

The Vine

News, Information and Inspiration from Royersford Baptist Church

Volume 52/Issue 2

March/April 2021



Wednesdays in Lent:

RBC and the Royersford Churches in Action are coming together during Lent to explore living and finding hope in times of grief. Join us for this Lenten Series, called "Life from the Ashes", Wednesdays in Lent, February 24, March 3, 10 & 17 at 7:00 pm on Zoom.

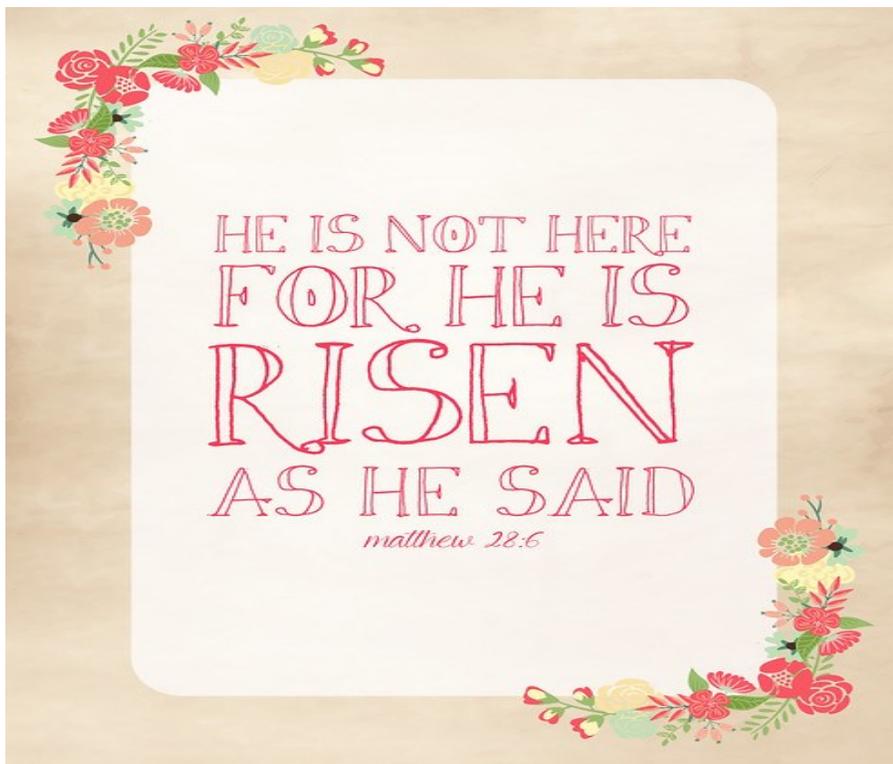
(See your weekly RBC Midweek Reminders for the link to join the services.)

**April 1:
Maundy Thursday**

**April 2:
Good Friday**

**April 4:
Easter Sunday
Worship at 9:30 am
on Zoom**

*Check your RBC
Midweek Reminders in
March for more
information about Easter
celebrations!*



A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR



The number one thing a new pastor hears when they enter a new congregation is, “well, we’ve never done it that way before.” I joked when I first started as your pastor that no one could get upset with me for doing things differently than they’ve been done in the past - I would just blame the pandemic!

We can blame a lot of the “bad stuff” on the pandemic. We haven’t been worshipping together in person in a whole year. We can’t sing together. Some of our RBC family has had difficulty connecting virtually. We haven’t been able to grieve losses in person. We haven’t hugged one another in a year!

But that’s not all that the pandemic has done.

The pandemic has also shown how resilient and creative RBC is. Because of the pandemic, we know that nothing can separate us from the love of God- and the love of our fellow RBCers. We have learned new technologies that have allowed us to reach more people. We have collaborated with local churches for various worship services and educational opportunities. We have welcomed guests from across the globe into our worship time and Selectives classes.

Yes, the pandemic is to blame for a lot of our sadness, anger, and frustration of this year. But the pandemic has also shown us just how strong, resilient, and caring we are. And so for that, I will say, “thank you, pandemic.”

Read on in this edition of The Vine for more COVID-19 updates and opportunities to connect with RBC.

And while we can be sad about what we’ve lost this last year, I encourage you to also take a moment to say, “thank you, pandemic” for all that we’ve gained.

*Peace,
Pastor Sarah*



Over the past year we have experienced change, and lots of it. Our lifestyle does not look like what it did before March 2020. And as we approach this one-year mark of living in the midst of Covid, our youth have been discussing and reflecting on what was, what is and what we hope to become.

