News Around the Congregation

COFFEE, TEA, AND PASTOR B FEBRUARY DATES: Feb. 12, from 10:30 a.m. to noon at Blackbird Baking Company (https://www.blackbirdbaking.com), 1391 Sloane Ave., Lakewood; and Feb. 21, 7 to 8:30 p.m., at Erie Island Coffee (http://erieislandcoffee.com), 19300 Detroit Rd. in Rocky River.

DECEMBER’S FROG WINNER! Congratulations to Christine Foote, the winner of the December gift certificate for Blackbird Bakery in Lakewood! Let the office know by phone, note or email (church@corucc.org) where the frog is in this issue to be entered into the next gift certificate drawing! Can you find this month’s frog? Let the church office know!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING FEB. 10 There will be a brief congregational meeting on a budget item following worship Feb. 10. Please plan on attending this important meeting. An all-church potluck will follow (see page 2 for info.)

Carol Peddie Celebrates 15 Years at Redeemer! During worship Jan. 6, the congregation honored Carol Peddie as she celebrated 15 years of service to Redeemer. Here are a few photos of the morning. Congratulations, Carol, and thank you for all the musical magic you bring us!
Happy Groundhog day! This is not such a major holiday in the southern part of the United States, but in Northeast Ohio, when every other day — seemingly — brings snow, we wait to hear what Puxatawny Phil is going to say.

And yet, as people of faith we recognize that Spring arrives in God’s time, not whether a groundhog sees his shadow or not.

While at times, February signifies the start of Lent, this year, since Easter is later, February is a time to perhaps consider what spiritual practice you might want to add for Lent. I have decided that I am giving up meat and adding a vegetarian diet. I recognize that it is better for my health — a temple to God — and also for our environment — God’s creation.

I also invite you to join me for a book/Bible study on the book *Saving Jesus From the Church: How to Stop Worshiping Christ and Start Following Jesus*. I hope you will consider being a part of this. There are details below. How will you prepare your heart for Lent? I will be hoping that God’s time brings an early Spring, and yet I know that I must Fully Rely On God.

*Blessings,*

*Pastor Brooke*

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**Join Pastor Brooke for Lenten Book Study**

Please consider joining Pastor Brooke during Lent to study the book *Saving Jesus From the Church: How to Stop Worshiping Christ and Start Following Jesus*. There are copies available through Amazon ([https://tinyurl.com/corlentbook](https://tinyurl.com/corlentbook)) and other book dealers as well as the entire book is online for free. Each week of Lent, there will be two identical opportunities to participate. The first meeting is Tuesday, March 5, 7:30-9 p.m. and subsequent Tuesday evenings through April 7. The other opportunity is a daytime study beginning Thursday, March 7, 10:30 a.m.-noon, and subsequent Thursday mornings through April 9. It is sure to spark lively discussion.

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**February In-Gathering**

The February collection is “Healthy Choices: Canned vegetables and fruit.”

Thank you in advance for your generous donations to both the collection and the offering.

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**Congregational Potluck Feb. 10**

On February 10, immediately following the Congregational meeting, we will gather in Fellowship Hall for a potluck to celebrate a successful stewardship campaign and annual meeting.

Please sign up in either the Gathering Room or Fellowship Hall so that we can plan food, or if you are unable to make workshop, email Bonnie Hawver with what you’d like to bring (bhwvr@aol.com). All are welcome!
February News in Faith Formation

Here’s what’s coming up during the month of February in children, youth and adult Faith Formation:

Candlemas, Sunday Feb. 3: Dedication of acolytes

DID YOU KNOW The official date of Feb. 2 places the celebration of Candlemas 40 days after Christmas. It is also the midpoint between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox.

OR THAT Candlemas is the same day as Groundhog Day. It may be because one is about predicting when Spring will arrive, and the other celebrates the lengthening of days as we approach Spring.

Candlemas falls during the season of Epiphany and is celebrated as a day of hope and light. It is a time to honor Jesus as the Light of the World and to remind us that we too have that light within us. To that end, we will be dedicating our Acolytes to their service as light bearers. During worship, they will be called forward to receive a candle and a blessing.

Movie Night, Thursday Feb. 28: "Whale Rider"

Building on the success of the movie night in the fall, the Faith Formation Team is hosting a movie night on Thursday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m. to watch "Whale Rider." Confirmation classes here at Redeemer have been viewing a clip from this movie during the session they study Jesus.

