** In 1968, my fiancé’ Barry and I met with Dr. Jerry Kirk about being wed at CHPC. “I’m not in the business of marrying people,” he said. “I’m in the business of building Christian homes. Are you interested?” We said that was an option. The next thing he asked was “What is your personal relationship with Jesus Christ?”

(We had none.) Three months of premarital counseling followed. He spoke candidly of his own marriage and shared how Christian marriage, including our sexuality, was designed by a loving God. “A personal relationship with Jesus not only frees us from guilt and shame, he presents us as *spotless* before our Heavenly Father, *no matter what our past has been*. Jesus can be

trusted to reveal God’s good plan for us, spirit, mind, *and body*. On June 21, 1969, Barry and I made a 3-way covenant with Jesus. We saw the depth of the love of God (who knew everything about us and still loved us) as we risked being “real” with each other within our marriage. We are eternally grateful to God and those who influenced us and to those we have influenced.

1/21/2025

Happy New Year  
Swim Ministry Family & Friends!

Burrrrr! In the midst of winter, we are confirming our summer swim-lesson dates!



**Children/Teens Day Lessons:**

10 AM, 11 AM, 12 PM at North Hills Swim Club

Week #1. June 23-27    Week #2. July 14-18    Week #3. July 28-August 1

**Adult and Evening Lessons:** 6-7 PM at Twin Towers' Connection Pool

Week A. July 7-11    Week B. July 21-25

**ONLINE REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 1st, 2025** (2-1/2 months away).

Our website is <https://chpc.org/swim/>

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

WHAT IS THE MINIMUM AGE FOR STUDENTS? 5 yrs-old the first day of class.

WHO CAN APPLY TO TEACH?

- Staff must be at least 11 years old and able to jump into deep water from the side and swim front crawl for 15 yards; maintain his/her body position by treading or floating for 30 seconds; and swim elementary backstroke for 15 yards (entering ARC Level 4).

- Former life guards, WSI's, teachers and strong recreational swimmers are especially encouraged to apply. The 2025 Staff Training is June 12-14.

Watch for a future email with more staff details and the date for Online Teacher Applications. To receive this email, contact me—[katy.verhagen@gmail.com](mailto:katy.verhagen@gmail.com) .

HOW CAN I HELP MY SWIMMER BE "WATER SAFE?"

The U.S.A. Swimming Foundation says, "No child is ever fully water safe. The goal of swim lessons is to make children safer in, on, and around the water." The U.S. Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) lists drowning as the leading cause of death in children ages 1-4 and the 2nd leading cause of death in children ages 5-14. Every day there is an average of 11 unintentional drowning deaths in the USA, over 4000/year. Tell your neighbors and friends about lessons.

During our awards ceremonies in the summer, we say, "The best way for your kids to improve their swimming is to have them swim in a safe, well-supervised pool!" We highly recommend investing in a pool membership for your family—for example, [www.nhswim.net](http://www.nhswim.net). If your swimmer is at an unmonitored pool (backyard/apartment/hotel) without a lifeguard, then YOU are the lifeguard. Watch them very carefully. Learn how to help. Let's work together to prevent drownings.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE 2025 SWIMMING MINISTRY. Thank God for faithfully providing the funds and staff needed to teach swimming well for 48 summers! Give God the glory for what He will do through the Swimming Ministry in the summer ahead. Philippians 4:13 is true.

OTHER QUESTIONS? Send me an email at [katy.verhagen@gmail.com](mailto:katy.verhagen@gmail.com).

Blessings to you all,  
Katy Verhagen Wilson,  
Head of Staff and Co-Administrator

p.s. Keep practicing "humming" with your swimmer this winter! Good breath-control is vital for relaxed, productive swimming.

# CONNECTION RESOURCES



SAT. FEB. 8, 9 – 11 AM

Register [chpc.org/faith](http://chpc.org/faith)

The training at CHPC removes the mystery of sharing your faith and equips you with skills to use right away. *Breakfast included.*



## Creating Connection: Empathy & Trust in Everyday Conversations

SAT. FEB. 7, 9 AM - 9 PM

The Equipping Ministries Int'l training at Mariemont Community Church is a shortened version of the world famous *Listening* course. Phone: (513) 742-1100.



