

# BELL TOWER NEWS

College Hill Presbyterian Church – MAY 2026

513.541.5676 | 5742 Hamilton Ave. | Cincinnati, OH 45224 | [www.chpc.org](http://www.chpc.org)

## Celebrating All Moms

BY JEANNE SCHNEIDER, DIRECTOR OF LIVING HOPE COUNSELING SERVICES

Mother's Day is a blend of joy and complexity, celebrating the nurturing love that reflects God's heart while acknowledging hidden pain and high demands. We honor mothers for their strength and sacrifices, and offer comfort to those facing grief, loss, or longing, reminding every one that God loves and sees them and desires to hear the longings of their heart.

### Honoring the Gift of Motherhood

Motherhood is a profound calling, embodying divine love through self-sacrificial service. It is a unique, God-given role to raise children in faith and character. Whether you are currently in the midst of parenting, navigating the empty nest, or providing guidance as a spiritual mother, your influence is shaping the next generation.

### Navigating the Complexities

We acknowledge that this day brings mixed emotions. For some, it can be a day of heartache due to lost children, estranged relationships, or the pain of childlessness. Others are

overwhelmed by the feelings and challenges of motherhood which leave mothers feeling exhausted. Still others experience the grief of broken relationships, or of the death of their own mothers.



### A Faith-Based Approach

This Mother's Day, let us cling to God's comfort and grace, knowing that the God who loves us meets us exactly where we are—whether that is in a place of rejoicing or deep

mourning, consider doing these things: **Celebrate with Gratitude**—Take time to honor those that have been 'moms' in your life, thanking God for their labor of love.

**Extend Compassion**—Reach out with love to those who find this day difficult—the grieving, the waiting, the wounded, and the lonely.

**Rest in Grace**—Remember that we are called to be faithful, not perfect. Our ultimate hope lies not in our parenting performance, but in our Savior's grace. God's grace is sufficient.

May we look to God as our ultimate comfort and strength, and find joy in the precious gift of motherhood, in all its messy, beautiful forms.

*She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. – Proverbs 31:25*

### HISTORY of MOTHER'S DAY

In the U.S., Mother's Day falls on the second Sunday of May—this year it's May 10, 2026. Hallmark Greeting Cards says, "Mother's Day is the third-largest card-sending holiday in the United States, with 113 million cards exchanged annually. 85% of adult men and women celebrate

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COLLEGE HILL  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# THE ADVERTISEMENT AND THE RESULTS



It took a lot of helpers to prepare for CHPC's Easter egg hunt. Things were already hopping when the guests arrived. The yard and auditorium of the



for a super Easter basket. One egg was in a tree!

College Hill Academy (on Cedar Ave between Hamilton & Belmont) were welcoming.

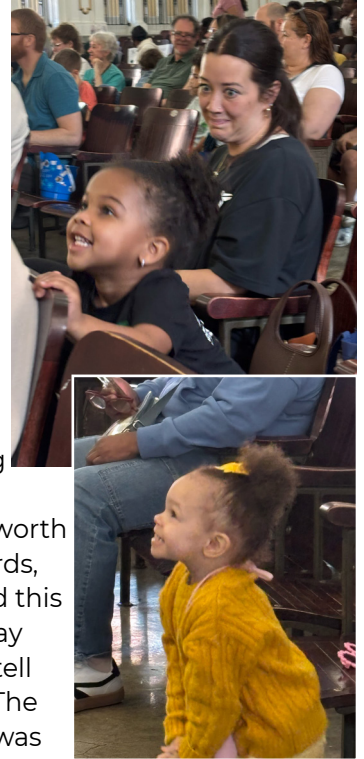
There were two traditional hunts for candy-filled eggs (one for toddlers and one for grade-school-aged) children and a raffle



Then came the BIG SURPRISE. During the event on "Vigil Saturday," the day before Easter Sunday, Rick Teepen from the Creation Museum taught about reptiles from God's perspective. "God is so loving and so creative, he made things that he thought were needed on earth." He asked for the adults and kids to raise their hands if they liked snakes. (Not many hands were raised.) Then Rick began introducing



some of "his friends." During his presentation, *Snakes Alive!*, the audience got to see and touch many interesting reptiles. A picture is worth a 1000 words, so we used this photo-essay format to tell the story. The audience was entranced.



