



The Chimes

The News of the Protestant Community Church of Medford Lakes, NJ

February 2026



**Worship Services at 8 & 10 AM
Sunday School during the 10 AM Service
Fellowship Hour at 11 AM**

Good News! God Promises We Will Have Spring.

We had a real winter this year, what a surprise. Most recent years have had a week of 60 degree weather in January. Not this year. Snow and ice have reminded us of the good old days. There is nothing like a 10 degree morning to get my blood pumping. The sting on my cheeks reminds me I am alive. Wahoo!! I personally like winter, but... we have had a lot of it and I am ready to see 30-40 degree days. It is good news that winter is waning.

Good News. The word "gospel" comes from the Old English to mean good news. The greek word "euangelion" also means good news. That is where we get the word evangelism. Originally, these words were not exclusively religious. But they are now.

Jesus is meant to be the good news to the world. But sometimes Christians forget that the good news of Jesus was not only forgiving sins and welcoming people into heaven. Jesus taught people to see that God loves them not matter what. Jesus told people who thought they were bad or worthless, "You are the salt of the earth and the light of the world." The good news is also that the Kingdom of God is in us. He fed people and healed people without requiring a list of obligations afterwards. Jesus helped lonely people feel connected to God and one another.

Believing that Jesus is our Lord and Savior, means that we commit ourselves to doing what Jesus did when he was on earth. One of the reasons this church is AMAZING is that we take Jesus' actions and words to heart. We visit, send cards, and send flowers to the lonely and sick. We feed the hungry and offer cloths to people with needs. No questions asked. And in worship we introduce ourselves to new faces and welcome them.

During Lent we will be reflecting on Jesus' words and deeds so that we can enter more deeply into the core of our faith. Please join us for worship on Sunday and for the Lenten Soup and Studies that will be on Wednesdays so that you can discover how joy filled and hopeful the Good News really is!

God bless,
Rev. Keith Reed

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The Chimes

Submit items to

Lynne Poag via email

Chimescoordinator@protestantcommunitychurch.org

MARCH

**CHIMES' ARTICLES
SUBMISSION DEADLINE:
February 18, 2026**

**Rev. Keith Reed
Senior Pastor**

Rev. Steve Winkler, Pastor Emeritus
Dr. Virginia E. Leopold, Pastor Emerita
The Late Dr. Richard T. Say, Pastor Emeritus

609-654-4220 (office)

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www.protestantcommunitychurch.org



Sunday School News
Andria Gross
Sunday School Superintendent



We completed our Epiphany rotation on January 18. We watched the last part of "The Star" movie and discussed the Wise Men's journey to Bethlehem and how God revealed Jesus to the world. The Star guided the wise men to baby Jesus, showing us that Jesus came for everyone. Through stories, crafts, and activities, the children explored what the Wise Men discovered and why Epiphany is an important part of our church year.

We had a busy rotation learning the meaning of Epiphany, making Wise Men crowns, participating in a star scavenger hunt, learning about the wise men's journey and what they discovered. We made Epiphany king cupcakes, a Star of Bethlehem, and we decorated star cookies after we finished our movie. It was a busy four weeks filled with fun activities to help us learn and remember our Bible stories.



Sunday, January 25, was Family Sunday. We planned to present Bibles to our 3rd graders and a few 4th graders who didn't receive theirs last year. A snowstorm interfered so we had to postpone the presentation. In the near future, Tess Beachley, Finnian Xavier Eklund, Allison Jane Masci, Ellie Louise Yoder-Mercy, and Mackenzie Catherine Yowell will receive their Bibles and be honored with a special Fellowship Hour.

Sonja Hardwick



How to View the PCC Weekly Worship Service

Each 10:00am Sunday service will be streaming live on YouTube, as well as Facebook. The YouTube link and QR code are below for access.
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJ_RANYCCIVcbP4EioYHAhg/
All past services are available on YouTube.



Thank You

Thank you to all the people who contributed to the purchase of two computers and accessories for Cuba. Dave Reynolds researched and purchased the computers with the donated funds. These computers will be used in Placetas, located in the central part of Cuba, to track the distribution of medicine and medical supplies within the community. Your generosity is much appreciated by those in the community who will benefit from these much needed supplies.

Rev. Reed, Lynne Poag, and Wendy Kunz, who procured the medicines and is a

member of the Woodbury, NJ, Presbyterian Church, will deliver the computers and \$4,000 worth of medicines and medical supplies that are desperately needed in the area. Rev. Reed and Ms. Kunz know pastors in Cuba who have arranged for accommodations, food, and transportation to the site. This goodwill trip from February 10 to 16 will help to build relationships between our churches and the Cuban churches.

We ask for your prayers during our travel time and look forward to sharing our experiences with you at the March 21 Fellowship Breakfast.

Lynne Poag

FEES-FREE DONATION OPTION NOW AVAILABLE

There is now a fee-free online donation option available. Please use the following link or QR code if you would like to donate electronically:
<https://www.zeffy.com/donation-form/protestant-community-church>





The Youth Group was able to exceed their goal of donating 10 stockings to Joseph's House this past Christmas and instead were able to donate 50! They would like to thank all of the church members who were able to donate items as well as give financially to this project. We plan to make this a new tradition.