The film’s lead character, a little New Zealander girl Pai, is a strong Jesus figure in seeking to save her Maori people. For all ages (confirmands may want to take this opportunity to see the whole film), this film has been called “timeless,” “enchanting,” and “nothing short of astonishing.” Bring a snack to share. Popcorn and beverage will be provided.

Redeemer UCC January and February Birthdays

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<th>January</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Marc Andrews&lt;br&gt;Bryan Hymphrey&lt;br&gt;Jonathan Miller-Shank&lt;br&gt;2 John Michelich&lt;br&gt;7 Larry Hess&lt;br&gt;Linda Hess&lt;br&gt;Charles Jayson&lt;br&gt;Bernard</td>
<td>9 Gail Salco&lt;br&gt;11 Mary Miller&lt;br&gt;12 Margaret Borrelli&lt;br&gt;15 Graham Foote&lt;br&gt;17 Gloria McIntyre&lt;br&gt;18 Bill Andrews&lt;br&gt;20 Brenden Bernard&lt;br&gt;23 Dave Hille&lt;br&gt;24 Eugene Widmer&lt;br&gt;25 Eric Schlitter&lt;br&gt;Amanda (Toreky) Fryson&lt;br&gt;26 John Thomas&lt;br&gt;27 Carol Peddie&lt;br&gt;3 Jean Badger&lt;br&gt;5 Barb Morgan&lt;br&gt;14 Julie Miller</td>
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Eating for Your Health, Well-Being

Greetings! Have you cleaned out the holiday fruitcakes, cookies, dips, sausage? Are you considering the calorie splurges of Valentine’s Day? Are healthy choices for your Super Bowl party on your grocery list?

Lent is approaching and it is time to get back on the healthy track. Biblegateway tells me food is mentioned 338 times in the Bible. God did intend for food to meet our whole health needs — physical, social, mental and spiritual (Proverbs 22:9; Numbers 11:5; 1 Timothy 4:13, 6:17; Genesis 43:11; Luke 15:1-2).

As you read the Bible and list the foods God instructs for daily use and gifts, you will see a diet that is high in fiber and reduces inflammation. Here are just a few to start your list: apples, almonds, olives, cucumbers, onions, barley, corn …

Today’s medical community is recognizing the grocery store as part of your pharmacy and your refrigerator as an extension of your medicine cabinet.

Why is this anti-inflammatory diet important for us? Persistent inflammation throughout the body can lead to chronic disease. Research has shown the links between chronic inflammation and cancer, cardiac disease, diabetes, arthritis, depression and Alzheimer’s disease. Educating yourself on food choices can reduce your risk of disease, may improve your quality of living and enable you to see God’s hand in your life.

Interested in learning more about an anti-inflammatory diet? Questions? Please send me a message at donahuepn@gmail.com or put a messing in my mailbox in the church office.

Smart food choices may …

◆ reduce your risk of disease
◆ improve your quality of living
◆ enable you to see God’s hand in your life.

UCC DEVOTIONAL
Too Busy for That

By the Rev. Rachel Hackenberg

Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king’s son.

May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.”

— Psalm 72:1-2

On Christmas morning, as my two teenagers began to open a shared present, I told them that the gift needed several caveats.

“First,” I said, “remember that we believe in the work of peace more than the work of war.”

“Second, world domination is a terrible business; remember that the manifestations of colonialism continue to impact and undermine peoples around the world.”

“And third,” I admittedly sheepishly, “I’ve played this game since I was a kid, but I can never manage the strategy to win it.”

With a synchronized roll of their eyes, my son and daughter finished opening the present: the board game Risk, which challenges players to conquer the world region by region. Risk posits each player as a conqueror, a global leader of sorts — or at least, a global contender.


Which is why we pray — with renewed discipline in this new year — for our worldly rulers to be guided by righteousness more than mightiness. To defend the cause of the poor more than the cause of the rich. To strive for peace in such a way that all people will have enough.

Prayer: We pray for rulers and royalty, for presidents and parliaments, that those in leadership might love the work of peace more than the work of war.

About the Author: Rachel Hackenberg serves on the national staff for the United Church of Christ. She is the author of Writing to God and Sacred Pause, among other titles. Her blog is Faith and Water (http://rachelhackenberg.com/blog/).