In Genesis, after Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God, the friendly plants and animals God had created changed to protect themselves. Mankind developed a fear of snakes and lizards. As Christ comes into our lives, God reveals how he has created them as a blessing.

Rick asked his friend Kevin Moser, CHPC's Director of Traditional Music for "a little help." Later, Kevin said, "Little did I know what I was getting into when I said, YES."



One by one, Rick took a variety of snakes from the carrying cases, talked about them, and draped them on Kevin. Aside from looking like the Greek goddess Medusa, Kevin said



Rick invited family groups to come forward to have their photo taken holding some part of the python's body. "These make great photos to include with Christmas cards!" For many their attitude about snakes has changed a lot.



Rick Teepen closed the time by reading:



that the only time he was "creeped out" was when one of the snakes wriggled inside his shirt and was squirming around.

Then, Rick introduced his show-stopping Burmese Python. "They start out at 3 feet and grow and grow and grow. For this snake, I need a lot of help! HE GOT IT!"

1 Peter 4:10— *As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.* He said he has a passion for reptiles and God uses that to teach about God's plan. He asked people to pray that God would reveal to them "their passion and how God may want to use it for His Glory!"



# Moms

(CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT COVER)

Moms have been celebrated around the world and through the centuries. But, the "Mother's Day" we celebrate has its origins in the peace-and-reconciliation campaigns of the post-Civil War era.

During the 1860s, Ann Reeves Jarvis urged one divided West Virginia town to celebrate "Mother's Work Days" that brought together the mothers of Confederate and Union soldiers. Ann's daughter, Anna, watched as God heal the town and restored relationship in spite of the war. She learned the difference that moms could make.

By 1900, Anna Jarvis (PICTURED) was an active lobbyist for the establishment of Mother's Day. In 1909, 45 states observed the day, and in 1914, President Woodrow Wilson



ANNA JARVIS

approved a resolution that made the second Sunday in May a holiday in honor of "that tender, gentle army, the mothers of America."

Today, Mother's Day is the second most popular holiday for gift-giving, following Christmas. Take a moment to Google "Mother's Day gift ideas." Marketers of candy, flowers, perfume, and "reservations" will be more than glad to remind us that May 10th is coming soon! Remember your spiritual Moms too.



# COLLEGE HILL Gardeners



AMY MCLEAN  
REICHLER, PRESIDENT



## RESURRECTING A COMMUNITY RESOURCE

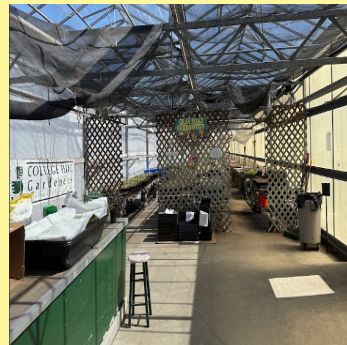
For 25 years, College Hill Gardeners (CHG) have promoted home gardening, neighborhood beautification projects, and events like the Fall Wee Patch family-friendly Festival in Patrick's Park on Hamilton Ave. The CHG are committed to helping make College Hill beautiful and welcoming. Some CHPC members are active in CH Gardeners. The group meets at CHPC on the first Tuesday of the month at 7 PM. Come and join others who live out the *Creation Ordinances* of Gen. 2:15: "to dress, till and keep the earth."

CHG's annual fund-raiser is the Plant Sale on the first Saturday in May (details page 8 of this BTN). CHG raise the herbs, vegetables, annuals, and perennials. The problem this year was that none of the greenhouses used in the past were available. As you will see, the CHG rose to the challenge. In the process, they literally *resurrected* an abandoned greenhouse on Gray Road across from Spring Grove Cemetery—a herculean task.