## Community Night at the Wavle's

THURS. FEB. 13, 6 - 8:30 PM

Mark & Christine Wavle, Directors of EMI invite you to connect with others on a deeper level and practice EMI skills over dinner. 2nd Thurs/ month.

[www.EquippingMinistries.org/events](http://www.EquippingMinistries.org/events)

# got power?

“One of the world’s great tragedies is that about 1 in 5 people on the planet lack access to basic electricity. That’s 1.4 billion people who live without the convenience and safety of lighting, who cannot refrigerate their food or medicine, who still pump water by hand and for whom charging a cell phone can even be a day’s walk. It will take the combined efforts of the private sector, governments, philanthropists, entrepreneurs, inventors, charitable organizations and committed individuals to attack this problem. It will also take the loving power of Jesus.”



CHPC is partnering with SonLight Power (founded by Alan Rainey from CHPC) to change that condition for people in an area of Honduras. Men, women and families are eligible to go June 7-14, 2025. Team size for the trip is limited. A guardian must accompany all participants under 18.

**Don't delay. Apply online at [www.CHPC.org/SLP25](http://www.CHPC.org/SLP25)** If you're selected for the 2025 team, Rev. Samuel Mock will notify you via the

email you list on your application. Upon notification, you will receive a Submission Form. Sign up and pay a \$500 non-refundable deposit within 14 days to reserve your spot. The deposit will be applied to the \$2500 trip cost.

**Want more information?** Learn more and see videos of other trips, <https://www.sonlightpower.org/join-mission-trip/>, or call Jill Council at SonLight Power (513) 285-9960.

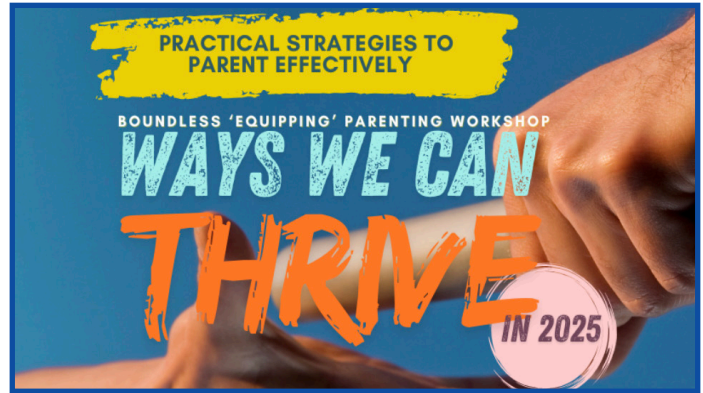


## “Boundless” Wkshop SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15th

8:30 AM to 1:00 PM

Free event for parents; lunch & childcare provided.

Register at [chpc.org/THRIVE](http://chpc.org/THRIVE)



**CHPC’s Family Ministry is hosting a series of FREE workshops this year to equip parents.** Using Lauren Gaines’ “Unshakable Kids ”resources, the first workshop of the year is *Ways We Can THRIVE in 2025*. It will employ videos, teachers, role plays, small group activities and fun times. By learning, playing, and growing together parents and leaders can become *less bound* in their home, work and community.

Questions? Nikki McKenna at (513) 491-5571 or [NMckenna@CHPC.org](mailto:NMckenna@CHPC.org) .

When we intentionally BUILD GODLY HOMES,  
our family’s firm foundation cannot be shaken.



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT COVER)

BY ROSA BRINKMAN

CHPC's 2025 celebration of Black History Month will emphasize two distinctive facets of Black history: food and music.

## COOKING AND TASTING FOOD

The front cover of this *Bell Tower News*, invites church attendee and friends to learn more about cooking techniques for making "soul food" (and why it's good for the soul). The CHPC kitchen is used to prepare tasty treats and side dishes like collard greens that have significant historical importance in America's culinary heritage.

**TO SIGN UP FOR COOKING CLASS** contact **Rose Brinkman** [mad327848@aol.com](mailto:mad327848@aol.com)

The products of the cooking class will provide delicious treats for "A TASTE OF HONEY" free luncheon on Feb. 23rd, following the single 10:30 AM worship service.

## MUSIC THAT MOVED PEOPLE

Spirituals and other Black heritage music allows all of us understand more deeply how the Old and New Testament helped to heal and gave hope to millions of enslaved people in America and around the world. The music became the antecedents of so much of today's popular music. Melodies were shaped by those in Africa.

