

# So, What Now... What's Next?

**Rev. Bob Hoffman**

About a month ago, the leadership of the congregation (the consistory and staff members) went away for a time of retreat together. We shared worship together. We spent some time reflecting on the near past experiences we've had. We talked about the challenges and encounters we've faced and where we discovered God showing up. We are just beginning to wonder about what happens now...about what is next for us all who are part of CRCC.

We discovered that this is very new territory for us all. Not many of the current consistory or staff (and probably not many from the congregation) have gone through a time of pastoral transition, so we want to be deliberate in our next steps. We also want to be transparent, so we will continue to communicate with each of you what is currently happening and what is being planned.

At the November consistory meeting, we agreed to petition the Albany Classis to extend our contract with Pastor Hoffman for 2024. Pastor Hoffman will walk with us through this time of pastoral transition which may even extend beyond 2024. That's the first part of what is happening. Another part of what is happening is that our ministries will continue in the way they have been developing and unfolding over the years.

Part of what is being planned will include congregational conversations where we will identify our values, resources, needs, and goals. The consistory will need to appoint a team of individuals to process all the information gleaned from the congregational conversations into a "Church Profile" which will be shared far and wide. And then we appoint a Pastoral Search Committee who will begin to receive candidates for interview and eventually recommendation to the consistory and congregation.

As noted in the bulletin insert a few weeks ago, this is not a quick process. It takes time and effort and a lot of energy by all. It requires patience and perseverance along with support and understanding. So, what can we be doing while we wait to get started? Rev. Cornwell left us with the Jeremiah 29:7-14 passage as the answer. First: PRAY....Pray for

*(Continued on page 6)*

# Cross and COMMENTARIES

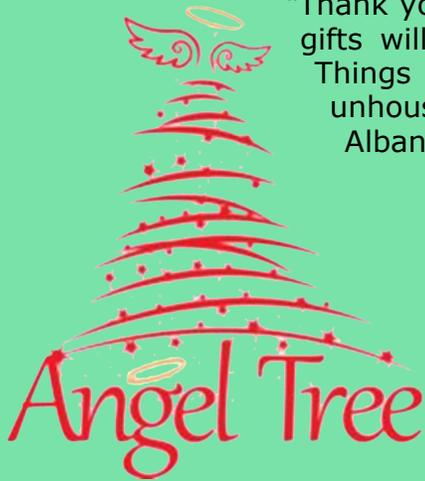
701 Sand Creek Rd, Colonie, NY 12205-2497 — Bob Hoffman, Pastor — Telephone (518)869-5589 — www.communityreformedchurch.com



January 2024		Upcoming Events	
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# Angel Tree Thank You

"Thank you!" to everyone who made purchases for the 2023 Angel Tree! Your gifts will bless the vulnerable families in crisis who utilize the services of Things of My Very Own, as well as the neighbors finding themselves unhoused in the Albany area who are partnering with Street Soldiers Albany. Your generosity goes so far in our community.



# Youth Group Thank You

A HUGE, "Thank You!!" to everyone who contributed to the Youth Group's collection of toiletries and socks. They assembled **100** personal care kits for the local homeless population for Grassroot Givers Month of Simple Giving.





# January Mission of the Month

## The Community Hospice

### Serving seriously ill people and their families throughout the Capital Region

Wherever you or your loved one may be - in your own home, in a local nursing home, or in the hospital, Community Hospice can help. This special kind of care focuses on allowing patients to live with dignity, where and how they want to live, with the best quality of life possible. They provide support and guidance for months, and not just a few days or weeks.

Many members of our church family have utilized Hospice services including our Rev. Cornwell. Knowing their loved one is fully supported by a medical team brings these families comfort during the most difficult of days and beyond.

Donations to The Community Hospice can be given via your yellow Mission of the Month Envelope, via PayPal, or directly on their web site. If you are paying by check or PayPal, please note "January Mission of the Month" and/or "Community Hospice" on your donation. For more information please visit their website: [www.communityhospice.org](http://www.communityhospice.org).

## Making connections within our church family

The Congregational Care Committee at CRCC works to extend caring messages to members of the church family by way of greeting cards, phone calls, messages, and visits. We invite everyone to contact us if you have a need for prayer, would like to receive a friendly phone call, email note, written note, visit, or need assistance with transportation to scheduled appointments.