The greenhouses, now owned by the Gray Road Church of Christ, had fallen into disrepair. The Gardeners signed a contract with the church to use a greenhouse in exchange for a lot labor. It took teams of CHG volunteers and friends working together for weeks—lots of lifting, trash pickup, repair and cleaning in hazardous weather (with no running water or electricity), and the rental of a mammoth dumpster! It was, indeed a labor of love.



### Enjoy the before & after photos.



**CHG meets 1st TUES each month at 7 PM CHPC's Parlor; collegehillgardeners@gmail.com**

# CHURCH STAFF CHANGES AND NEWS

## HEATHER LETHANDER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR—RETIRING

As I approach retirement at the end of May, I find myself with a mixture of emotions. I am excited to step into this next chapter in my life as my husband, Charlie and I begin retirement, but I am also going to deeply miss being a part of our paid staff who leads the church so well.

Over the past 11 years, I have had the privilege of serving as a part of the CHPC staff team. One of the best parts of my job was working with all the different ministries of the church, usually in the



background. Together we have worshiped, supported one another through loss and joy, grown in faith, and pursued the mission God has given CHPC. I am incredibly grateful for the trust, encouragement, and friendships that have shaped my time on staff.

God has prepared an excellent succession plan. **Michael Gaines will follow me as Executive Director.** We have been working for the last six months to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible. I am very confident that he will do well! **Roger Williams will be replacing Michael as Property Manager.** He is extremely well prepared for this role after volunteering with Greg Fischer for years. What a blessing they both are to CHPC!

Charlie retired in March, and we are excited to share new adventures together. We love to travel and explore the world together. Our first big trip to celebrate our retirement will be a cruise

from Tahiti to Hawaii this Fall! Our children (and spouses) and our first grandchild all live in Houston, so we plan to visit them often. We will celebrate our grandchild Jack's first birthday in July. We also have many "house projects" that we are ready to tackle (when we aren't doing something else that is more fun)! Even though I'll no longer be on staff, I am still committed to CHPC as a member and friend and will cherish the relationships we've built.

With gratitude & love in Christ, Heather



## REV. SAMUEL MOCK—SABBATICAL 7/1-8/24

By God's grace, I've served six consecutive years on CHPC's staff. In the seventh year, CHPC's "sabbatical policy" encourages staff

to take time for rest, renewal, and reflection. I will be away July 1 through August 24, 2026.

This sabbatical is about slowing down to be with the Lord, to be renewed in my Calling, and to invest intentional time with my wife Liz. Ministry is a deep joy, but it also requires rhythms of rest to remain healthy and faithful over the long haul. I'm thankful that CHPC values this kind of renewal.

Initially I will take time rest by intentionally stepping away from the normal responsibilities of ministry to allow my soul, heart, and mind to reset. Liz and I are planning, Lord willing, to travel to Italy for two weeks for unhurried time together—enjoying

God's creation, experiencing a different pace of life, and simply being present with one another and with the Lord.

I'll be spending time reading several books on leadership, spiritual formation, and the life of the church, and inquiring how the Lord might continue to shape me as a pastor and a better servant of our congregation. My goal in this season is not productivity, but formation—slowing down enough to listen carefully to God and to grow in wisdom and faithfulness.

In the final stretch of the sabbatical, I'll take time to reflect on what I've learned and experienced and how these insights might be beneficial to our church as a whole.

Summer is a slower time in many of the ministries I lead. There are wonderful leaders who will continue to serve faithfully while I'm away. I'm confident that the church will be well cared for during this time. Please pray that Liz and I will flourish during this time.

