

# Cross and ~~+~~ COMMENTS

701 Sand Creek Rd, Colonie, NY 12205-2497 — Bruce K. Cornwell, Pastor — Telephone (518)869-5589 — [www.communityreformedchurch.com](http://www.communityreformedchurch.com)



## ADVOCACY AND GLOBAL MISSION SOCIAL JUSTICE

February 2023

### What Does Social Justice Mean?

Justice is the concept of fairness. Social justice is fairness as it manifests in society. That includes fairness in healthcare, employment, housing, and more. In a socially-just society, human rights are respected and discrimination is not allowed to flourish.

### WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE - FEBRUARY 20

<https://nationaltoday.com/world-day-of-social-justice>

World Day of Social Justice is observed annually on February 20. Internationally, the world is plagued with unfortunate issues that prohibit millions of individuals from living a fair life. Many of the world's population, through no fault of their own, are deprived of basic facilities, such as homes, jobs, healthcare, education, nutrition, and more.

On World Day of Social Justice, we are invited to raise awareness of the need for better social justice both within nations and between nations. Promoting human rights, removing artificial social barriers based on race, gender, or religion, and standing up for the rights of migrants, the disabled, and the elderly are among the issues that are addressed.

### WHAT CAN WE DO?

RISSE ([www.risse-albany.org](http://www.risse-albany.org))


CRCC is giving \$500 to RISSE – Refugee and Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus to support their work in breaking down barriers and providing services to refugees and immigrants.

Located in the Pine Hills neighborhood of Albany, NY, RISSE is a family-based center that supports newcomers in building sustainable lives in the United States. Their Mission is to equip refugees and recent immigrants to build sustainable, independent lives by offering language and literacy instruction, as well as support with life skills and integration into U.S. culture and community.

**RISSE is located in Emmaus United Methodist Church at  
715 Morris Street, Albany, NY 12208**

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February 2023		Upcoming Events	
In this Issue:		<b>Women's Bible Study</b>	<b>Feb. 4<sup>th</sup></b>
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**"You are dust, and to dust you will return"**

Ash Wednesday Worship  
February 22  
7 PM

(Social Justice—Continued from page 1)

HERE ARE SOME OTHER ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING SERVICES TO REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS WHERE WE CAN DONATE MONEY OR VOLUNTEER TIME AND TALENTS:



**USCRI** U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants  
99 Pine St Ste 101, Albany, NY 12207  
(518) 459-1790

For inquiries about volunteering at USCRI Albany, email us at: [info@uscricr.org](mailto:info@uscricr.org). Please, include an area of interest from the list below:

- Mentorship
- Legal
- Transportation
- Teaching
- Administration
- Youth
- Technical needs and/or
- Home set-up



#### **LEGAL PROJECT**

24 Aviation Rd Suite 101 Albany, NY 12205 US  
Tel: (518) 435-1770  
Fax: (518) 435-1773  
Email: [info@legalproject.org](mailto:info@legalproject.org)

“The Legal Project is proud to celebrate 25 years of helping the people of the Capital Region get vital civil legal services. We provide civil legal services and supports for the most vulnerable people in our community, including the working poor, women, immigrants and the LGBTQ community. We have grown steadily since our founding in 1995, and we currently have over 300 pro bono attorneys and staff ready to assist you in 11 counties across New York state.”

## February Mission of the Month

February’s Mission of the Month is  
**Family Promise of the  
Capital Region.**

They are a faith-based, international organization whose mission is, “affirming the humanity and dignity of homeless families and engaging our community in helping them achieve sustainable independence.”

Thirteen churches in the capital region provide temporary sleeping quarters. They rely heavily on volunteers with only a few paid staff. To support this mission, you may use your yellow Mission of the Month envelope. Please be sure to write “February Mission of the Month” on your check memo line. For more information, you can visit their website:

<https://www.familypromisecr.org/>

## Creation Care Collaboration

There are so many ways we can care for God’s creation. For instance, where you purchase items, how you recycle, how you save resources, gardening, educating yourself, etc.

### **What’s your favorite way?**

Have you read any books or articles that you continue to think about or act upon? Let’s share our experiences and ideas so we can learn from each other.

Go to <https://padlet.com/CRCCstewardship/InAction>

to see what everyone’s doing and add your thoughts, photos, or links! (This link goes to [padlet.com](https://padlet.com), which is a free and safe platform. No account needed and only those with this link can access it.)