CALLING ALL 6TH, 7TH, & 8TH GRADERS!

Come and join the fun happening on Sunday mornings at 9:00am on the stage in Memorial Hall. All students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade and all friends are welcome. Grow in fellowship with peers as you grow in Christ and faith. The earlier weeks will be formative to the group so come with all of your creative ideas, including ideas for a group name as we go forward into the year!

For you have questions, please contact Jacquie Long by email at clinong@comcast.net or text to (609) 605-1091. Please indicate the name of the student in your message. We hope to see you all there!

*Jacquie Long
Middle School Youth Leader*

Single Again will gather at Ginger Restaurant on Wilkins Station Road on Thursday, February 26, at 6pm. Come join us for numerous, upscale Asian food choices, friendly singles' conversation, and a kitchen-free evening.

Suzanne Murray

In the upcoming months, the youth group will continue to participate in one community service project a month along with meeting weekly for their lessons. Please be on the lookout for activities and possible fundraisers.

Confirm Not Conform Mentors

The Senior High Youth Group will begin their *Confirm Not Conform* program this spring focusing on four major areas: prayer and worship, scripture, tradition and history, service and action.

Along with these important aspects, a central part of the program is for each youth to have an adult mentor within the congregation. The purpose and role of the mentor is to be a supportive person who will work with the youth in offering guidance, support and encouragement while the youth identifies what it means to be a Christian. Each youth has been encouraged to think of an adult within the congregation whom they would want to work along side during this special time, and they have been encouraged to contact that person within the next few weeks. If you are asked to be a mentor, please highly consider it. It is possible that God is calling for your service, and you might just be the perfect example for that youth who is asking.

Upon agreeing to be a mentor, you would attend a handful of youth group sessions in the spring, possible community service events, meet with the youth to review some of their assignments, and take part in their confirmation ceremony. If you would like to volunteer to be a mentor, please contact the church office or Stephanie Rahinsky.

*Stephanie Rahinsky
Senior High Youth Leader*

VOLUNTEER TO BE A MENTOR

PRAYER SHAWLS NEEDED

Calling all knitters/crocheters! There is a need for new prayer shawls to be made. Those who are grieving or sick appreciate the warm feeling that comes from wrapping themselves in a blessed prayer shawl from the PCC family. For more information, please contact Alice D'Arcy at aliced8789@yahoo.com or (609) 654-2507.

Prayer Shawl Instructions

The recommended yarn is Lion Brand Homespun. This is sometimes difficult to find at local stores, but you can order through Amazon or Lion Brand directly. Please make sure that you buy three skeins and that the dye lot numbers match.

We recommend size 11 or 13 needles, depending on whether you knit tightly or loosely, and also if the yarn is thin or thick. For a looser weave, you can select size 15 needles. If you knit to gauge, please use size 13 needles. If you choose to use size 11 needles, please cast on 63 stitches to make sure the shawl is wide enough.

Start, knit and end with prayer. You can say your own prayer or follow the ones provided in the box in the Leopold Study.

When beginning, say a prayer for your intended recipient. If you do not have a person in mind, please pray for healing, good health, and peace for the one who will receive the shawl. Please take time as you knit to repeat the prayer. Prayer is good for you as well as the one who will wear the shawl.

Cast on 57 stitches. The pattern for the shawl is called a 3-seed stitch pattern. Knit three stitches, then purl three stitches. If you cast on 57 stitches, when you start the next row, always start by knitting three stitches. If you choose to use 54 or 60 stitches, you will have to pay attention to the beginning stitches of each row and decide whether to knit or purl. **Please always choose a multiple of three for the number of stitches in your shawl, as three is representative of the Trinity.** As you create the shawl, you are knitting a purl stitch and purling a knit stitch, which creates a "popcorn" type effect.

We suggest you start knitting by pulling the yarn from the inside of the skein. This keeps the skein from rolling around and fraying as you knit. You may also wish to buy stitch markers—small white plastic rings you can slide on the needle every three stitches to remind you to change from knit to purl or vice versa.

Another possible pattern is to knit two full rows, then purl one row, then repeat.

If you are new to knitting or for some other reason you have trouble with the above, please feel free to just knit your shawl.

ALL CHURCH FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

The next PCC Fellowship Breakfast will take place February 21 at 8:30am in the Todd Building. It will feature church members Bai Kamara and Nancy Cauffman describing their recent experiences providing medical assistance to people in Sierra Leone, Bai's home of origin. Everyone is welcome!

Dave Reynolds

Soup Orders For February



February's Soup Sale will be Cream of Chicken Rice, a satisfying and hearty soup for chilly days. Order forms will be available at the back of the sanctuary and in the Fellowship Hall on Sundays. Order a quart for yourself and give a gift of soup to a friend for Valentine's Day on February 14!

Your soup order will assist Member Care in defraying the expenses of Fellowship Hour that are not absorbed by the hosts and the money placed in the donation basket.