## ROGER WILLIAMS— NEW CHPC PROPERTY MANAGER

*Three congregation, and a wide variety of Christian and community organizations are blessed by using the CHPC campus.*

*Over the years the Church has wisely embraced technology to control lighting, security, heating and air conditioning. Property Management is a BIG job.*

TAKE TIME TO MEET ROGER: My family started attending CHPC in 2007, as the oldest of our three sons was entering 3C's Nursery School. I have been involved with many different ministries here over the years. In 2010, as the youngest of our sons

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)



EVERYTHING IN ONE PLACE: [CHPC.ORG/SUMMER/](http://CHPC.ORG/SUMMER/)



# SUMMER AT CHPC



**MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH. THE 2026 THEME IS "MORE GOOD DAYS TOGETHER— Honestly, who doesn't want more of those?"**



Science says that when we help others, our brains actually change. We release oxytocin — the “feel-good” chemical that lowers stress and even helps with pain. Pretty incredible, right? And it's not a new idea. Jesus talked about “one anothering” all the time — caring for, forgiving, honoring, and loving each other. So, maybe this month, you bring a meal to a neighbor, send a kind note, or just take time to listen to someone who needs it. You'll be doing something good for them and for yourself.



Another mood-booster? Get creative! Paint, write, read, doodle — whatever makes you focus on the moment. Research shows that just 45 minutes of art-making can lower stress hormones. And no, you don't have to be a Michelangelo — it's about joy, not perfection. If you want more ideas, check out the **FREE toolkit from Mental Health America at [mhanational.org/printables](http://mhanational.org/printables)**.



WHAT'S UP THIS SUMMER?  
HOW CAN I BE INVOLVED?  
DO I NEED TO REGISTER?  
TIME/COST?

Remember, we're here for you at Living Hope Counseling Services. Maybe this is the month you take that first step toward counseling — or maybe you can help someone else take it by donating to support their journey. You can give online at [livinghopecs.com](http://livinghopecs.com) or mail a gift to 5742 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45224. For more information, call us at 513-371-5135. **“We want to serve you. That's why our name includes service.”**

BY JEANNE SCHNEIDER, DIRECTOR OF LIVING HOPE COUNSELING SERVICES

# LET'S GO FISHIN' - TRAIN WITH RON RAND



**SAT., JUNE 6, 2026—COVENANT-FIRST CHURCH—8:30 AM-NOON**

REV. RON RAND, former CHPC Co-Pastor, has trained thousands easy way to be excellent “fisher of men and women” for Jesus. *Learn from the best fun and memorable ways to allow Christ to attract others through you.*

For Christians of all ages, including teens!

**8:30-9:00 AM** Light breakfast

**9:00-12-00 PM** *I.D.E.A.S* Equipping Model: **I**-nstruction, **D**-emonstration of Instruction with **E**xpectation of attendees' practical **A**-pplication, while at the meeting, leading to **S**-atisfaction of the attendees—“Hey, I CAN DO this!”

**12:00-1:00 PM** a light Lunch and Q. & A. Time Cost is \$15 per person

Overcome natural fear and timidity. Open and close spiritual conversations. Be concise, considerate, and Christ Centered. Use helpful and significant examples. Share with children and grandchildren. Disciple those who pray to receive Jesus

**REGISTER by Monday, June 1** by emailing: [ron.upbuilding@gmail.com](mailto:ron.upbuilding@gmail.com) or by calling Ron at 239-850-8324. You can register for others as well.

## ROGER WILLIAMS—NEW CHPC PROPERTY MANAGER

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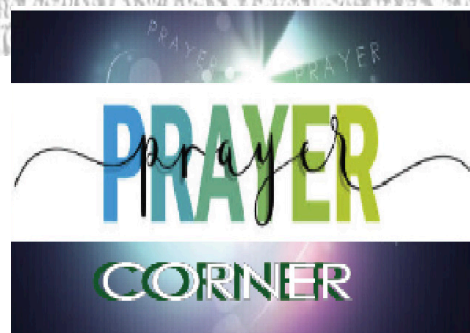
entered preschool, I started volunteering with Greg Fischer who was Facilities Director at that time. I continued volunteering on a weekly basis as I worked my full-time job of *Stay-At-Home Super Dad* until June of 2025. During the years with Greg and more recently also with Michael Gaines, I have learned a lot about the facility and property. (I know all the best hiding places for hide-n-seek.) I have been married to my high school sweetheart, Jenn, for 27 years. We have three boys, who are now pretty tall adults: Zach, Kyle (who is here running sound every Sunday), and Evan. I enjoy running and biking regularly year-round. I have been

teaching group exercise classes at the Gamble-Nippert YMCA for the last 14 years.