Our worship services will include music like "Go Down Moses," which according to Harriet Tubman was one of two code songs that fugitive slaves used to com-

municate when fleeing Maryland and the South as they followed the Underground Railroad.

Black music was shaped by where they came from in Africa. Traditional African-American spiritual songs are deeply rooted in the experience of slavery, where enslaved people used the biblical story of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt as a metaphor for their own yearning for freedom. The song draws heavily from the Exodus narrative in the Bible, where Moses is commanded by God to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. The refrain of the spiritual focuses primarily on a forceful, passionate command that imbues life and urgency into the biblical account: "Let my people go!"

"Go Down Moses" and similar music transcends its origins to remain a powerful reminder of the enduring human spirit. Its message of liberation, faith, and hope remains relevant, echoing the struggles of the past while inspiring future generations to continue the fight for justice and freedom.

**Have an idea for  
Bell Tower News?**

Questions? Want to submit an article/ photo of an event? Request an update about \_\_\_\_? Contact the BTN Editor, Sam Stare, 513-382-5902 or email [starecvg@aol.com](mailto:starecvg@aol.com) .

LOOKING FOR BACK ISSUES OF BTN?  
GO ONLINE TO [chpc.org/BTN](http://chpc.org/BTN)

**Deadline for BTN submissions is the 15th of each month.**

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## REVIEWING THE DAY

- Be still for a moment. Breathe deeply.
- Ask the Spirit to lead you in peace and wisdom.
- Remember the last 24 hours from waking up to going to sleep. Watch the day like it was a video. As you reflect, you may pray for patience, forgiveness, greater love, courage, or other virtues.

Reflect on the commitments of your heart throughout the day.

Celebrate the commitments to Jesus.

Confess the times you didn't follow him.

Receive Jesus' forgiveness.

- As you continue through the scenes of the day, some may bring gratitude, and others regret. Speak to the Lord about these different times. You may pray for the various people you encountered.

Give attention to your impatience with other people.

Give attention to temptations to be dishonest.

Ask for the Spirit's help to grow patience within you.

Rejoice in the times you were patient and honest.

- If you have difficulty praying outloud, come before the Lord using a notebook to write down your prayers and reflections on the day.
- End with a prayer of thanksgiving for God's provision, direction, mercy, and love. If it is the end of the day, pray for restful sleep; if it is the beginning of the day, pray for an awareness of God's presence throughout the day.

## RODNEY BARBOUR KICKS OFF CHPC's 2025 CONCERT SERIES

"There's No Business Like Snowbusiness" might have been the subtitle of Rodney's organ concert on January 12th. Delayed by the 10-inch snowfall on January 5th, the concert *Prelude at the Manger* showed why Rodney is a first choice to demonstrate and do organ concerts internationally. The concert was excellent!



It has over 5000 pipes in 3 locations. It can be used for drama, special effects, improvisation; antiphonal playing of the pipes in the balcony;



and effects using percussion, orchestral, and theater-organ sounds. It is one of the most advanced in the area. If you missed the concert or want to appreciate the organ at CHPC, the concert is on *YouTube.com*. You can copy this address: <https://www.youtube.com/live/ysXE11fdfFA> or go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and at the Q (magnifying glass) type in the name of the concert: **Prelude at the Manger** or **Rodney's name**

WATCH FOR FUTURE CONCERTS. EMAIL [KMOSER@CHPC.ORG](mailto:KMOSER@CHPC.ORG)  
DONATE TO MAKE FUTURE COMMUNITY CONCERTS POSSIBLE.

## ALL NEW CHPC.ORG

WEBSITE

Take a moment and check out the church's website. It is redesigned to provide resources for your life and growth and for you to share with others. For example:



ONLINE AT [CHPC.ORG/PRAYER/](http://CHPC.ORG/PRAYER/)  
Request prayer for yourself, others, God's work in the world, etc. Sign up with [JCORNELIUS@CHPC.ORG](mailto:JCORNELIUS@CHPC.ORG) to join CHPC ePrayers —emails about prayer needs and answers.



ONLINE AT [CHPC.ORG/GROWTH/](http://CHPC.ORG/GROWTH/)  
Growth groups provide a supportive place for people to gather (online or live) to explore how God and the Bible relate to everyday life.



