



COLLEGE HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH – PC(USA) FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

1547 Philadelphia Dr.
Dayton, OH 45406
(937)278-4203

Web – collegehillcommunitychurch.org
Email - collegehillcommunitychurch@gmail.com
Church Office Open – 10am – 1pm T & TH

Worship: 10:30 am or on Facebook at [College Hill Community Church - Dayton](#) (Spanish interpretation available.)

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

February 1 – Communion, First Fruits collection

February 8 – Black History Month Moment

February 15 – Youth Sunday

February 22 – Birthday Sunday
Collaborative Congregations gathering –
2:00 pm, Fellowship Hall

March 1 – Annual Meeting

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Andriano Herrera – 02/07

Elijah Schessler-Benson – 02/08

Prince Benson, Jr. - 02/09

Amir Pulliam-Nju – 02/10

Julia Burrell – 02/16



UNIQUE THINGS TO GIVE UP FOR LENT – from Focus.org

Lent is a yearly walk with Christ through the desert for 40 days. Traditionally, Christians choose something to give up for the 40 days of Lent, remembering Jesus’s stay in the desert for 40 days without food or water. We Christians know that choosing what to give up should not only challenge us to become better, but ultimately bring us closer to Christ. Here are some unique ideas to give up: complaining, social media, overthinking, procrastination. driving impatiently, and using negative words about oneself. Whatever

unique thing(s) you choose to give up this Lent, remember that the goal is not based in just self-improvement, but in growing closer to Christ. Don't forget to pray this Lent! Pray for the grace to persevere, and trust that every small sacrifice made in love will bear fruit in your spiritual journey. Lent in 2026 begins Wednesday, February 18 through Thursday, April 2.

Love is Good Medicine - By G. T. Turner Finney

In 1991 Fred Singer's book, *Change Your Mind, Save Your Life*, arrived in the mail. The book focused on the mind and body health-connection. What fascinated me about the book were the 28 Life Cards which captured the essence of psychological research into health and longevity and the *Ode to the Centenarian*.

Life Card #12 is attached to my refrigerator door. It states simply: Love your parents, Love your spouse, Love your children, Love your work, Love your friends, Love your community, Love God.

In a romantic sense, we are inundated by the idea of love in songs, soap operas, movies, and romantic novels. Love is highly valued. Everybody wants love. Couples search for it through marriage. It's like a quest for the Holy Grail. Yet half of all U.S. marriages end in divorce. Does this mean the divorcing couples fell out of love? Did they look for love in the wrong places? To love is a tall order. Christians are instructed: to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, (Matthew 22:37) to love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:31), and to love our enemies. (Luke 6:35) Do we really know how to do this? Do we have the capacity? Where do we learn? What is love?

The American Heritage Dictionary defines love as an intense affection for another person based on familial or personal ties. When I engaged a friend and professional colleague, Nick, in a dialogue about love, he shared with me his understanding of love from a spiritual sense as "the giving away of ourselves to others without expecting anything in return. We have to see and feel love from within, he said. "Love is the feeling of the presence of God within who is the embodiment of love. Love comes from a spiritual relationship with God who first loved us. As a result, we are able to love people as they are." Obviously, my friend is speaking about God inspired unconditional love.

To gain a broader perspective, it is necessary to consider other views and dimensions of love. The renowned psychoanalyst, Erich Fromm, in *The Art of Loving*, provides insight into five objects of love: maternal love, brotherly love, erotic love, self-love, and love of God. Fromm describes motherly/fatherly love as unconditional love. "A mother loves her

children just because they are her children, not because they are good, obedient, or fulfill her wishes.”

Brotherly love is non-exclusive love, the kind the Bible speaks of when it says, “love thy neighbor as thyself.” Erotic love is a “craving for complete fusion with one other person.” It is exclusive and deceptive because sexual attraction can be mistaken for love. To love someone is not just a strong feeling. It is a decision; it’s a judgment. It’s a promise. Self-love is “respect for one’s integrity and uniqueness, it is not narcissism or selfishness.”

What is significant about Fromm’s work is the intertwining of faith with love and the profound statement “he who is of little faith is of little love” and recognition of lifelong effects of motherly love on the personality. Fromm states that one can distinguish among children and adults who only “got milk and those who got “milk and honey.” Milk symbolizes care and affirmation. Honey symbolizes an attitude of happiness, sweetness and love of life.