# History of Book Group

By Karen Reynolds

Community Reformed Church Book Group held its first meeting on May 25, 2004, at the home of Nancy Case. It was organized by Nancy Case, Debbie Lilkas (Grabau) and Karen Reynolds.

Debbie had read the book After Ann written by Roxanne Henke and wanted to share it, so we made that our first Book Group read. The Group took off from there and is still going strong in 2022. We started with a great group of people who enjoy reading and opening their homes to host the group. Others have come and gone over the years for one reason or another, but we still have a good core group that keeps us going strong. We share wonderful friendships, great discussions and lots of laughs. Also, thanks to Ana Crosbourne, we are able to zoom the meetings for those who can't make it out or if weather or a pandemic prevents us from meeting in person.

We open our meetings with the lighting of the Christ Candle and a prayer. We also take a free-will offering. At the end of the year, we decide how we want to use this money in service to God. Many different needs have benefited in the past such as Gift of Hope, The Heifer Project, JaJa's girls, Northeast Parent and Child, Schoharie library flood relief, and puzzle pieces toward the roof loans, to mention a few.

We read more recent best sellers or highly recommended novels, memoirs, history, and even economics, as well as some all-time classics such as Ethan Frome, The Tale of Two Cities, and To Kill a Mockingbird, to mention a few. Everyone has an opportunity to contribute suggestions of future reads, and the group agrees before the book is added to the calendar.

The group has taken a few field trips to hear authors speak (Jodi Picoult – The Pact, My Sister's Keeper and others, Sara Gruen- Water for Elephants, Jamie Ford – The Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet), toured Edith Warton's home, held movie nights at LouAnn's home, and went to the theater to see movies of some of the books we have read (The Help and most recently Where the Crawdads Sing.) We all agree, read the book first before you see the movie.



Some favorite and repeat authors are Jodi Picoult, Kristen Hannah, Amor Towles, Anne Patchett, Mitch Albom, Sue Monk Kidd, Lisa Genova, JoJo Moyes, William Kent Kruger and Chris Bohjalian

February's Book Group meeting is **Tuesday, February 28th**. We will be discussing the first half of The Great Alone by Kristen Hannah. The remainder of the book will be read in March. All are always welcome to attend!



This vital ministry focuses on the urgent prayer concerns of our church family and community. Prayer requests will be sent to you via E-mail from either Sandy Cornwell or Karen Latta.

You will receive the request directly and will not have to pass the request on to others. Prayer updates will be sent when possible.

It is our hope that we will be able to reach even more people who will actively pray for one another.

If you are interested in participating in the E-chain ministry,

please leave your contact information with Lori in the office ([crcclori@gmail.com](mailto:crcclori@gmail.com)).

# STREET SOLDIERS

By Nancy Bacon

*CRCC has chosen Street Soldiers to be one of the beneficiaries of the church's Angel Tree for the past few years. Nancy Bacon began volunteering with Street Soldiers five years ago, helping provide food and necessities at their Friday Night dinners in a park in Albany. I asked her why she was drawn to this organization, "I like that Street Soldiers is a grassroots organization. This means volunteers give from their heart, no receipts for taxes given as we are not a 501c3. No red tape, no sign ups. Friends in need do not have to give their names. It comes together organically. And there is always enough." Just recently, she began volunteering in their outreach van. I asked her to share her experiences.*

My first night on the Outreach van was Friday December 23 - a rain and icy night. It was just me and one employee that drove the van. Calls were coming in from unhoused people that were unable to get into code blue shelters. The van starts at the Albany Public Library first. People from HATAS (Homeless and Travelers Aid Society) are usually there to help get people shelter as well as assist with social services paperwork to secure assistance. The library had closed at 6:00 and HATAS had left early. Remaining at the library, were basically unhoused individuals who had waited too long to get assistance. The driver took a name and info and called the HATAS hotline for someone. He had been kicked out of all local shelters. The person from HATAS was able to secure a spot in Safehaven, even though he had been kicked out, but he refused.

People seemed to just appear at the van. They lined up for hot meals, cocoa and sandwiches, and snacks. All asked for gloves, hats, blankets or sleeping bags. I handed out those items that I received from church. There were not enough gloves, so we gave extra socks.