### Members of the committee

Linda Murphy – [lindamurph98@aol.com](mailto:lindamurph98@aol.com)

Doris Neese [dorneese@gmail.com](mailto:dorneese@gmail.com)

Bonnie DiSanto-Hotaling [dhdrbon@aol.com](mailto:dhdrbon@aol.com)

Maggie George [mlandis1231@aol.com](mailto:mlandis1231@aol.com)

Pam Fitzpatrick [pamelastryker@hotmail.com](mailto:pamelastryker@hotmail.com)

# Shawn Bredice's Memorial Award

## Thank You!



Thank you for the generous support given to Shawn Bredice's Memorial Award! This year, we were able to give TWO \$500 awards to students graduating from the Colonie High School Life Skills program. In addition to that, the fund also provided \$500 as seed money to initiate a new

program at Lisha Kill Middle School by funding the purchase of a coffee cart for the grade 5-6 life skills class taught by Sara Norton. As these young baristas hone various skill sets, the impact of this initiative goes beyond the coffee cart. Norton is not only fostering the traits of a good employee, but also instilling values that seamlessly translate into positive classroom etiquette. The students are learning the

importance of organization, attention to detail, and effective communication. These traits contribute not only to their success in running the coffee cart but also to their overall development as responsible and respectful individuals.

As many of you know, we are passionate about workforce development for youth with developmental and intellectual disabilities. We are honored to be able to support programs and persons who benefit from innovative initiatives, and we are so grateful for our church family who supports us in that endeavor!



**We are truly blessed!**

**Sue and Barry Bredice**

## Family Ministries NEEDS YOUR HELP!!

Our Winter Family Ministries Event will be FAMILY FEUD! And we need YOU to help us out with the answers! Below are 10 questions. Submit one answer for each question to Sarah at [crccsarah@gmail.com](mailto:crccsarah@gmail.com) so we can have great poll results to pull from!

Questions? Contact Sarah Huiest.

- 1) Give me a woman's name from the Bible that is popular today.
- 2) Which commandment is the average person most likely to break?
- 3) If the plagues of Egypt were modified for modern times, what would be the most devastating thing God could send?
- 4) Name an animal that would take up the most room on Noah's Ark.
- 5) Name a word that is used more than any other in the Bible.
- 6) Name a biblical hero you'd most like to have as a friend.
- 7) Name an animal that is mentioned several times in the Bible.
- 8) If you had to create a habitable world in six days, what is the first thing you'd create?
- 9) Name a gift the Three Wise Men brought to Baby Jesus.
- 10) Name a book from the Bible that is longer than most other books.

# Another way of giving IRA distributions

By Lou Ann Connelly

For the last several years, I have chosen a different way to give funds to Community Reformed. It's called an IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution.

At my age, I am required to take an annual minimum distribution from my IRA account. Failing to do so would result in a large penalty. But instead of receiving the money, paying taxes on it, and then donating it to the church, I have designated that a portion of that payment is to go directly to CRCC. Since it doesn't pass through my hands, that portion is free from income tax.

Donating to church in this way means more than avoiding some income tax. It automatically ensures that my pledge is fulfilled even if we are traveling or otherwise unable to get to church. Furthermore, the payment reoccurs every year automatically. Once I set it up, the only time I need to intervene is if I wish to change the amount of my contribution or the time of year it occurs.

According to an article in US News (Emily Brandon, December 20, 2022)

*A qualified charitable distribution is an IRA withdrawal that is paid directly from your IRA to a qualifying charity. While income tax is normally due on each traditional IRA distribution, the account owner does not need to pay taxes on the amount transferred to charity.*

You don't have to designate your entire distribution as a charitable donation. In my case, a portion of my distribution goes to church, and the rest is sent to me. On the other hand, some people designate several charitable organizations. It still counts as your minimum distribution, so you don't face the 50% penalty.

There is a cap on the amount you can give to any one charitable organization, but it's very high. The person or entity that is managing your IRA has all the information.

If you decide to use this way to fulfill your offering, or even a portion of it, it's important to notify the church office. The check that your IRA sends to church may not identify you by name as the source.

I set up my IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution through my IRA manager. It entailed a bit of paperwork but was surprisingly very quick and easy. Designating an IRA distribution is a win-win for me and for the church I love so much.

## Epiphany Worship

**January 6, is Epiphany. Epiphany is a Greek word which means "to make known" or "to reveal." It is that AHA moment of discovery. - like the Magi had when they came to where Jesus was and bowed down in worship of him.**

**We look forward to remembering and celebrating Epiphany on Sunday, January 7, at 10AM. We also look forward to something special during the worship service which will perhaps guide and enlighten us in the coming year. Join us in worship to find out what that might be.**

*(What's Next? —Continued from page 1)*

where we are currently and what we are still called to do. Second: TRUST...Trust the wisdom and plan God has for us. And third: BELIEVE... Believe in the future God is going to reveal to us and bring to us.