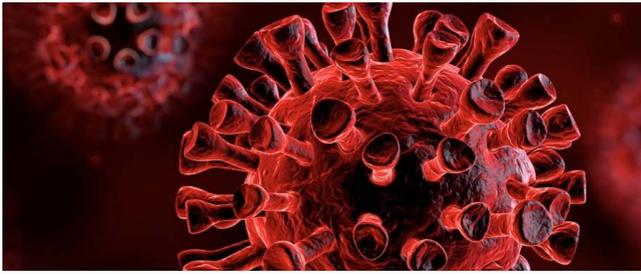
We acknowledged long ago that this new lifestyle change was not welcomed kindly. We agree that this is tough for all of us in different ways and in some ways similarly. Week after week we talk at around the Zoom table with Covid as the center piece, with sentiments such as, “when we can meet back together, we will...” or “being stuck in Zoom calls all day is the worst!” These conversations have become normal, and we find ourselves accustomed to “the way things are.” We can discuss and agree this is not ideal, while emotionally accepting that it is what it is.

It is important to reflect and be in tune with where we are. We reach this one-year mark, understanding that this has been a long and quick year, but that this current way of living is temporary. We may not go back exactly to how they were, but change is on the horizon. So, one of the things we have been acknowledging is how we have grown over this year, and how resilient we truly are. We are capable of learning new things fast and adapting even faster. We learned that we CAN in fact spend this much time with our family and not melt away. And we learned that we can still be productive and active in a safe and distant manner that shows love and concern for those around us.

This is no longer a hypothetical statement. We have lived socially distant from one another for a year. We have not met together in our Sanctuary, or in our Youth group room as a full group in a year. This is hard to swallow and coming together in this sadness is important. We have missed out on Summer trips, retreats and lock-ins. Seniors who are missing their last chance to go to REACH (at least as high school students) are mourning that loss. We acknowledge this pain and challenge. But we adapt, we grow, we change. I am not the person I was one year ago, and I would be willing to be most of you and most of our students are not either. But new opportunities are ahead of us, God has a plan of redemption and glory through this. The hope of what is to come can carry us through our times stuck at home.

So, as we say happy birthday to Covid... lift one another up! Send a text, email, card, or phone call to one another to check in. Pray for one another regularly and celebrate our strength together. Let us replace Covid from the centerpiece of our Zoom table, and replace it back with Jesus, who is the one who truly binds us together.

--Ryan Seckman



**COVID-19 Update from
Pastor Sarah:**

Many people are wondering- when will we gather in person again? The update is- there is no update. We continue to monitor the data and recommendations in our area. For now, the safest decision is for us to continue to operate virtually. Many in our RBC community are among the most vulnerable, and to gather in person could put all of us at an unnecessary risk. We can show our love for one another by keeping each other safe in this way.

The good news is that infection rates in our area are starting to decline. With nicer weather (hopefully!) coming soon, we may be able to do some outdoor gatherings in the coming months. As the vaccine becomes more available, we will be better equipped for some of us to safely gather in the future. There is hope!

I encourage everyone who is eligible to get the vaccine when they are able. (More information about vaccines can be found here: [PA COVID 19 Vaccine](#)) Continue to wear a mask, practice social distancing, and take care of one another!

Keep up-to-date with various ways to virtually connect with RBC through our mid-week emails! All of our worship services are recorded and posted on our website, Facebook page, and YouTube channel. Do you know



someone who might be interested in RBC? Send them a link to watch our service- it's a great way for someone to get to know us without having to leave home!



**Don't forget to Spring
Forward on Sunday
March 14th !**



The 2021 Winter Pride Drive is being conducted online to protect people's health during the pandemic. The Drive is organized by the LGBT Equality Alliance of Chester County and provides needed supplies to area homeless shelters. Use the URL below to purchase any of the suggested items from the Amazon Wish List to help local people struggling with homelessness. Amazon will then send the items you have purchased directly to any of the listed shelters that you designate.

https://lgbteachesco.org/community-outreach-education?mc_cid=765ead6f23&mc_eid=250b365bf6

ADULT SELECTIVES CLASS

Thinking About Creation

Two international guests will join the Adult Selectives Class by Zoom in March as we discuss various understandings of creation. From February 28—March 21 we will have a series of conversations about God, Creation and our relationship to both.

Stan Slade led the **February 28th** session by looking at key texts in Genesis and how they have been understood.

The **March 7** class will be led by Karen Hite on the symbolic approach to creation care.



