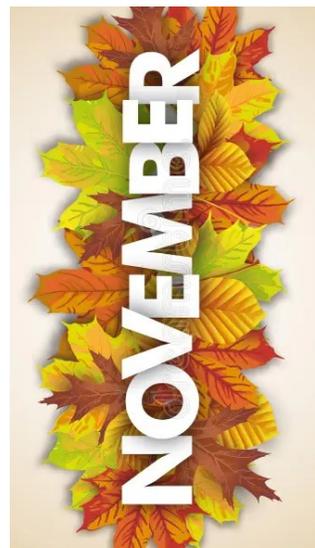


# Cross and **Comments**



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

*Well done, good and faithful servant*

November 2023



On October 18th, 2023, Rev. Bruce K. Cornwell left us here on earth to join God in the Glory of Heaven. A Celebration of Life was held on Saturday, October 28th, at CRCC. Interim Pastor (and close friend of Bruce) Bob Hoffman led the service that Bruce, himself, had a large hand in

preparing. Many traveled to be part of this special day and honor a life well-lived. Bruce's legacy of creativity, compassion, faith, and service lives on in all we do within the walls of CRCC and out in the world.

## Slow Me Down, Lord

"Slow me down, Lord!

Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind. Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time. Give me, amidst the confusion of my day, the calmness of the everlasting hills. Break the tensions of my nerves with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory.

Help me to know the magical restoring power of sleep. Teach me the art of taking minute vacations of slowing down to look at a flower; to chat with an old friend or make a new one; to

pat a stray dog; to watch a spider build a web; to smile at a child; or to read a few lines from a good book.

Remind me each day that the race is not always to the swift; that there is more to life than increasing its speed. Let me look upward into the branches of the towering oak and know that it grew great and strong because it grew slowly and well.

Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values that I may grow toward the stars of my greater destiny." ~Orin L. Crain

### November 2023

In this Issue:

<b>Stewardship Opportunities</b>	2
<b>Mission of the Month</b>	5
<b>Angel Tree</b>	6

### Upcoming Events

<b>All Saints' Day</b>	<b>November 5</b>
<b>Youth Group</b>	<b>November 19</b>
<b>Thanksgiving Worship</b>	<b>November 19</b>
<b>Book Group</b>	<b>October 28</b>

# CRCC Global Mission is supporting the fight against AIDS

## *What is World AIDS Day?*

World AIDS Day is observed on **December 1** each year. It is a day of solidarity for people around the world who are affected by HIV. This is a day for voices to unite by sharing experiences, remembering those lost, and standing together in the fight against HIV. While great strides have been made over the four decades since the first known reported cases of AIDS, this disease remains a public health challenge. World AIDS Day is an opportunity for every community and each individual to honor the more than 32 million people who have died worldwide from AIDS-related illness. For more information on World AIDS Day, visit [UNAIDS World AIDS day](#).

### ELTON JOHN AIDS FOUNDATION

The Elton John AIDS Foundation was established in 1992 and is one of the leading independent AIDS organizations in the world. Our mission is simple: to be a powerful force in ending the AIDS epidemic. We believe AIDS can be beaten and we're committed to making it happen. That means everyone at risk of HIV – no matter who they are or where they are – must get compassionate support and care that allows them to stay healthy and safe, and live with dignity.

## Stewardship Committee

As winter approaches, we tend to find ourselves with more spare time and, perhaps, even looking for companionship or a new hobby. Practically every week, there is an opportunity for you to join with others from church to form friendships and feel a great sense of purpose. The Stewardship Committee encourages everyone to read the weekly bulletins and find your place.

Do you enjoy helping children? Ask Sarah Huiest about **Family Ministries**, **Children's Message**, the **Nursery**, or **Sunday School**.

Do you like to bake? Linda Murphy can help you host **Coffee Hour**.

Are you more of a behind-the-scenes helper? There are several committees that would love to have you! Ask anyone on Consistory, Pastor Bob Hoffman, or Lori Cote about how you can be involved.

Do you enjoy taking care of your home? There's always something that needs doing around our **property** - just ask Kevin Ingalls.

How about reading? Join the **Book Group** by speaking with LouAnn Connelly or Karen Reynolds.

Do you sew, crochet or knit, or wish you knew how? The ladies in **Shirley's Shawls** and the **Quilt Group** would surely welcome you.

Are you looking to explore your faith outside of Sunday worship? Ask Mark Kaercher, Mike York or BJ Todd about **Men's Group** or Ana Crosbourne about **Women's Bible Study**.

Surely, there is a space for you!