The Bible gives us many facets and images of love: love edifies, love endures forever, love casts out fear, love covers a multitude of sins, love is patient and kind, love is the fulfillment of the law, love is as strong as death. God is love. Love is the greatest gift elegantly and poetically stated in I Corinthians 13:13 “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three but the greatest of these is love. Jesus commanded his disciples to love one another as He loved them. So, if we love one another God lives in us and his love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:12)

Yes, love does have therapeutic properties and indeed is good medicine. Children who grow up in loving, nurturing, and stable homes “usually grow up to be happy, healthy and long-lived adults.” Researcher David McClelland of Harvard University has found evidence that people who love and care about others have a stronger immune system and recover faster from illnesses. Other researchers tell us that parental love is “preventive medicine” and that when administered in infancy acts as a vaccine to boost our self-esteem, protect us against diseases, strengthen our egos against disappointments, failure, rejection, and immunize our psyches against a world that will assault us.”

It is no accident that the Divine Creator placed us in families with parental and kinship ties. Now, suppose what would happen if every child was loved and taught to love by example. Fromm invites us to visualize the many possibilities of exposing our youth to people who are loving, have integrity, courage, and concentration.

During my days as a mental health therapist, I remember a psychiatrist paraphrasing Sigmund Freud, “Everyone needs something to love, something to do, and something to

hope for.” The facts are love, work (a sense of purpose), and hope (sustain life). I would add faith, described by Emil Brunner as the origin of hope, and embrace the idea that “work is love made visible.”

To love is the highest spiritual experience one can obtain through faith. It depends on our capacity to give up our narcissism, ethnic and racial prejudices, the things that separate us from each other and God. It requires us to be open to others, to grow, and to change.

(Reprinted from: Blogger.com : Visited by an Angel, Gladys T. Turner Finney

<https://www.blogger.com/blog/reading/4070549281056680524>)



Growing Community through Garden Planning – by Jose’ Lamont Jones

The Garden Planning and Preparation Community Seminar on January 22nd was a pleasant success! Local gardeners were given a presentation by Tia Stewart on how to get ready for their gardens this spring. In an ongoing attempt to build a sense of community and find other local producers, we shared suggestions and ideas. The overall goal is to increase the availability of wholesome food options in our community and enhance food security! We're headed there!



L to R: Brother Steve Muhammad - Refuge Depot (co-sponsor), Elder Jose LaMont Jones - CHCC Outreach and Evangelism (co-sponsor), Tia Stewart - Agraria center for Regenerative Practice, Sheena Johnson - Metro Parks, Larry Ramey - Salem Community Garden and Angela Shaw - l’NitaDream Soy Candles, Soaps and Teas

**ADULT SUNDAY
SCHOOL**

The Adult Sunday School is now meeting immediately following worship on Sundays in Rm 104 and via Zoom. Elder Stan Hirtle is the leader, and the class is currently studying the Gospel of Mark, using Kerygma Materials.

Black History Month Book Review - CHCC Peace & Social Justice Ministry

Thank you, College Hill Community Church, for your participation in the MLK Sunday Discussion on voting this past January 18th. There were about 40 participants and the discussion was rich...actually raising more questions than answers. This is excellent motivation to point out what we have yet to do!

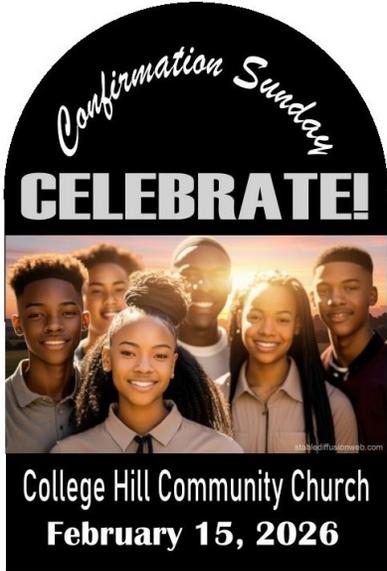
Our ministry anticipated that there would be interest in the next steps! During February, we will discuss/review [How We Win the Civil War](#) by Steve Phillips (available on Amazon and on [Audible.com](#)) which reviews the issues which created voter disenfranchisement and what worked during the 1960's thru 2000's Civil Rights Era. The final section of the book describes case studies of how multiracial democratic elections were achieved in several states.