Helle Liht will speak from her home in Estonia on **March 14**. Helle is the Associate General Secretary of the European Baptist Federation and is the author of the article “Beyond Instrumentalism and Mere Symbolism: Nature as Sacramental” which will shape our weekly discussions. Her article invites fellow Baptists to reconsider common Western ways of thinking about and relating to God’s Creation.

Malkhaz Songulashvili will speak to us from his home in Tbilisi, Georgia on **March 21**.

Malkhaz is the Metropolitan Bishop of Tbilisi in the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia. Please invite others to join us to hear these distinguished and insightful guests.



Looking Ahead at Adult Selectives Classes:

March 28 - Palm Sunday: Experiential art session #1 led by Karen Hite and Melissa Reitnour.

April 4 - Easter Sunday: Experiential art session #2 led by Karen Hite and Melissa Reitnour.

April 11 - Difficult Conversations With Those We Love (conflict transformation) led by Dan and Sharon Buttry.

April 18 - Difficult Conversations With Those We Love (conflict transformation) led by Dan and Sharon Buttry.

April 25 - Difficult Conversations With Those We Love (conflict transformation) led by Dan and Sharon Buttry.



2021 America for Christ Offering “Love Your Neighbor”

Thanks to your America for Christ (AFC) Offering contributions, American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) ministers to families who have lost homes to floods, to children living lives of limitation in poverty, to seminarians preparing to devote their lives to sharing the Good News, and many more. We have been answering God’s call to heal broken families and communities—as well as cultivate strong Christian leaders and equip passionate disciples—since 1832.

The world’s needs are great, and we are extending our ministry by awarding grants to mission partners across the United States and Puerto Rico. In 2019, ABHMS awarded grants totaling more than \$300,000 to partners who are empowering Christian leaders, nurturing disciples and intercultural awareness, and transforming congregations and communities with the healing power of God’s love.

One grant enabled Heart Reach Neighborhood Ministries in Campbell, Ohio to purchase mattresses above and beyond the 104 already delivered to prevent children and teens from sleeping on the floors, couches and piles of clothing in its three housing developments.

A grant of \$8,400 was awarded to the Los Angeles-based Innovative Space for Asian American Christianity (ISAAC) to help fund its “Imagining A More Equal Pulpit” initiative, including a Gender Summit that addressed the challenges faced by women of color in ministry.

And a \$15,300 grant included support to Iglesia Bautista Betesda, Indianapolis, Ind., and its “Walking With the Immigrant” project, which has helped 60 families, including a family that senior pastor the Rev. Jaime Flores and a church brother accompanied to immigration court in Miami, Fla.

On behalf of ABHMS, thank you for your past generous support of our transformational mission. Our ministries—along with the ministries of our mission partners—are making a difference in the lives of so many individuals and families. With your help, we can bring God’s healing touch to so many more.

May we count on your generosity once again?

With gratitude,
Dr. Jeffrey Haggray
Executive Director, ABHMS



APRIL MISSION OPPORTUNITY

Easter eggs and baby chicks go hand in hand. But in South Africa, baby chicks are lifting families out of poverty!

In 2012 American Baptist medical missionaries, Drs. Anita and Rick Gutierrez introduced a new program that has helped more than 130 families! The **Poultry and Protein** mission project is self-sustaining and easily reproducible which is important in a province with 65% unemployment.

Participants in the program are trained and supervised as they raise poultry, incubate and hatch eggs, raise the birds, grow Chaya plants to produce their own feed and develop markets to sell their produce. They receive a basic housing unit for laying chickens, two incubators for eggs, two quail starter kits, some mature laying hens and roosters, quails, feed for 2 months, antibiotics and instructional materials.

This innovative project includes creating a 16' geodesic dome out of PVC pipe and zip ties that contains the poultry and protects them from predators. The inexpensive, lightweight dome can be easily moved to give the chickens fresh ground every few days. *(See the photo below of a finished dome assembled in 25 minutes during a workshop at the World Mission Conference.)*

A gift of \$25 can provide over 150 pounds of feed or provide a laying hen and rooster. A gift of \$50 will provide a forced air incubator that can hold 60 eggs.

To give the gift of a chicken this Easter, go to: <https://www.internationalministries.org/south-africa-poultry-and-protein/>



FROM THE GREEN TEAM

Don't Be Bitter- Pick Up Litter!