ONLINE AT [CHPC.ORG/ABOUT/](http://CHPC.ORG/ABOUT/)  
Explore the foundational principles that guide our faith and shape our mission to be a growing, diverse community of Jesus followers: our beliefs, our history and our denomination, the E.C.O.

**Thursdays, 10 AM at CHPC**

June Elwood (513) 205-7991  
or Gwyn Spindel (513) 761-7185  
for weekly details

A caring fellowship group of social knitters and fabric arts women who use their talents for the benefit of others. In its 17th year. Open to the community. "A great place to go and unwind."





## A CLEAR RESOLUTION

focusing our commitments

BY PASTOR DREW SMITH

Our current preaching series focuses on our commitments as “covenant partners” at College Hill Presbyterian Church. We don’t have “members.” *Covenant* is a fancy way of saying we make promises together to honor God as a Christian community. We are not customers or clients; we are partners with God and one another. We seek to demonstrate to the world how God has created us to live and be led by the Holy Spirit in our lives so that we grow to love as Jesus.

We make a common commitment to Presbyterian principles and Reformed theological distinctives. We agree to pursue a common vision: “We honor God by growing a diverse community of Jesus followers.” In our lives together, we continually encourage and challenge one another to love God and neighbor with our heads, hearts, and hands. We cannot do this on our own. We need one another as partners on this journey.

### February 2—Focused Together Ephesians 2:11-22

At CHPC we commit to “Honor God by growing a diverse community of Jesus followers.” Every word of our vision statement has purpose that flows from the heart of God’s plan. We covenant to pursue together with clarity God’s plan of making a “new humanity” out of a broad collection of people. Jesus is our common commitment. His death, resurrection, and return unite us beyond all other

earthly allegiances.

### Feb. 9 — Committed to Love

I Cor 12:12-31; Micah 6:8

As Covenant Partners, we promise to help one another grow in Christian maturity. Jesus has made it clear that the greatest commandment is to love God and others. We, therefore, promise to help one another through encouragement. We are committed to helping one another grow in love in the power of the Holy Spirit. We identify three directions of love – upward toward God, inward toward one another, and outward toward our neighbors.

### February 16—Love God

Matt. 24:34-40; I Cor. 13, Eph. 3:14-21

Let’s help one another love God. We engage in worship, small groups, spiritual conversations, and other ministries to grow in our knowledge, commitment, and adoration of God. Out of our love for God, we will sacrificially give to God’s work through CHPC with our finances, prayers, and active participation.

### February 23—Love One Another

John 17:20-26; I John 4:7-21

We commit to loving each other by listening well, speaking the truth in love, supporting and encouraging one another so that all have what we need to serve and honor God. We promise to work through conflict in healthy ways and refuse to let the evil one cause divisions among us. (TASTE OF HONEY SUNDAY)

### March 2—Love The World

John 3:16,17; Mark 12:31; James 1:22-27  
God so loved the world that he sent his only Son . . . God loves his creation. We commit to demonstrating that love to those around us by sharing God’s good news of salvation, sacrificially giving to the vulnerable in our community so that all have what is needed to flourish, and inviting any and all to join with us on this journey.

## NEW FOR 2025

THERE ARE SIX “SINGLE SERVICE” SUNDAYS where the 9 AM and 10:30 AM services are combined into one 10:30 AM services, usually in conjunction with a special event. The first *Sunday FunDay* will be Feb. 23rd with one worship service at 10:30 AM followed by a free *Taste of Honey* luncheon. We pray that the Sunday FunDays will provide special times of worship together and foster deepening relationships with one another and Jesus Our Lord!



### CALENDAR FOR SUNDAY FUNDAYS:

Feb. 23—ONE service at 10:30 AM with *Taste of Honey Luncheon* to follow.

April 27—10:30 AM Worship, *Prayer Walk* in the Area, and Lunch.

May 18—Outdoor Worship at CHPC, *Graduation Sunday*, Lunch.

August 24—“Worship in the Woods” at Winton Wood, *Potluck Picnic* with organized games and tournaments.

Oct. 26th—Worship, *Congregational Meeting*, Lunch.

Dec. 28th—the Sunday following Christmas— Breakfast at 9 AM. Worship at 10:30 AM.

**SAVE THE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW.**