



# The Chimes

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

## March 2026



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

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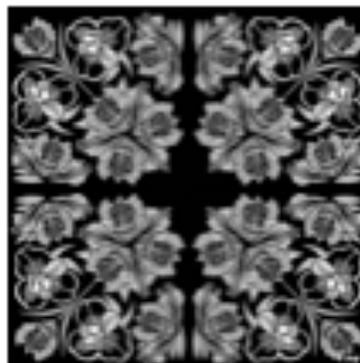
### The Cross in the Darkness

Lynne Poag and I recently returned from Cuba, and I experienced both the beauty and the ugliness of human existence on the trip. There were children playing, people laughing, street vendors selling espresso from their front doors. The church we visited in Placetas fed 40 elderly people after 3 hours of Bible study, friendly banter, and everyone getting their blood pressure taken. On Saturday, 43 children gathered at a nearby farm, received a breakfast snack, played games, learned a Bible story, did a craft, and ate a satisfying lunch. After we had lunch, Lynne and I joined a few adults delivering homemade soup to the elderly in the neighborhood. Seeing all that done by the church community was beautiful, inspiring, and hopeful.

Being in Cuba was also heart wrenching. Walking on roads that had more potholes than road, seeing collapsed buildings in the middle of a bustling neighborhood, having 6 hours of electricity in 5 days showed just how hard life is for everyone in the country.

### The Cross Remains—Lauren Wright Pittman

The Cuba I saw and this drawing of flowers remind me of the truth that the cross of Jesus often exists in the center of darkness and the pain. The cross reminds us that God knows the injustice and the ugliness that exist in our world because, through Jesus, God suffered and joins us in our suffering.



However, this drawing is a reminder that death and darkness do not have the last word. The blooming of life comes after the death of winter. The beauty of the flowers only exist if the black background reveals them. The cross is obscured by life that comes out of death.

Our faith calls us to be honest with how negative and hard life is. Faith then guides us to see the Spirit of God moving in the lives of people who bring food, safety, connection, and hope.

Hold On, See God Moving, Have Hope!  
*Rev. Keith Reed*

### The Chimes

Submit items to

**Lynne Poag via email**

[Chimescoordinator@protestantcommunitychurch.org](mailto:Chimescoordinator@protestantcommunitychurch.org)

**APRIL CHIMES' ARTICLES  
SUBMISSION DEADLINE:  
March 18, 2026**

**Rev. Keith Reed  
Pastor**

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

609-654-4220 (office)

609-654-0515 (Sunday School)

[www.protestantcommunitychurch.org](http://www.protestantcommunitychurch.org)



**Sunday School News**  
**Andria Gross**  
**Sunday School Superintendent**



In February, the children worked on our "Verses of Love" rotation. We had some fun, hands-on-activities to teach us ways to show God's love to one another, to those in need, and to all creatures great and small. We learned our Bible verse—John 13:34, "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another"—and made a special Valentine's craft.

**FAITH  
IN  
ACTION**

The children made casseroles and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the Christian Caring Center, putting faith into action by serving the hungry and demonstrating LOVE through service. Laurel Thomas came in to help us. The kids helped make a total of 15 casseroles and 40 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches! Our Bible lesson for this activity came from 1 John 3:18: "Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

We are beginning our lesson on Lent and preparing our hearts for the joy of Easter. We will talk with the children about what Lent means and how we can grow closer to Jesus.



The Easter Happening will be Sunday, March 18, beginning at 4:00pm upstairs in the Sunday school rooms. The children will make a variety of fun Easter crafts. Following the Easter Happening, the senior high youth will provide a delicious spaghetti dinner for everyone downstairs in the Todd building. Everyone is welcome to attend!

*Sonja Hardwick*

## Volunteers!

From the Property Committee:

We have developed a property committee to help with the repairs and maintenance of the church. If interested in joining, please email Jay Thomas at [jdtoner@gmail.com](mailto:jdtoner@gmail.com)

*Jay Thomas*

## Single Again

Single Again will gather for dinner at Dory's Cafe in the Taunton Forge Shopping Center on Tuckerton Road in Medford. Call Suzanne at 609-654-7593 so she can make reservations. The local reviews are quite good and it is BYOB if you'd like to bring wine or a cocktail.

*Suzanne Murray*



Zumba classes led by Kathleen Harkin continue to meet every Tuesday afternoon at 4:00pm in Memorial Hall. These classes are easy to follow, invigorating, and fun. You need no prior experience with Zumba to attend. You will learn by doing! A \$10 donation is greatly appreciated. Kathleen generously gives all donations to PCC.