# Grassroot Givers

*Connecting Communities. Giving with Dignity. Empowering Lives.*

CRCC **Youth Group** will be meeting on **Sunday, November 19th**, after worship to assemble toiletry kits for Grassroot Givers' Month (formerly Day) of Simple Giving. These kits will be distributed to the local homeless population. **Thank you** to everyone who has donated money, toiletries, and socks, so far. We still need 5 more packages of socks to reach our goal of 100 kits. To ensure uniformity in our donation, we ask that purchases are made through our Amazon link only [https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3D389M1NYJBYD?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3D389M1NYJBYD?ref_=wl_share). All young people in grades 6-12 are invited to attend this activity. Questions? Contact Sarah Huiest or Deb Desnoyers.

Our first **Family Ministries** event was based on Psalm 17:8 "Keep me as the apple of your eye, hide me in the shadow of your wings." We read the story of Jesus and the children in Matthew 19:13-15, and discovered how precious children are to Jesus. We are all truly the apple of God's eye. We did a photo craft project, played games, and did science experiments.

At our next event in November, we will be making mini nativities for loved ones and strangers in care facilities with limited decorative space. For more information about Family Ministry Events, check your Sunday

bulletin or contact Sarah Huiest.





## OUR CHRISTMAS STORY

Many parents with adult children struggle with the Christmas dilemma: what do we give the kids for Christmas? How can we give our children, who have just about everything they already need, a meaningful gift?

About ten or so years ago, I was having a conversation with Noreen Fargione, who was still working for the RCA at the time, and she was inviting me to participate in the RCA's Gift of Hope ministry. Gift of Hope provides the opportunity to give different kinds of gifts. The general gifts are for basic necessities; animals; education and empowerment; and hope to families and children. Each gift represents empowerment, long-term impact, and the opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus reaching out to those who need it most in our world. (You can find out more at: [www.rca.org/global-mission/gift-of-hope-catalogue-order/](http://www.rca.org/global-mission/gift-of-hope-catalogue-order/)).

Gift  
of Hope

Last year, we targeted the interests and involvement of our adult children and gave gifts that would match up with them. For our educators, we honored them by providing scholarships and books for young girls to receive an education. For our medical professionals, we honored them by supporting medical care offered by clinics. And for our children with passion for care of creation, we honored them by purchasing a water mobile barrel for use by those who have to walk miles to get water and a flock of chickens for a tribal family.

At Christmas, each got a card from Gift of Hope noting that the gift had been given in their honor, and then in the Spring, an email came with an update on how those gifts had been used to bless individuals, communities and the RCA's Global Mission. And the additional impact was the family conversation that followed when their cards were received and opened.

If you'd like more information about Gift of Hope, beyond the website, please speak with me.

Pastor Bob Hoffman

# November Mission of the Month

The November Mission of the Month is the **West Hill Refugee Welcome Center** located at 104 Ontario Street in Albany. They welcome individual refugees and families, as well as immigrant groups to the area. Their mission is to provide them "with support services, resources, and safe housing." Donations can be made via your yellow Mission of the Month offering envelopes with West Hill Refugee Welcome Center written on the memo line, via paypal with this designation, or directly through their web site. You can learn more about the West Hill Refugee Welcome Center at <https://www.rwcwesthill.com/>.

## REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

The typical Advent calendar is the December countdown to Christmas. With great anticipation, each of the 24 little doors is opened revealing maybe a drawing, saying, little toy, or even a chocolate. What if the calendar focus was on giving instead of receiving this Christmas season?

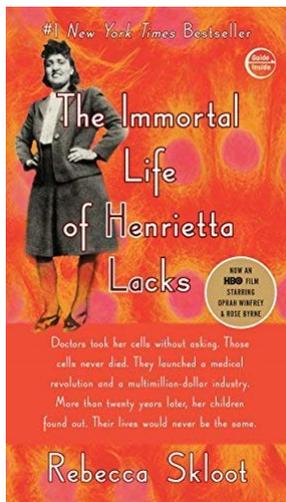
The idea of the Reverse Advent Calendar is simple. Start with a large sturdy cardboard box. Decorating the box could be a fun family activity – let your imaginations soar. Make it merry or keep it plain. It's all up to you. For each day December 1-24, add one item to your box. Again, use your imagination. You could focus on a specific item such as a different pasta for each day, or personal care items, or only canned soups, or just a variety of non-perishable foods.

This reverse calendar is your very own design and would be fun at home or at work. The best gifts are those we give away. Bring your calendar box or items to church after Christmas or let the church office know if you wish to have the box picked up. We will deliver all items to local agencies that strive to aid our neighbors in need. For those of our church family who live afar, consider donating your box to your local agencies. Near and far, we remain together in Christ.