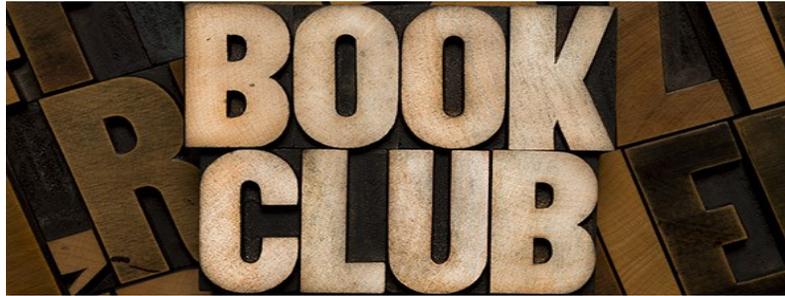
(Photo by Karen Mason, an Audubon volunteer in Florida, shows a Black Skimmer feeding a cigarette butt to its chick.)

As we head into warmer months, we have an opportunity to help the Earth in yet another way... picking up litter. I know a very small percentage do this year round, but it's not on too many radar screens when the weather is daunting. Since this newsletter is for March – when Spring begins (officially anyway), and April, which is Earth Month, I thought it would be a good time to encourage folks to join in the effort to pick up litter. First, the facts. Annually, in the USA, over 250 million tons of litter are flung out a window, or carelessly let go of. Research shows that 81% of this is done intentionally. Really??? This costs over \$11.5 billion in repair and clean up. One half of this, around 4.5 trillion, is, what do you guess? Cigarette butts. They are the biggest bulk of our litter. Made of cellulose acetate, they are mistaken as food by animals and birds, which leads to nausea, vomiting and seizures. They take 5- 400 years to decompose, leaving a legacy of damage beyond what we will ever see. Lids, caps, and food wrappers are next, with leaves and broken glass also being a large percentage. So, why do we pick up litter?

Here are Ten Reasons:

- 1) It is unsightly. It can bring down both housing and town values.
- 2) If there is litter in an area, it encourages more litter. Think about it. Who cares anyway?
- 3) The clean-up costs a lot, as mentioned earlier. \$11.5 billion a year. In just the US.
- 4) There are benefits, such as physical exercise, and getting outside in the fresh air.
- 5) Another benefit is social: that you can sometimes meet other cool people.
- 6) Open containers can breed mosquitos and rodents.
- 7) The dyes and hazardous chemicals in the litter can leach into the water, soil, and air.
- 8) Animals are endangered from eating or being caught in litter such as plastic bags and 6 pack rings. This causes suffocation, starvation, and drowning, killing one million a year.
- 9) Marine life are suffocated, starved, or drowned by the litter, killing one million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals such as turtles, dolphins, whales and seals, a year.
- 10) Litter is dangerous to our safety, especially children, our wildlife, and our economy.

On one Earth Day a couple years ago, I took “my boys” to Norristown Farm Park, to hike, and play in the stream. Fortunately we had nice weather that day. I looked across the stream, and saw a plastic bag caught in a bush. And then I saw a squirrel eating it. No kidding! So Julian crossed the stream and scaled the bank, and got the plastic bag. We saw another, and got that one too. Then we looked up and saw a bald eagle. We went back to their home, and circled their large block collecting trash. One of the neighbors thanked them with a monetary donation. All in all it was a very cool Earth Day. It seems like when we reach out to help, nature thanks us, if we have the eyes to see it. So I invite you too, to join in the litter clean-up effort. It can be done safely (in these days of the pandemic) with good gloves. We have a huge mess on our hands, and you can be part of the solution to help take care of this beautiful Earth of which we all are the designated stewards. Will you join us?



Join us as we continue to read our way around the world in 2020! We started in Moscow in January, and traveled to Antarctica with a stowaway in February. This list is subject to change as we may rearrange the order later in the year.

March - [American Dirt](#) by Jeanine Cummins

April - [The Chillbury Ladies Choir](#) by Jennifer Ryan

May - [The Beekeeper of Aleppo](#) by Christy Letteri

June - [The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek](#) by Kim Michele Richardson

July - [A Tree Grows in Brooklyn](#) by Betty Smith

August - [The Girl from Jakarta](#) by Hester Keegan

September - [The Sun is a Compass: A 4,000 Mile Journey into the Alaska Wilds](#) by Caroline Van Hemert

October - [A Passage to India](#) by E.M. Forster

November - [The Pinks: The First Women Detectives \(in America\)](#) by Chris Enss

December - [No Man's Land: The Trailblazing Women Who Ran Britain's Most Extraordinary Military Hospital](#) by Wendy Moore

The RBC book club meets at 7:15pm on the 3rd Thursday of each month. If you would like to receive the Zoom invitation, please contact Karen Mason at K26mason@gmail.com.