## How to View the PCC Weekly Worship Service

Each 10:00am Sunday service will be streaming live on Facebook, as well as on YouTube. All past services are available on Youtube and on Facebook. Youtube link and QR code are below for access.

<https://www.youtube.com/@protestantcommunitychurcho5206>



### PCC Centennial Celebration!



The 100th year anniversary of the Protestant Community Church of Medford Lakes is fast approaching! The PCC

was officially incorporated in 1931, with our beautiful sanctuary constructed that same year. What better reason to celebrate our faith community's legacy and its future here in our little corner of the world!

A committee is being formed to prepare for this momentous occasion and celebration. If you are interested in joining, please let us know by responding to PCC Board Vice-President George Greatrex at [ggreatrex@comcast.net](mailto:ggreatrex@comcast.net). Once we have a group of interested volunteers, we will meet to "start the ball rolling!"

*George Greatrex*

### In Memoriam

Capt. Ronald Lee Koontz  
1 - 29 - 26

Brenda Nelson  
2 - 7 - 26



Nursery

### Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed in the nursery which is open during the 10:00am Sunday service for children under 5. The nursery will be open each week that Sunday school is in session. Please contact Adrienne Foran at [azap188@hotmail.com](mailto:azap188@hotmail.com) if you would like to volunteer to help in the nursery. Anyone over the age of 21 for lead teacher and 13 or over to be a helper are welcome!

### FEE-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>



## Member Care

Member Care remains active during these wintery days. Soup sales continue into March when we will be making Italian Wedding Soup, including the tiny meatballs. Order forms are available at the back of the Sanctuary and at Fellowship Hour. We are considering making Gazpacho Soup for August or September when Jersey tomatoes are at their peak. Any interest?

The Lenten Soup Suppers begin at 6:30 in the Todd Building each Wednesday in the month of March. Following the meal, Pastor Keith will lead a discussion on the theme "Tell Me Something Good." Volunteers are needed each week to provide soups, bread, and an optional dessert. Please sign up on the sheets provided at Fellowship Hour. We hope to see you there.

*Suzanne Murray*

## Fellowship Breakfast

The Fellowship Breakfast will be held at 8:30am Saturday, March 21, in the Todd Building. This month's speakers will be Lynne Poag and Rev. Reed who will be discussing their February trip to Cuba to provide medicines, medical supplies, and 2 laptops to Iglesia Presbiteriana-Reformada de Placetas (Reformed Presbyterian Church in Placetas) and to build relationships with its members.

*Dave Reynolds*



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)*  
*Deodorant*  
*Toothpaste & Toothbrushes*  
*Shampoo and body wash*  
*Towels and washcloths (can be gently used and clean)*  
*Blankets (can be used and clean)*  
*Backpacks*  
*Socks underwear (must be new)*

*Beth McGinnis*



**The Protestant Community Church**  
of Medford Lakes, New Jersey  
*"Cathedral of the Woods"*

*The Reverend Keith Reed, Pastor*  
*The Reverend Steven E. Winkler, Pastor Emeritus*  
*The Reverend Dr. Virginia E. Leopold, Pastor Emerita*  
*The Late Reverend Dr. Richard T. Say, Pastor Emeritus*

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100 Stokes Road - Medford Lakes, NJ 08055 - phone (609) 654-4228

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**2026 Board of Trustees Contact List:**

President: Brent Schopfel - bschopfel35@gmail.com

Secretary: Mary Clark - maryk209@verizon.net

VP of Administration: Gary Cop - garyjcop@gmail.com

VP of Christian Ministry: Linda Estacio - estacio@verizon.net

- Christian Education - Jacquie Long - clinong@comcast.net
- Worship - Linda Estacio - estacio@verizon.net

VP of Christian Services: David Stuart - drstuart1@verizon.net

- Member Care - Suzanne Murray - suzannemurray1013@gmail.com
- Missions - Diane Smith - scooterb06@comcast.net

VP of Communications: George Greatrex - ggreatrex@comcast.net

- Outreach - Jessica Ritter - jessicascottritter@gmail.com
- Stewardship

VP of Development: Linda Hoffman - lindysue121@gmail.com

VP of Finance: Hugh Fetla - hfetla11@gmail.com

VP of Property & Safety: Jay Thomas - jdtone@gmail.com

# Join the Fun

## SAVE THE DATE

**April 11—Cash Bingo Party  
in Memorial Hall**

Doors open at 6:00pm  
and games begin by 6:45.

There will be Cash Prizes  
and a 50/50 Raffle.

Light snacks, desserts, and bottled  
water will be available for purchase.