We then went down by the river to see a woman that I know through Street Soldiers that lives in her car. She wouldn't take hot food because she had gotten sick from a dinner once before. But she did take yogurts and soft snacks due to her dental issues. I gave her a new hoodie and a yoga mat from our angel tree. She is still so grateful for both.

We met up with a woman who has a safe and warm place that she stays. I'd met her through Street Soldiers. She's vegan, and I was able to give her salads and fresh fruit that was donated from the airport.

We checked on a person that is staying in an apartment with a friend (for now). She has serious medical issues; the van checks on her daily and brings her food.

Back to the library we went (a few people called after we had left the first time). We gave them the last of the blankets, hats and hot meals. When we pulled up, the police were there. I saw a young man in the bus shelter. He was standing, but folded in half (it's called a fentanyl hang). We stayed long enough to see an ambulance come and take him.

One last ride through Albany. We checked in the concourse for anyone in need, then drove back to Menands. I saw many Street Soldiers friends and met new ones. The driver knew most.

I learned how much the outreach really does. They have contacts for emergency shelter. There is intake including names and supplies given. They offer harm reduction bags (needles and items for safe, clean IV drug users), as well as Narcan.

At the end of the shift, the driver enters all information into a data base, including info on SafePoint harm reduction bags.

Everyone that came to the window for assistance readily gave their names. There is a very comforting trust between people in need and outreach workers.

I returned to the van on Christmas Eve. Renee (Street Soldiers founder) and I went out for 4 hours. We handed out the yoga mats, sleeping bags, sweats, and a bag of hats and scarves. We brought one homeless friend to the Skinny Pancake for whatever she wanted. The owner came over and talked with us. They know our friend well, and offer \$4 bottomless coffee. We also bought her a \$50 gift card so she could go in for food and coffee whenever she wants.

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Street Soldiers—Continued from page 4)

There is a husband, wife and adult son that hold signs that we gave gifts and tarps to – the wife cried so much.

We visited a woman that sleeps in a doorway. We gave her a tarp and a gift bag of healthy snacks.

I have continued to volunteer in the Outreach Van. They have a huge need for gently used winter coats and gloves. This is something I can see myself being a routine volunteer for. The staff is wonderful! It is a great, but emotional experience.

## Colonie Community Day Care News

Things may finally be settling down for awhile at the Day Care. It's been a whirlwind of events since Thanksgiving. Our Christmas show was a huge success! We allowed the children's families to all attend for the first time in two years. It was standing room only for sure.

The kids were wonderful - they sang so loud, and, of course, were adorable! We had Santa back this year to give the children gifts and provide picture opportunities. It felt like old times.

We celebrated our classroom Christmas parties with a pajama day and a surprise visit from the Grinch. It was hysterical! A couple of the children were not very thrilled, but the rest chased him when he was "stealing" our toys. It was fun for all.

Our wreath fundraiser was a wonderful success. Thank you to all who participated. We purchased some new toys for the classrooms with the fundraising money - the Grinch tried to take them!

We are starting our Krause's candy fundraiser soon. Watch for the flyers!

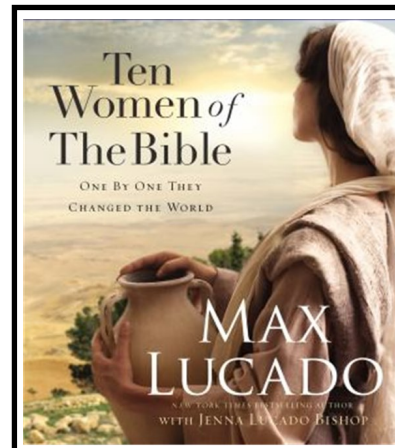


## Building and Grounds Update

This month, we should be done with the plans for the kitchen and bathrooms renovations and will have received price quotes for the entire project. The daycare has given us their needs and wishes which will facilitate the daycare lunch program in a more sustainable fashion. We are well on our way towards making our bathrooms ADA compliant with upgraded fixtures, such as new partitions, ventilation fans, and wider doors. We will be changing the heating and cooling in the kitchen and narthex, so as to make the room between the bathrooms, where the heat source is currently located, into a utility room with a slop sink, washer, dryer, and janitor closet. We will soon be developing a timeline for start and expected completion.