To God our Lord and Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

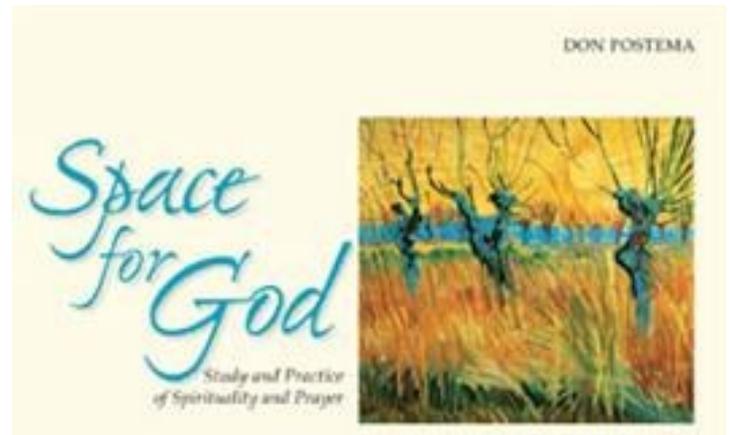
## Shirley's Shawls



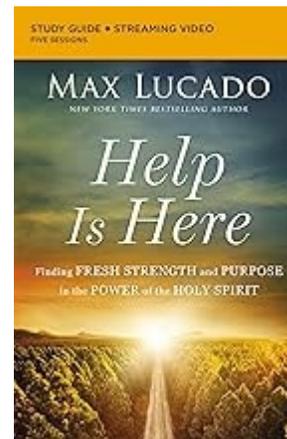
Our prayer shawl group, "Shirley's Shawls," knitted 35 hats for the Angel Tree recipients. 29 children's hats were given to Things of My Very Own, and 6 adult hats given to Street Soldiers.

# Bible Studies

The Men's Group is continuing their study Space for God by Don Postema



The group meets the second Wednesday of every month at the church from 6-7:30. Their next meeting is **January 10<sup>th</sup>**. For more information, please contact Mike York, Mark Kaercher, or BJ Todd.



The Women's Bible Study meets the second Saturday of every month at 9:30, in the gathering room. Their current study is Help is Here by Max Lucado. Their next meeting is **January 13<sup>th</sup>**. For more information, please contact Ana Crosbourne.

Thanks to my church family for all the prayers, cards, telephone calls, and visits over the past few years. Our God is so good. I know this is an answer to all the prayers said for me. For the first time in a very, very long time I can say that I feel great. Yes, I still have some physical problems like using the walker, but I am not sick.

**Thanks again for caring so much for me.**

**~Gladys Chamberlain**

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## 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  
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Carol Grasso, Director

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E-mail:  
[cgrasso6@yahoo.com](mailto:cgrasso6@yahoo.com)

## Winter Weather Advisory!

If winter weather becomes a hinderance to us worshipping safely on Sunday morning, Zoom **ONLY** will be announced approximately 1 hour before worship begins. The Worship Team for the day will make the decision. Building closure will be announced on the church's website ([communityreformedchurch.com](http://communityreformedchurch.com)), Facebook, Instagram, X account, and via email. Even if the decision is made to remain open, PLEASE exercise appropriate caution when deciding whether or not to commute. Keep in mind that you need to get TO and FROM the church safely and that weather where you live may be different than the church's location. Your safety is of utmost importance and with Zoom, you can still access and participate in worship.

We love you but not your germs.



If you are feeling a little under the weather, please remain home and get the rest you need.

Some of our church family are at high risk of infection so what may not seem too bad for you could be dangerous to them.

**So, please join us on Zoom.**

God will understand  
and we will thank you.

## Book Group News

The Book Group will meet on January 23rd, from 6-8PM.

Everyone is encouraged to bring a book recommendation for the coming months! All are welcome.

Questions?  
Contact **Karen Reynolds**.

## Break Bread, Share Bread



For the month of January, we will be collecting Spaghetti O's and Canned Ravioli! Jams, Jellies and Juices (all flavors) are a constant need, as well. Please feel free to donate these at any time throughout the year. Donations to the Help Center Food Pantry can be left on the back table in the sanctuary.



**Questions? Contact Tina Bottini.**

Communications/Media Coordinator: **Sarah Huiest**

Layout Designer: **Bob Becker**

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