This event will be open to the public  
so invite your friends and neighbors.  
Come partake in the fellowship and  
fun. Let's make this the first Bingo  
Night of many to come!

We will need help setting up and  
cleaning up. Many hands make light  
work. To offer your assistance please  
contact [lindysue121@gmail.com](mailto:lindysue121@gmail.com).



## NEW OUTREACH AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM AT PCC THANKS TO TWO MOMS ON A MISSION



On Friday, February 6, *Two Moms On A Mission* hosted our second pop-up thrift shop in Memorial Hall where everything was just \$1. The event drew predominantly women from all over the Medford Lakes, Medford, Tabernacle, Shamong, Haddon Heights, and Cherry Hill areas bringing promotion and positivity to our church. Thanks to the community, we tripled the amount of donations at this event in comparison to our first one held back in December.

It was an extremely successful event with tremendous feedback prompting us to work on our third event to be held in just a few short weeks. Check the church announcements for the upcoming date.

*Two Moms On A Mission* is so grateful for all the community support as our mission is to try and make clothing (and eventually household items) extremely affordable and to keep things out of landfills.

If you're interested in donating items or even helping by donating your time, then please reach out to Jessica Ritter at 610-357-4590.

Thank you,  
Jessica Ritter



Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00am on Sunday, March 8. Remember to set your clocks ahead by 1 hour before you go to bed on Saturday night, March 7!

**Mission Council** continues to gather ingredients for casseroles. We would welcome any donations to this on-going vital mission. The YMCA camp has been very generous with their overruns, but with no camp until this June, they have little to contribute during the winter. The same is true of the Amish Dutch Market because many items are sold out and leftover items aren't as plentiful as in the past.

In 2025 we provided 2,843 casseroles, each providing 8 hearty servings or 23,000 meals to the Christian Caring Center in Browns Mills. Because of the cold we are experiencing this winter, our church is a true life line for the community. Coupled with 6,400 sandwiches as well a variety of other donated foods, PCC is making a real difference in the lives of the food challenged.

Want to help? You can find us in the Todd Building preparing foods on Tuesday mornings at 9:30am or Saturday at 4:00pm dropping off foods from the Amish Market. Not your thing? We also welcome gift cards, checks and cash. Your support is appreciated. Thank you.

*Suzanne Murray*

*"When we struggle for human rights, for freedom, for dignity, when we feel that it is a ministry of the church to concern itself for those who are hungry, for those who have no schools, for those who are deprived, we are not departing from God's promise. He comes to free us from sin, and the church knows that sin's consequences are all such injustices and abuses. The church knows it is saving the world when it undertakes to speak also of such things."*

*—Saint Oscar Romero*

## Youth News

Happy Spring! The youth will be having their Easter candy fundraiser from March 1–22 through BC Chocolates. This has been a hit in the past couple of years. The kids will have samples and order forms located at a table during coffee hour. All items are \$25 and the youth get 20% of the total sales.

The older youth group will be collecting Easter candy for the yearly Sunday school Easter Egg Hunt from now until Palm Sunday. Please choose candy that can easily be stuffed into the plastic eggs. Please drop off the donated candy in the church office with a label "for Easter egg hunt" or give it directly to Stephanie Rahinsky.

The Easter Happening will be held in the upstairs Todd building for children to participate in Easter-related craft making on Sunday, March 15, at 4:00pm! The youth groups will also assist the children during that time and provide a family dinner at 5:30pm. All are welcome to the dinner. This is a time for fellowship and for the youth to give back to the congregation.

The older and younger youth groups will be co-hosting a Family Game Night on May 16 from 6 until 8pm! There will be more information in the coming months.

*Stephanie Rahinsky*



## March Birthdays



03	Andy Childress Theresa Hurley	13	Megan Jedwabny Linda Chamberlain
04	Marguerite Schaefer Marcia Shaffer	14	Lynda Miller
05	George Greatrex	16	Lori Cobb
06	Andy Moll Misty Pistone	17	Andrew Nordyk
08	Braelynn Lingle	18	Dave Reynolds
09	Kathryn Bennett	19	Ann Beachley
10	Nan Hanold T J Hardwick	20	Fred Gross
12	Lucy Talbot	21	Jeremy Sviben
		23	Debora Smith
		26	Zoe Pistone
		30	Carol Latti



*Happy Birthday*

**The Protestant Community Church**  
**100 Stokes Road**  
**Medford Lakes, NJ 08055**

*Return Services Requested*

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**The Protestant Community Church is an inclusive ecumenical faith community purposefully seeking to be caring, faithful disciples of Jesus Christ through worship, study, prayer and Christian service.**

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