To view a list of suggestions for items or themes, click on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/CRCCReverseAdvent> Questions? Contact Jessica Kaercher, Tina Bottini, or Sandy Cornwell.



**Don't Forget!!** Clocks go BACK 1 HR on Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup>!



## Book Group News

The Book Group is reading The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot for their meeting on November 28th, at the home of Cynthia Placek. There will be no December meeting, and everyone is encouraged to bring a book recommendation to the January meeting. Questions? Contact Karen Reynolds. All are Welcome.

### *Our annual Angel Tree collection has begun!*

This year we will, once again, be collecting gifts for **Things of My Very Own** and **Albany StreetSoldiers** in two ways – even our Angel Tree is hybrid!!

There are angel tags on the tree in the back of the sanctuary for your choosing or you can go to:

<https://www.target.com/gift-registry/gift/crcc-angel-tree-2023>



### **Things of My Very Own**

When a child is removed from an abusive or dangerous situation, they may only possess the clothing they are wearing at that moment. This agency, which serves the Capital District, provides them with clothes, bedding, supplies – and even toys. This caring agency gives them “things of my very own” and helps them transition through those initial difficult days.

### **StreetSoldiers**

StreetSoldiers, founded in Albany in 2016, is a collaboration of impassioned volunteers who’ve come together to provide comfort and necessities to the area’s homeless and less fortunate populations. This is done through community donation and reflects the best principles of grassroots action.

*Please return **unwrapped** gifts and items by **December 10.***

Questions? Contact Sandy Cornwell, Sarah Huiest, or Tina Bottini.

Thank you for your support.



In years past, we have celebrated Agape on Thanksgiving Eve and have collected a non-perishable food item for the food pantry. Since the Pandemic, we have not had that feast. This year, we have the ability to provide **fresh baked apple pies** for those who use the food pantry. Typically, they are provided with a complete meal, but there is no dessert. Yes, we are collecting food items, but this would be a nice way to complete their Thanksgiving meal. Each pie would be \$15.00; if you would like to participate in this mission, please place your donation of cash or check made out to CRCC with "Pies" in the memo in the collection box located on the back table in the sanctuary. Thank you for your support and making someone's tummy very happy.



**Sunday, November 19**  
**10AM**

"Now Thank we all our Lord with heart and hands and voices" – and pens!

Our **Thank You Chain** tradition continues! You will be receiving strips of white and gold paper in an upcoming mailing. Please prayerfully write down your thoughts of thanks and bring them with you to worship on November 19. For those of you worshipping at home, please drop off your paper strips or return them by mail to the church office prior to November 19.

These strips will be joined together and will encircle our Chrismon tree with our love and thanks.

From near and afar, we are joined in gratitude for our Lord's continual blessing.



**November 5th**

The celebration of All Saints' Day has a long history in the worship life of the Christian Church. It began as a commemoration of the martyrs who had died for the faith, and it has since become a day when we honor and remember those who, in death, have joined the Church Triumphant, as well as the faithful saints of the present who serve Jesus Christ. Martin Luther held that all Christians are simultaneously sinner and saint--a sinner because of our rebellious nature, but a saint because of salvation in Jesus.

On this special Sunday, our church family gives thanks to God for "all the saints from whom their labors rest." Through prayer, song, and the lighting of candles, we honor those whom we dearly love and will always remember. For those worshipping at home, please have a candle available to light during the time of remembrance and reflection.

**Community Reformed  
Church of Colonie**

701 Sand Creek Rd  
Colonie, NY 12205-2497

**Bruce Cornwell—Pastor**  
**Bob Hoffman**  
Interim Pastor

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**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)

# Break Bread Share Bread

For the month of November, we will be collecting **Hot Cereal** and **Corned Beef Hash**. We recently learned that Jams, Jellies and Juice (all flavors) are a constant need. Feel free to donate these throughout the year. Donations to the Help Center Food Pantry can be left on the back table in the sanctuary. Questions? Contact Tina Bottini.



Thank you: **Kyrra Howard, Jessica Kaercher, Linda Murphy, Debi Todd** and her granddaughter **Mia**, and **Debbie Helf** for all of your hard work, enthusiasm, sewing skills, and the generous gifts of your time and effort on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Together,

we constructed two dozen fleece hats that will provide warmth and protection from the elements for children, teens, and adults in need.



Your efforts contributed greatly to our goal of making 50 colorful and cozy hats. They will be distributed to Things of my Very Own and Street Soldiers Albany as part of the annual Angel Tree gift collection.



“Thank you,” also, to the ladies of the Quilt Group who added to their own endeavors during the months of September and October to make these hats.

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.