I am excited to be able to use my accumulated knowledge of the property in a new way to serve the community and the CPHC family that has blessed our family in so many ways over the years.



JENN & ROGER WILLIAMS



BY CHRISTY ROEDIGER, ELDER

*A woman, when she is in labor, has pain because her time [to give birth] has come; but when she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of her joy that a child has come into the world.*

—John 16:21, Amplified Translation

One of my colleagues just had a baby—a boy, I know you wondered, and over 8 pounds. He is well and his mother, father, and big sister rejoice at his healthy arrival. Their community gives thanks with them. In this beautiful spring month, we celebrate mothers and later, Veterans who have sacrificed to protect our country. I wonder what relationship this little guy will build with my friend as time goes by. I wonder if he will serve or what his path will be. So much is blooming this season, and I wonder how your heart is open to what is blooming in your own life.

Almighty God, please bloom within each of us. Grant us hearts to receive and celebrate the new things that you are doing and the courage when we are called to hard places that lead us to sacrifice. You are always doing something new, and we ask you to open our eyes and hearts to where you are taking us. Please, Father God, be glorified in us and in our church in Jesus. AMEN

# jesus: the original influencer

THE GOSPEL OF MARK



BY PASTOR DREW SMITH

In the study of the Book of Mark, God brings big changes through Jesus' ministry. Let's explore how we need to prepare for the transformation he brings.

### May 3 - Mark 4:1-34 - God's Garden Secrets

Jesus brings growth in you and me by teaching us the way God created us to live and flourish. When we live it and share our lives, stories and the Gospel with others, others are naturally drawn to a relationship with Christ.

### May 10 - Mark 4:35-5:43 - Christ Calms Chaos

Jesus shows the power of God over all forms of evil. Jesus demonstrates God's power by taming the forces of disease, storms, and death. Whatever seems to have a hold on you, bring it to Jesus.

### May 17 - Mark 6 - Sharing the Power - FUNDAY

Amazingly, Jesus wants to share God's power with us. He wants to teach us, form us, and empower us so that we experience victory over the evils in this world. He invites us to receive the power and peace that only he can give.

### May 24 - Mark 7 - Inside Out

Jesus does not just clean us up on the surface. Jesus dives deep into the soul, changing not just our actions but our very desires.

### May 31 - Mark 8:1-26 - Seeing Clearly

Jesus gives us a lens through which to see our lives as God sees them— Divine perspective.



THANKS TO ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE EASTER FLORAL DISPLAY AND TO DALE KABBES WHO ARRANGED IT.

## SAT., MAY 30, 11 AM— College Hill Community Party and Parade Patrick's Park on Hamilton Ave.

Cedar Ave → Cary Ave → Marlowe Ave → Patrick's Park



COLLEGE HILL COMMUNITY URBAN REDEVELOPMENT CORP. HOSTS "THE AVENUE EXPERIENCE!" STARTING WITH A PARADE AROUND THE BLOCK AND ENDING WITH A FUN PARTY IN THE PARK. DON'T MISS IT!

**MAY 17, 2026**  
*Graduation Sunday*  
OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE 10:30AM  
COLLEGE HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GREAT PLANTS  
at GREAT PRICES!

Plants are lovingly grown for sale. The income from the sale is re-invested in the community and enriches the College Hill area.

See the related story about the "Resurrection of A Greenhouse" on page 4.

COLLEGE HILL GARDENERS ...dig this!  
**Plant sale**  
SATURDAY, MAY 2ND | 9-2  
BRINK BREWING PATIO  
5905 HAMILTON AVE  
ANNUALS - PERENNIALS  
HERBS - VEG - HOUSE PLANTS  
COLLEGE HILL GARDENERS