

The Reformer

The Reformed Church of Port Ewen

Reverend Brian Steadman—Pastor

FEBRUARY

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Inside this Issue

Pastor's Reflection 2
(continued)

"Yellow Pages" 3

Prayer List 3

Presidents Birthdays 4

Stewardship Moment 5

Ministry Fair 6

Jackson's Baptism 6

Mission of the Month 7

Birthdays and Anni-
versaries 7

The Back Pew 8

Movies with Spirit 8

Recognizing a Saint 9

February Lectionary 10

Kindness Day

Feb. '26 Calendar 11

Coloring Page

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RCPE Family,

The monk of the Order of St. Benedict, Brother Paul David Fitt (d.2016), more commonly known as Brother Paul, said, "God cannot love you more. God already loves you infinitely. You just need to become more aware of [God's] love...by becoming more present to it. It's like hearing birdcalls. By paying attention and delighting in it."

In similar fashion, the poet David Whyte in his poem *Everything is Waiting for You* says, "Alertness is the hidden discipline of familiarity."

I first began paying attention to birds during my sabbatical the summer of 2024. My interest developed from exploring the life of St. Francis of Assisi. It is said that Francis would wander the hills and forests singing a joyful hymn to God and the birds would alight on his outstretched arms. You've probably seen art and sculptures depicting this legend. Francis called the birds brother and sister. He called all things brother and sister, the wind, the rain, the trees, even his own body, addressing them as their own unique entities to be acknowledged for their sacred dignity and interconnectedness to himself and all things.

When I started birding proper, I was astounded that for 47 years of my life, I had always been surrounded by the calls and songs of birds, but never paid much attention. Of course the out of the ordinary calls of owls while sitting around a campfire or the screech of a bird of prey would gain my attention. But so many birds that I heard or saw I never paid attention to them. Therefore, I never delighted in them. And this realization both saddened me that I had missed out on something that brought me delight simply because I was not alert, and gladdened me because it wasn't too late to start paying attention and learn their names, their colors, and of course their songs. When I see a bird, I try not to say, "Oh, it's just a sparrow." It's not "just" a sparrow. It's a delight!

In the same way, we tend to go about life unalert to the familiarity of God's presence with us, in us, all around us, all the time. It's so easy to be distracted and unattuned due to our to-do lists, our worries, our anxieties, our concerns. Which are all legit, they just tend to be the only sound we hear. And understandably so, they are LOUD! And then there is all the noise around us (war, violence, division, hate, injustice, insecurity), crowding out all other voices, calls, songs, and delights. And so we struggle to be present to God's love which is there, if only we could pay attention and hear Love's song.

(continued on page 2)



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So what do we do? Maybe the next time you hear a bird song and notice it, stop. Listen. Say to yourself, "That's not just a robin. That's Sister Robin. And she's telling me that God loves me." Or the next time your husband or wife or daughter or son laughs, stop. Listen. That's the voice of Love telling me God loves me.

And if that hidden discipline of familiarity to God's presence is still alluding you, join us on Wednesday nights at contemplative prayer. That's what we are doing. Building up our alertness muscles so that God's presence becomes more readily familiar to us.

And keep in mind, this is no New Year's resolution. This is an intention and resolve that doesn't come quickly and you are never not a student. It takes time and patience. Sort of like my birdfeeders I got as a Christmas present and I still don't have birds flocking to them. Except for one male and one female house finch. But I call them Brother Brian and Sister Jessie. They are the first delight and I will wait patiently for more delights to arrive.

Brian's Birding New Additions January
None! But I'll keep listening and watching.

For February, the [Chickadee](#) is recognized as a key bird of the month due to its resilience, staying active and social throughout the cold, harsh winter months. Other notable candidates often featured in February include the [Parrot](#) (symbolizing personality/color), the [Cardinal](#) (linked to love/passion), and the [Mourning Dove](#).

- **Chickadee (Farmers' Almanac):** Symbolizes endurance and social behavior, often seen in groups during winter.
- **Parrot (Birth Month Birds):** Known for being spunky, smart, and colorful.
- **Cardinal (Birdfy):** Bright red color makes them highly visible and associated with love, often, notes [Birdfy](#), making them a popular February choice.
- **Mourning Dove (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service):** Highlighted for Feb 2025 as a symbol of hope and remembrance.
- **Red-tailed Hawk (WNY Young Birder Club):** Often active and visible during February.

February is also recognized as **National Bird Feeding Month**, as it is considered one of the toughest months for birds to survive.

R.C.P.E. Yellow Pages

Data at your fingertips

Prayer Chain

Proverbs 15:29

"The Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous."