In the three sessions, held **Feb 3rd, 10th and 17th**, we will discuss the contents and topics raised in the book and focus on the best practices and how they can be applied to Dayton and our community. Please purchase or download the book and join us in the book discussion! It promises to be a great time and informative...continuing our commitment to Social Justice and FULL engagement and enfranchisement of all members of our country.

Each session will begin at 7:30 pm

Here is the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89800805211?pwd=3kvwrousQJyA9zZnGme16cOM7bssa5.1>

 <p>Confirmation Sunday CELEBRATE! College Hill Community Church February 15, 2026</p>	 <p>The goal of the Older Kids Ministry is to promote health, wellness and socialization among seniors, above 55 years, through activities, celebrations, and education.</p> <p>Join TODAY!</p> <p>DUES: \$60/yr -- individual \$90/yr -- couple</p>
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TWICE WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

Weekly Bible Study is on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm and Fridays at 1pm. January’s study comes from *“In Response to the Call of Christ – A Bible Study and Reflection Guide.”* The zoom link and reading material are in your weekly email or may be found on the church website. All are welcome to attend either session!

George Brown, More Than an Interpreter – by Pat Townsel

We all know that George Brown speaks Spanish. But would you believe he is multilingual beyond Spanish and English. If you have called and gotten his voice mail, it would be easy to answer yes, he also is fluent in French. That is not all, but this is just a teaser as I am going to let you ask George to speak in the other language he knows and see if you can determine what it is.

Did you know that George is a “Street Soldier”, volunteers for the Red Cross; at a voting site for local and national elections, and translating for other organizations and events? His favorite food is pizza, and chicken is one of his least favorites. And most importantly, George is very close to God, being one of the least anxious persons you’ll ever meet. He believes in prayer, and when he has a concern, trustingly, patiently says, “It’s OK, I placed it in God’s hands and He is in control. It’ll be fine.”

Have a little chat with him sometime and you may discover the information shared here is just the tip of the iceberg! Hint, just ask him about life in New York.

<p style="text-align: center;">SAVE YOUR STAMPS</p> <p>Please save your Forever Stamps and stamps with postage amount from letters received. The stamps should be cut 1/4” on each side.</p> <p>Stamps may be given to Gladys Turner Finney.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ELECTRONIC GIVING</p> <p>Those worshipping online are welcome to send your offering by mail directly to College Hill Church, 1547 Philadelphia Drive, Dayton, OH 45406 or On-Line contributions are available as follows: Website: https://giving.servantkeeper.com/chcc-dayton-oh/member/login.</p>
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Temporary Change in College Hill Communion - Larry Hollar, W&M Chair

In last month’s newsletter I described in detail some changes in the timing and format of communion at our church that Worship & Music has made recently. Those changes included the expectation that we would continue to transition from using the sealed cups with wafer and juice to instead offering elements by intinction, where the congregation is invited to come forward and receive the two elements in sequence up front (while those choosing to remain in the pews will be served there). However, due to the significant outbreak of flu in many parts of the country at this time of year, we are temporarily returning to use of the sealed cups, feeling those are safer for those concerned about the flu. After flu season ends, Worship & Music will consider how to proceed with communion in the future.

From Your Voices to Our Hearts and Hands



Some of you may remember from our Congregational Gathering that there were some concerns raised about communication and services of the Deacons. Please be assured that your concerns were taken to heart. During 2026, we are hoping you will discuss with your deacon if you feel dissatisfied, and the concern will be satisfactorily remedied.

By the end of February, we pray that MackArthur Lakes and Bernetha Pulliam, who are eagerly waiting to serve, will have been installed and ready to become active on the Deacon Board. Other planned improvements are to:

Publish the name & contact information for each deacon and the names of their Shepherding List members in our church newsletter

Include that list in a printed church directory that will be distributed to everyone
Resume Deacon Sunday to highlight Deacon activities during worship service followed by a
gathering in Fellowship Hall.