We are ALWAYS looking for hosts for Fellowship Hour. Sign up with friends or make new ones by hosting the after-service time of fellowship at 11am Sunday mornings.

Suzanne Murray



Joseph's House is a Camden shelter that provides, meals, health care, and other support services for adults who are homeless. Our guests may need mental health and substance abuse services, and/or services for the disabled. These supports help stabilize those who are homeless and help them get off the street. Guests arrive at Joseph's House at 8pm. The shelter is open 365 days a year. They are served a hot meal and are able to shower, wash their clothes and have a safe and warm place to sleep. Donations are used to help guests in their journey towards health. Please place your donations in the labeled box in the PCC office. Thank you so much for your generosity.

Here is a list of needed items:

*Breakfast/health bars
Individual snack bags
Ground coffee
10 lb bags of sugar
Tea bags
Large containers of Cremora
Laundry pods' detergent (Not liquid or powdered detergent)
Toiletries
Blankets & towels (can be used and clean)
Backpacks
Socks underwear (must be new)*

Beth McGinnis

TIDES OF HOPE: GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Welcome to our new 13 Week Grief Support Group! Dates to be announced soon - Tides of Hope aims to be a friendly, caring group who will walk alongside one another through one of life's most difficult experiences. This is a faith-based seminar/support group. Each session has a theme connected to grief and ways to care for ourselves that tie into each theme. Various videos will help us see how grief impacts others as a way of showing both the commonalities and distinctness of grief. Group Discussions are a safe space to share how we experience grief and learn to listen to others share their grief. Please tell your friends and neighbors, all are welcome!



Lenten Soup Suppers will begin on Wednesday, February 25, and continue on succeeding Wednesdays until March 25. Food will be served at 6:30pm, followed by a discussion led by Pastor Reed. The theme for the Lenten suppers, Tell Me Something Good, will connect with the same themes at each Sunday service. We hope to see many of you there throughout the Lenten season!

Sign up sheets will be available at Fellowship Hour and several volunteers will provide soups (at least three, depending on numbers), bread and, if desired, a simple dessert of fruit or cookies. Join us at this time of fellowship and study.

Suzanne Murray

REFLECTIVE PRAYER TIME:

Empty Yourself and Listen to God

February 20-21, 2026 in Memorial Hall

Starts: 9AM-8PM Friday

Ends: 2PM-8PM Saturday

What is Reflective Prayer Time?

A two day event where an individual or an individual with a child dedicates an hour to read scripture, reflect, listen for God to speak, walk a labyrinth, and write in a journal. This is a rare chance to pray in a deeply spiritual setting, specially prepared for the prayer vigil.

Sign up for an hour of alone time with God. Read a guide and walk the labyrinth as a form of prayer. Sit in the chapel and read the prayer/reflection guide which includes a few scripture passages. Reflect on what scripture is saying to you. Write down your thoughts in the prayer journal. Remember that prayer includes; praising God, admitting our struggles and our weaknesses, asking for help, praying for others, asking for guidance, listening for God.

TELL ME SOMETHING GOOD: Lent 2026

This Lent we will worship and study to journey towards what was most central to Jesus' life and ministry: radical welcome, love for neighbor, care for the vulnerable, nourishment for the hungry, nonviolence in the face of injustice. At the heart of Jesus' teachings, we find liberation, love, mercy, and grace—all of which are meant to be very good news for us all. Jesus' ministry can be described as "radical" which comes from the Latin word "radicalis," meaning "root" or "ground." Therefore, the good news should bring us back to our roots and connect us more deeply to God. Drawing closer to God means that we need to let go of our selves and our concerns. Emulating Jesus and embodying his teachings should ground us in who God created us to be. Can we be "good news" people in a world too often burdened by bad news?

This Lent, let us remember that the good news really is good news. It is joyful—like fine wine saved for celebration. It grows like a mustard seed and smells like perfume poured from an alabaster jar. It tastes like bread passed endlessly through a hungry crowd. It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy. The good news is alive in the world.

This series will provide fertile ground for conversation and worship, rooting our hearts and lives in the expansive goodness of God. This Lent, let the teachings of Jesus lead us forward. May the good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see, and taste what is good.

God bless,
Rev. Keith Reed





February Birthdays



01	Valerie Armstrong	07	Tiel Hardwick	21	Dwight Tamaki
02	Madison Sviben	08	Sheryl Taylor	22	Abby Smith
04	Amy Talbot	09	Ginnie Phillips	24	Dorothy Mulholland
05	Sonja Hardwick	15	Jennifer Gottschalk		Zachary Powell
	Ryleigh Haussman		Aidan Vitelli	26	Paula Masters
06	Catharina Copeland	16	Crew Kalinowski	27	Timothy Estacio
	Nancy Smith	18	Kent Hardwick	28	Amanda Libetti
	Michele Rahinsky	19	Juanita Campbell		Jim Schaefer
	David Thomas	21	Mary Lynne Reynolds		

Love One Another

**The Protestant Community Church
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Return Services Requested