Routine maintenance is on-going throughout our campus. I recently leveled some of the concrete sidewalk pieces in an effort to alleviate the trip hazards around the sanctuary entrance. I continually clear brush and clean the day light drains into the ditch along Watervliet-Shaker Road, so as to prevent future water and sump-pump drainage problems. Replacement of the steel fire doors in the sanctuary and other places is still an open project, and may well get bundled into the kitchen and bathroom project.

**Kevin Ingalls** - Deacon of Grounds



Women's Bible Study will continue their study of Ten Women of the Bible with **The Samaritan Woman** on **Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>** at **9:30.**

Please contact **Ana Crosbourne** with any questions.

# We share the air.

Consider reducing the fragranced products you wear to school and work.

Please consider reducing your use of fragranced personal products such as:

*Laundry detergent*

*Perfumes and colognes*

*Lotions*

*Antiperspirants and deodorants*

*Hair spray*

*Body spray*

*Hand sanitizer*

*Antibacterial hand soap*

*Shampoos*

*Wipes*

*Dryer sheets*

*Essential oils extracted with solvents*

**Fragrances can trigger medical distress in others:**

- **asthma attacks**
- **allergic reactions**
- **migraines**
- **sore throats & coughing**
- **eye irritation**
- **new cases of asthma in adults.**

Fragrance chemicals can cause health problems similar to second-hand smoke.

Fragrance chemicals in personal care products can include phthalates, formaldehyde, volatile organic chemicals (VOCs) and other respiratory irritants. They can cause serious health problems to others in classrooms and offices.

***Thank you for making our indoor air quality healthier!***

For more information, see  
<http://fragrancesensitivityawareness.weebly.com/>

**Community Reformed  
Church of Colonie**

701 Sand Creek Rd  
Colonie, NY 12205-2497

Bruce K Cornwell, Pastor

Tel: (518) 869-5589

E-mail:

[crclori@gmail.com](mailto:crclori@gmail.com)

Website:

[www.communityreformedchurch.com](http://www.communityreformedchurch.com)

Twitter:

@ColonieReformed

Facebook:

[facebook.com/ColonieReformed](https://facebook.com/ColonieReformed)

**Worship Hours**

We invite you to join us for worship and fellowship every Sunday at 10 AM in person and via Zoom.

Outdoor Services are also available in the Summer every Sunday at 9 AM

Holiday and Special Services will be announced on our website and this newsletter

**Colonie Community  
Day Care Center**

701 Sand Creek Rd  
Colonie, NY 12205-2497

Carol Grasso, Director

Tel: (518) 869-0131

E-mail:

[cgrasso6@yahoo.com](mailto:cgrasso6@yahoo.com)



**Ash Wednesday Worship  
February 22  
7 PM**

***"You are dust, and to  
dust you will return"***

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season. Lent is the 40 days (excluding Sundays) that come before the crucifixion of our Lord. It is a time of penance, reflection, self-examination and spiritual redirection - a time of darkness ending with the rising of the Son. The introspection of Lent allows us to celebrate the full glory of Easter morning.

For those planning on worshipping on Zoom and wishing to receive Ash Wednesday worship materials, please notify the church office [crclori@gmail.com](mailto:crclori@gmail.com) by **February 15**.



***Church Choir is BACK!***

Rehearsals: Sundays at 9AM AND 11AM

See Director Ben April for more info.



**Thought for Today**

For decades, our church sign has provided our community with moments of inspiration, hope, reflection, and humor. About 15 years ago, we began the "Thought for Today" ministry while our church sign was being rebuilt. Since then, this daily email communication has proved to be a vital link within our congregation. These "Thoughts for Today" offer words of encouragement as we journey through our hectic days, as well as reminders of upcoming church services and events.

If you are interested in receiving these daily thoughts, contact Sandy Cornwell at [crccsandy@gmail.com](mailto:crccsandy@gmail.com). The daily quote can also be found on our church's Twitter page @ColonieReformed.

**Winter Weather  
Cancellations**

**If wintry weather mandates the cancellation of church services, a notice will be posted on the School/Business Closings on local television stations and local internet news sites, as well as [communityreformedchurch.com](http://communityreformedchurch.com)**

Communications/Media Coordinator: **Sarah Huiest**

Layout Designer: **Bob Becker**

Articles are due by the 15th of the month and can be submitted to [crccsarah@gmail.com](mailto:crccsarah@gmail.com) or given to Sarah Huiest.