Maintain communication through calls, visits, worship service connections, assistance for
members/friends, collaborating with other ministries, considering your suggestions
throughout the year.

We thank you in advance for your prayers, feedback, and other support.

Deacon Pat Townsel

You're Invited To
**Miami Valley Immigration
Coalition's
Community
Mobilization**
February 21, 2026



REGISTER by 2/18 at
www.mvicdayton.org/events
Connect, Learn, and Take Action
Together!



SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 21, 2026



Time
1-3 PM



UIE-CWA Union Hall
313 S Jefferson St,
Dayton, OH 45402

What Happened? What Now?

Reflect on what has happened and how we respond moving forward in support of our neighbors.

If you have accessibility or interpretation needs, please indicate that in your registration!

¿Necesitas interpretación? Por favor indíquelo en su inscripción.



More Information:

ImmigrationDayton@gmail.com



Special Hosting of Sunday, Feb. 22, 2:00 pm Collaborative Congregations Worship Service at College Hill

College Hill for a year and a half has been part of a group of smaller churches in our presbytery who gather for worship, mission, fellowship, and mutual support. Periodic gatherings mostly in months with five Sundays have included a picnic with games, an ice cream social, a hymn sing, worship, and creative stations. Participating churches include Faith Huber Heights, Corinth, First Fairborn, and other area churches.

For the first time College Hill Community Church hosts this group on Sunday, February 22, at 2:00 pm in our Fellowship Hall with a worship service drawing both on themes related to the beginning of Lent and on the musical heritage of Black History Month. Come join us to hear the Voices of Fellowship (a group that rehearses in our church) sing songs from their repertoire and also Isaiah Jones, Jr's "God Has Smiled on Me." "Precious Lord" and "Lift Every Voice and Sing" are also planned. A variety of spiritual and meditative moments to begin our Lenten journey will be interwoven, reminding us of the reality of lament and the need to journal our own feelings during the Lenten period ahead. Don't miss the opportunity to join other local Presbyterians in this meaningful connection. Refreshments will be provided.

The worship will end by 3:00 pm to allow those interested in participating in the first of three training sessions relating to Christian Nationalism that the presbytery's Committee on Representation and Diversity is sponsoring to do so. For more information on those training events, see <https://miamipresbytery.org/series-on-christian-nationalism/> or the flyer provided elsewhere in the Social Justice & Peacemaking portion of this newsletter.

February 2026 Worship Plans

Sunday, February 1, 2026: 4th Sunday after Epiphany, Communion Sunday; 10:30 am Scriptural Texts: Micah 6:1-8; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12. Sermon: "What does the Lord require of you?" Communion, First Fruits Offering, Poetry Moment for Black History Month.

Sunday, February 8, 2026: 5th Sunday after Epiphany; 10:30 am Scriptural Texts: Isaiah 58:1-12; 1 Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20. Sermon: "The restorer of streets to live in." Poetry Moment for Black History Month; Moment for Mission, Social Justice & Peacemaking.

Sunday, February 15, 2026: Transfiguration of the Lord; 10:30 am Scriptural Texts: Exodus 24:12-18; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9. Sermon: “This is my Son; listen to him!” Youth Sunday, Time for Children in worship; Youth activities for Black History Month.

[Wednesday, February 18, 2026: Ash Wednesday, when the Season of Lent begins. There will be no worship service that day at College Hill Community Church, but we plan to offer ideas where you could find an Ash Wednesday service at a nearby church.]

Sunday, February 22, 2026: 1st Sunday in Lent; 10:30 am Scriptural texts: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11. Black History moment; celebrate February birthdays.

Worship and Music Committee Highlights from January 2026

At last month’s meeting on January 13, your Worship & Music Committee:

--Expressed gratitude that session and the presbytery’s Committee on Ministry had approved the stated supply pastor contract with Rev. Tinsley for 2026, addressing his pastoral duties and compensation to more fully reflect what he has been providing to the church.

--Celebrated that during December we had two baptisms on Dec. 7, and welcomed a new church member on Dec. 21 and a second on Jan. 11. The youth collaborated on a special presentation of Las Posadas on Dec. 21. The confirmands’ welcome will come in the new year.