With Open Hands

RBC welcomes you to the 2021 Women's Retreat!



Join us for a study of the Henri Nouwen book *With Open Hands*.

Recently, Karen Hite turned to this book for personal guidance and was inspired to share its wisdom with us.

With Open Hands aspires to help us enjoy a meaningful prayer life.

When: Friday evening April 23rd and April 24th.

Where: The retreat will be on Zoom and, weather permitting, we will have an outdoor session on Saturday morning.

The Zoom sessions will include small group sharing in breakout rooms, as well as large group and individual time for reflection. We will have fun with social time and games.

Watch for more details but remember to save the date or contact a planning team member for more information.

Planning team members: Karen Hite, Ginny Dearolf, Karen Mason, Marty Murray, Marcia Ricketts, Bernice Rogers, Mary Glassman, and Melissa Reitnour.

What's happening at RBCNS?

So many exciting things are happening at RBCNS! During the month of January, we did all things winter and cold! We even did a unit on Arctic Animals in Pre-K! Take a look at the pictures below to see what the kids created! In February we talked about love, family and friendship as well as our teeth! Did you know that enamel is the hardest substance in your body and when you bite down you can apply up to 200lbs of pressure? Well, our Pre-K and Pre-K+ class is learning all about our amazing teeth and how they are unique to us, just like our fingerprints. We have also been experimenting at home with some amazing science experiments provided by Mrs. Moffa! Our 2s and 3s are loving Mrs. Amit's birthday celebrations in class and learning all about our shapes and letters! Registration is open now for the 2021-2022 school year and if you want to be a part of this AWESOME school don't delay and contact director, Melissa Moffa, today by calling 610-948-4584 or email director@rbcns.org.

There are a limited number of spots, so act quickly!



Love Bird Valentine's
Day Craft



Igloo and Penguins
Arctic Unit



Walrus and Seal
Arctic Unit



Our Snowmen!



Our Winter Person!



Hearts with Play-dough!



MARCH BIRTHDAYS:

Tyler Parker	2
Fred Neiffer	3
Aiden Obijuru	6
Haydee Ortiz	6
Nicholas Theusch	9
Kori Theusch	12
Bill Wanner	12
Alverna Bedford	14
Bob Dearolf	14
Ken George	17
Amy Wheeler	19
Amelia Yeoman	19
Marilyn Weikel	20
Marty Murray	22
Connor Engstrom	24

APRIL BIRTHDAYS:

Julie Williams	2
Eleanor Kagi	8
Danielle Crist	9
Emily Scales	9
Samuel Turley	10
Rose Stauffer	11
Shawn MacCoy	14
Peg Pascale	15
Herb Rogers	15
Rebecca Romain	20
Weege Neiffer	25
Mickey McDaniel	27
Bob Yeoman	28
Bernice Rogers	29
Ryan Seckman	29



Dan & Rose Stauffer	March 2
Jose & Haydee Ortiz	April 5
Emily & Chris Scales	April 5
Bob & Amelia Yeoman	April 12
Herb & Bernice Rogers	April 22

*Christ
is
Risen!*

If there are any additions/changes that need to be made to the birthday and anniversary list, please contact the church office.

Royersford Baptist Church
452 S. Lewis Road
Royersford, PA 19468

**Royersford Baptist Church
(RBC)**

Office - 610-948-4170

Email - rbcabc@rbcabc.org

Website - www.rbcabc.org

OFFICE HOURS:

**Monday through Friday,
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**



*RBC is affiliated
with American
Baptist Churches
USA*

STAFF:

Pastor -
Sarah Strosahl-Kagi

Youth Director-
Ryan Seckman

Worship Coordinator-
Lara Cifelli

Accompanist-
Alex Cifelli

Administrative Assistant-
Terry Myers

Custodian-
Danielle Crist

Nursery School Director-
Melissa Moffa

NOTE:

*Pastor and Youth Director hours
will vary during the COVID-19
pandemic. Please call the office
at 610-948-4170 to schedule an
appointment.*

If you have been touched by the ministry of RBC, you can be part of continuing our ministry together through your financial gifts. Our website has online giving options that make it possible for you to be a part of supporting the work of Royersford Baptist Church. Your gifts and your prayers make a vital difference in the Kingdom of God.



For the latest in news and information about Royersford Baptist Church, visit our website at:

www.rbcabc.org