We amplify this power of prayer when we pray together.

To activate the chain for you or someone else, call Katherine Kinsch at 338-6378. That day, a team will be praying for you. Confidentiality pledged.

Consistory Meets

The 2nd Friday of each month at 11:00 AM Meetings open--call 331-2782 for agenda space. Next meeting February 13, 2026

ELDERS

Beverly Gallagher

Sunny Scherry

Len Falcinelli

DEACONS

Matthew Van Aken

Linda Bresnahan-McCarthy

Colleen Sutton



(Prayers will stay on for one month unless notified otherwise)

World — Prayers for our country, troubled areas of our world, Israel's conflict, the Middle East, the innocent Palestinians, all of the people attacked in Israel, people of Ukraine, world peace, political leaders, a solution for the refugee crisis, for all the homeless.

Church Worldwide — Religious persecution in Bangladesh, the persecuted Church (China, Nigeria, North Korea).

RCA — Sudan Mission, Oman Protestant Church and Bode family, Al-Amada Ctr.

Mid-Hudson Classis — Rev. Ann & Ron Rost, Bob Vanderlaan.

Petitions of healing, protection, and deliverance — Nina Stein, Christine Ellison, Chris Roscoe & family, Mike Bennett, Vivian Gonzales, Essie Zaheedi.

Church Family — Curt Bradley, Rev. Linda & Nick Miles.

Homebound/nursing homes/institutions — Bea Hogan.

Grieving — Family & friends of: Robert Shelightner, Samantha Berger.



Presidential Birthdays in February

Introduction

Presidents' Day, observed in February, is a time when Americans honor the legacy of the nation's leaders. While the holiday is most closely associated with George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, it's worth noting that a total of four U.S. presidents were born in February. This month serves as a reminder of their enduring contributions to the country and their unique places in American history.

Presidents Born in February

Below are the four U.S. presidents whose birthdays fall in February. Their lives and legacies are often celebrated during Presidents' Day events and other historical commemorations throughout the month.

Ronald Reagan – Born on February 6, 1911, Ronald Reagan served as the 40th president of the United States from 1981 to 1989. Known for his charismatic leadership and communication skills, Reagan's presidency saw significant economic reforms and the end of the Cold War.

William Henry Harrison – Born on February 9, 1773, Harrison was the 9th president. Though his time in office was the shortest in history—lasting only 31 days due to illness—his military achievements and campaign style left a lasting impact.

Abraham Lincoln – Born on February 12, 1809, Lincoln is widely regarded as one of the greatest American presidents. As the 16th president, he led the nation through the Civil War, preserved the Union, and issued the Emancipation Proclamation to end slavery.

George Washington – Born on February 22, 1732, Washington was the nation's first president and is often referred to as "The Father of His Country." His leadership during the Revolutionary War and his role in shaping the presidency set essential precedents for future leaders.

Celebrating Presidential Legacies

During February, historical societies, schools, and communities across the country host events, exhibitions, and educational programs to honor these presidents. The month provides an opportunity to reflect on their achievements and the ways each shaped the course of American history.

Conclusion

While George Washington and Abraham Lincoln are the most prominent figures associated with Presidents' Day, William Henry Harrison and Ronald Reagan also deserve recognition for their February birthdays and contributions to the nation. By exploring their stories, Americans gain a richer understanding of the diverse leadership that has guided the United States through its history.



Imposition of ashes: February 18, 2026

All in the sanctuary.

7:00-7:30 AM
12:00-12:30 PM
7:00-7:30 PM

Not doing the drive by ashes.

Stewardship Moment

Day 24 – Why be so generous?

1 Timothy 6:18-19

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds,

and to be generous and willing to share.

In this way, they will lay up treasures as a firm

foundation for the coming age, so that they may take

hold of the life that is truly life.

When people think of Christianity, they often already know a lot about its rules and its standards. They know so much about dos and don'ts; but they often don't know much about the bigger question, "Why?"

It should be no surprise to you that the Bible commands us to live generously. 1 Timothy 6 commands us to be rich in good deeds, to be generous and willing to share. But, do you know what reason Paul gives for living this kind of generous life/ whatever the reason is, it is going to make a huge difference in our ability and desire to live out this command.

Some people think God tells us to things just for cold obedience – as though God just wants to see if you'll do something difficult and self-sacrificing for Him. While one of the biggest ways we love God is by obeying Him, God is so generous to us that He also gives us huge rewards to encourage us to obey.

The reason Paul gives for our good deeds and generosity is two-fold.

First, he says that by living this way we will lay up treasure for the coming age. In living generously, we are actually storing up eternal treasure. It's like a spiritual investment plan, invest a little now to receive way more in heaven!