--Made general worship plans from January 2026 to early April 2026, when Easter occurs. Agreed that, during flu season, communion elements will be distributed in the sealed cups we used earlier during COVID and later. Agreed to move toward having a land acknowledgement in bulletins recognizing the previous presence and contributions of Native Americans in the lands we now call home.

--In an effort to reduce the length of worship services, we agreed to consider some additional changes: for example, only doing an Affirmation of Faith on communion and occasional other Sundays; streamlining the way we welcome visitors and also gather prayers from the congregation, by eliminating written prayer sheets and encouraging brief spoken prayers from the congregation; assigning two people rather than one to go around sanctuary with a microphone to expedite prayers; looking again at the amount of Spanish spoken during worship versus interpreted.

--W&M welcomed three representatives by Zoom from the Collaborative Congregations group to continue planning for College Hill hosting a special Lenten Worship Service on February 22, 2026, at 2:00 pm (see more in-depth article elsewhere in this February newsletter). Further planning with the CC group will happen Jan. 20. College Hill will not do its own Ash Wednesday service on Feb. 18, but will encourage our members to attend services at other churches.

--Noted that we are continuing to search for a piano accompanist for our services. Meanwhile José Jones and Vicki Penn are providing supply piano service.

--Agreed to the purchase of new Christmas wreaths now for next year.

--W&M meets next on Tuesday, February 10 at 5:00 pm via Zoom.

Series on Christian Nationalism

Faithful, Courageous, and Practical Conversations - Shared by Social Justice & Peacemaking Ministry

Christian nationalism is an ideology that seeks to merge Christian and American identities. It suggests that to be a “true” American, one must be Christian in a particular way—often white, conservative, and politically aligned with nationalist values. It confuses loyalty to God with loyalty to country, and uses religious language to justify systems of power, racial exclusion, and cultural dominance. This is not the same as patriotism, nor is it about expressions of personal faith in public life. Rather, Christian nationalism insists on a narrow, state-supported expression of religion that marginalizes others and undermines core Christian values such as compassion, justice, and humility.

As part of our commitment to dismantling systemic injustice and affirming the image of God in every person, the **Committee on Representation and Diversity** (CORD) of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley is hosting a series of events that will engage pastors, congregations, and local leaders in faithful, courageous, and practical conversations around this critical issue.

Teach the Teachers Event on Zoom

Sunday, February 22, 2026, 3:00 PM

This event is for Teaching and Ruling Elders and will be led by Dr. **Miranda Zapor Cruz**, author of *Faithful Politics: Ten Approaches to Christian Citizenship and Why It Matters*. This session will help equip our church leaders with definitions of Christian Nationalism, the theological streams and heresies often intertwined with it, and strategies for preaching

and leading Bible studies or other conversations on this topic. Registration information will be coming soon.

**Unmasking Christian Nationalism:
Faithful Witness in the Face of Exclusion and Harm**

Saturday, March 21, 2026, 1:00-4:00 PM

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Springboro and online

This event is for anyone involved in our community of congregations in the PMV and will be led by the Rev. **Marciana Bain** and **Dr. Miranda Zapor Cruz**.

Listen in to a conversation between these two friends and colleagues and bring your own questions and concerns as they help us explore and reflect on what Christian Nationalism is, what it isn't, how it operates and harms, and how any and all disciples can learn and respond faithfully. Watch for registration information coming soon.

Looking ahead to April 2026

Exploring Faithful Direct Action and Resistance to Christian Nationalism, a community event.

Bach Society Sings of War and Peace on March 22

Make plans now to be present when the Bach Society of Dayton offers a musical reflection on war and peace for the Dayton Peace Festival on Sunday, March 22, at 4:00 pm at the Kettering Seventh-Day Adventist Church, 3939 Stonebridge Rd., Kettering. The concert features Joseph Haydn's Missa in Tempore Belli (Mass in Time of War); J.S. Bach's Cantata 130; Randall Thompson's renowned Alleluia; and Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks's haunting Dona Nobis Pacem (Grant Us Peace). The Bach Society chorus, featured soloists, and the Bach Society of Dayton Orchestra are the artists for this concert. A concert preview lecture at 3:00 pm amplifies the themes of the music. For tickets or information, see <https://bachsocietyofdayton.org/concerts>.