Second, Paul says that we will be taking hold of the life that is truly life. By living generously in light of eternity, we are giving up temporary things like our treasure or our time, the things some people think are essentials of life, and in exchange we get to have true and full life from God, the kind of life God wants most for us. So when God calls us to obey and live generously we do so knowing that what He offers us is so much greater than what He calls us to give up.

Today's Generosity Challenge:

Again let's reflect on the last 23 Generosity Challenges. What have you learned about the "why" of being generous? Write down your thoughts here at <http://GenerousLife.net/Day24>. Now, how has it begun to change you?

* Michael L. Stickler, *A Journey to Generosity (41 Days to a Generous Life)* the Visiongroup Ltd. 2013. Pages 59-60

Ministry Fair Jan. 11

We hosted a ministry fair following the church service Jan. 11. Our committees were on hand to answer questions about their missions and how people might be able to assist.



Welcome Jackson Showers!

We celebrated the baptism of Jackson Showers, son of Kelsey (Lalor) and John Showers on Jan. 21. May the Lord bless you and keep you, Jackson.



The February Mission of the Month is *the St. James Happy to Help Food Pantry*. The pantry is located at the St. James United Methodist Church at 35 Pearl Street in Kingston. It operates more like a grocery store, allowing patrons to choose what food they want, rather than providing those in need with prepared bags of food. The pantry, which is open three Sundays per month, is staffed almost entirely by volunteers and more volunteers are needed. If you feel called to donate to this mission, please write checks to The Reformed Church of Port Ewen and write "February M.O.M." on the memo line. Online giving is also available.



Note : the Mission of the Month for January 2026 collected \$ 335.00 for Place of Serenity

February Birthdays

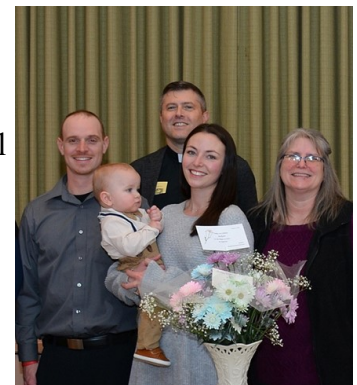
- 3 Arlene Wilhelm
- 4 Joseph Relyea
- 10 Mike Kinsch, Sr.
- 18 Shannon Goodrich
- 19 Joseph Sutton
- 21 Bev Gallagher
- 24 Cheyenne Candlin
- 25 Marie Klippel
- 27 Paula Van Aken

March Birthdays

- 26 Nick Miles
- 30 Johnny Candlin



I would like to thank everyone who braved the cold and snow for attending Jackson Daniel Shower's Baptism. It was a wonderful service. I am so happy to have Pastor Brian's 1st Baptism at RCPE be with my grandson. Thank you to family care for the coffee hour with cake. Thank you to Anita for a beautiful bouquet of flowers and thank you to the choir for a beautiful song. We are truly blessed to have a wonderful Church family to celebrate with. Blessings of Peace,
Bonnie Lalor



The Back Pew Clean Humor & God's Truth



MOVIES WITH SPIRIT

Feb. 21, HALLELUJAH: LEONARD COHEN, A JOURNEY, A SONG (2021), Old Dutch Church, 272 Wall St., Kingston — This profound documentary explores the remarkable life and spiritual journey of poet, singer-songwriter and monk Leonard Cohen through the lens of his iconic song “Hallelujah.” Drawing on rare archival material, personal notebooks and revealing interviews — including with collaborators John Cale, Judy Collins, Jeff Buckley and Rufus Wainwright — the film traces the song’s long arc — from rejection by Columbia Records to global anthem status — and in doing so captures Cohen’s poetic craft, late-career resurgence and lifelong quest for meaning, love and transcendence. “[A] majestic, almost symphonic documentary.” — Joe Morgenstern, *The Wall Street Journal*. “The tale of ‘Hallelujah’ serves as a metaphor for Cohen’s life.” — David Browne, *Rolling Stone*. “What turns out to be the most moving and meaningful thing about the film isn’t the song at its center, but the work ethic of a man who might have disappeared from the public eye for years at a time but never stopped sweating every word.” — Ann Hornaday, *The Washington Post*. Rated PG-13.



"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" —Matthew 22:37-39

Recognizing Our Church's Saints

The Reformed Church of Port Ewen is blessed to have many saints whose unwavering dedication and faith continue to enrich our church family. Each month, we will pause to honor members who exemplify selfless service and a steadfast commitment to our church's mission. Their actions inspire us all and strengthen the bonds within our community.

This Month's Honoree: Linda Bresnahan-McCarthy

It is with great joy and gratitude that we recognize Linda Bresnahan-McCarthy for her many years of unselfish service. Linda's tireless efforts have touched countless lives in our congregation, and her steadfast devotion has become a shining example of Christian love and generosity. Whether working quietly behind the scenes or stepping up to lead, Linda consistently puts others before herself, embodying the true spirit of service.

A Legacy of Musical Excellence

Linda's service as Organist and Choir Director has been a cornerstone of our worship experience. Her exceptional talent and unwavering commitment have greatly enriched our services, week after week, providing music that uplifts and inspires both choir members and churchgoers. Linda's musical gifts have brought beauty to our worship and fostered a sense of unity and joy among all who participate in the choir and congregation.

Dedication Beyond Music

Linda's contributions extend beyond music. Her steadfast involvement with the Building and Grounds Committee has been invaluable to our church. Through her leadership, countless improvements have been made to our church and parsonage properties, ensuring that our facilities are welcoming, well-maintained, and reflective of the care we all have for our spiritual home. Linda approaches every project with good humor and cheerfulness, making even the most challenging tasks lighter and more enjoyable for everyone involved.

A Grateful Community

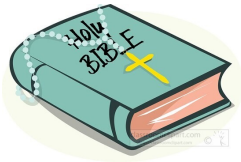
We are truly blessed by Linda's presence, dedication, and positive spirit. Her years of service stand as an enduring example of selfless commitment and genuine care for our church community. On behalf of all members and friends of the Reformed Church of Port Ewen, we extend our deepest appreciation to Linda McCarthy for all she has done—and continues to do—to enhance our worship and our church home.

With Heartfelt Thanks

Linda, your faith, joy, and service shine brightly within our congregation. Thank you for inspiring us and for embodying the values that make the Reformed Church of Port Ewen such a special place. May God continue to bless you as you bless others.

"Wishing you a Valentine's Day filled with the knowledge that you are cherished by God with a love that never fails"

Lectionary Scripture Readings for February 2026



First reading and Psalm	Alternate first reading	Second reading	Gospel
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February 1, 2026 Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12

February 8, 2026 Isaiah 58:1-9a, Psalm 112:1-9; 1 Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

February 15, 2026 Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

February 22, 2026 Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7; Psalm 32; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

National Random Acts of Kindness Day is celebrated annually on February 17th to encourage spreading joy and positivity through selfless actions. Originating in 1995, it inspires individuals and groups to perform small, unexpected acts—like paying for coffee, leaving nice notes, or volunteering—without expecting anything in return.

Key details about the day include:

- Purpose: To make kindness the norm, promoting compassion and community, and to boost mental well-being for both the giver and receiver.



Origins: Rooted in the 1990s, with The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation later championing the movement.

- How to Celebrate:
 - Small Actions: Compliment a stranger, let someone go ahead in line, or send a thank-you note.
 - Community Support: Donate to a food bank, volunteer, or help a neighbor with chores.
 - Digital Kindness: Share positive messages on social media or send an encouraging text.



February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00 am Worship 10:00 am Children's Church 5-8 pm AA (FH)	2	3 5-8 pm AA (FH)	4 12:30 pm Bible Study (Lib) 4-9:30 pm SCA (FH) 7-7:45 pm Contemplative Prayer	5	6	7 6:30-10:30 pm Hudson Valley Comm Dance (FH)
8 10:00 am Worship 10:00 am Children's Church 5-8 pm AA (FH)	9 1:00 pm Mystery Book Club (Lib)	10 9 am—2 pm Woodstock Weavers 5-8 pm AA (FH)	11 12:30 pm Bible Study (Lib) 4-9:30 pm SCA (FH) 7-7:45 pm Contemplative Prayer	12	13 11:00 am Consistory Mtg. (Lib)	14
15 10:00 am Worship 10:00 am Children's Church 5-8 pm AA (FH)	16	17 5-8 pm AA (FH)	18 ASH WEDNESDAY 12:30 pm Bible Study (Lib) 4-9:30 pm SCA (FH) 7-7:45 pm Contemplative Prayer	19	20 REFORMER DEADLINE 5-9:00 pm ANA (FH)	21
22 FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT 10:00 am Worship 10:00 am Children's Church 5-8 pm AA (FH)	23	24 5-8 pm AA (FH)	25 12:30 pm Bible Study (Lib) 4-9:30 pm SCA (FH) 7-7:45 pm Contemplative Prayer	26	27	28

February 2026 Reformer

Our facilities are handicapped accessible

We're on the net!
Therpcpe.org

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