

# ReSOUNDS

April 2026

The Newsletter of ResoundingJoy Church

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Presbyterian Church (USA)

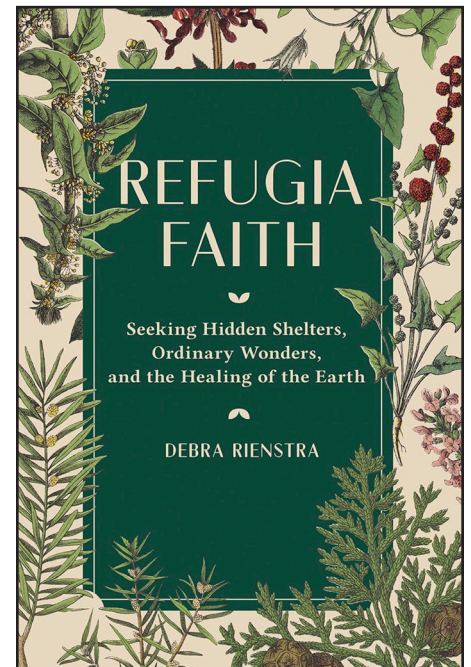
## Refugia Faith *Those Little Pockets of Safety*

One of my earliest memories is when I was six years old when I saw a layer of dust on the black trash bags full of lawn clippings sitting outside our garage. I remember running my finger through the ¼" or so of dust and seeing the streaks left from my fingers. This was in the days following the eruption of the Mt. St. Helens volcano in Washington state on May 18, 1980.

That memory came back clearly to me as I read the introduction to Debra Rienstra's amazing book, *Refugia Faith: Seeking Hidden Shelters, Ordinary Wonders, and the Healing of the Earth*. She began the introduction with this (my book highlight in bold):

"When Mount Saint Helens erupted in May of 1980, it lost 1,300 feet of elevation and gained a new mile-and-a-half-wide crater. The debris and ash fall from the volcanic blast devastated the mountain and its surroundings for miles, crushing, burning, killing, and coating everything in hot ash. Everyone assumed life could return to this apocalyptic death zone only very slowly, maybe over several human lifetimes.

Instead, forty years later, the moun-



tainsides are covered with lush grasses, prairie lupines, alders. Critters scamper, streams flow. It will take a few hundred more years for the vegetation to return to something like old-growth forest. But still. Why did life come back with such vigor, and so quickly? As Kathleen Dean Moore explains in her book, *Great Tide Rising*, "What the scientists know now, but didn't understand then, is that when the mountain blasted ash and rock across the landscape, the devastation passed over some small places hidden in the lee of rocks and trees. Here, a bed of moss and deer fern under a rotting log. There, under a *Continued on next page*

# Finance News

*From Lee Sanders, Treasurer*

For the first two months of 2026, which is 16.7% of the year, we have brought in \$34,022 or 16.2% of our projected direct income (that is, money that goes toward the general budget and not toward specific items, such as per capita or the non-food pantry). We have spent \$49,609 from the general budget (again, not including separately funded items), or 17.3%. Both are fairly close to the 16.7% that put us “on track.” However, we should remember that we approved a deficit budget this year, while we are still in “start-up” mode, so the difference between

income and expense is larger than we’d like. But as noted in the Session report, the deficit for February is less than that from January, so we are making progress!

Special thanks to those who are able to pay the credit card fees when they contribute online. That lessens RJC’s overall expense line!

## Good News for SON Ministries!

No more special coin counting! Money for SON Ministries has been built into the 2026 Mission budget (and it’s an increase from the coin contributions of 2025), plus a check has already been sent

(which, by the way, was part of a matching grant program, thereby multiplying its benefit!). This means that whatever coins are in the offering plates will go to the general budget, which then funds the Mission budget and all the good things it funds, including SON. As always, we are grateful for every dollar, every penny!

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask Lee Sanders or any member of Session.

***“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”***  
— Matthew 6:21 NIV

*Continued from front page*

boulder, a patch of pearly everlasting and the tunnel to a vole’s musty nest.’ **These little pockets of safety are called refugia. They are tiny coverts where plants and creatures hide from destruction, hidden shelters where life persists and out of which new life emerges.**” (Rienstra, Debra. *Refugia Faith: Seeking Hidden Shelters, Ordinary Wonders, and the Healing of the Earth* (pp. 3-4). Kindle Edition.)

Few books in recent years have stuck with me as *Refugia Faith* has. As Dr. Rienstra goes through the intersections between refugia in nature and the current situations we find ourselves both in the church and in the wider culture, I kept finding myself thinking about us as RJC and also ways in which we can reflect upon what people are looking for in a faith community today. Each of us who is a part of RJC has come to this new thing out of the loss of

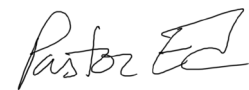
something else — a congregation we had been a part of for years. There was (and is) the grief of losing places and identities and the unsettledness of the unknown. But our coming together was like those little places described above “where life persists and out of which new life emerges.”

But I also am feeling a Spirit-led leading about how this could be something for us to center on as we move into a new season of outreach to our community. How can we engage our communities, our neighborhoods, our relationships and bring to them a sense of refugia and restoration? So many of us today are feeling the weight of losses of so much and we are longing for places to renew. But what I love about the idea of refugia is that it is not just about things finding places to persist in the midst of devastation, but that they are using those spaces to grow and for new life to

emerge. What I see and experience around us feels like this is a place we could be uniquely gifted and positioned to offer to the world.

I don’t yet know what this looks like for us as RJC but I do feel this leading and I would love to explore it more with people who want to engage with imagination, wonderment, and hope for what is ahead.

Grace, Peace, Love, Hope, and Joy,



Pastor Ed

***“Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.”***

— Psalm 62:8 (NIV)

# Your Bible Questions

From Pastor Ed

**Pastor Ed, why do you sometimes say “The Hebrew Scriptures” instead of “The Old Testament”?**

There’s nothing “magic” about the names, “Old Testament” and “New Testament.” They are simply phrases that have been passed down for centuries to speak of the first two-thirds of the Bible and the remaining one-third. Referring to that first two-thirds as The Hebrew Scriptures (or Jewish Scriptures) is simply a statement of respect for the Jewish people who do not view those texts as “old” (which can imply outdated, etc) but instead as their Scriptures. Similarly, it acknowledges that there is still deep truth and wisdom to be found in those and not simply in the “New.”

**What advice do you give for reading the Bible?**

I’ll go with two things. First, remember you are reading someone else’s mail. What I mean by that is that every book we have was written to a specific group of people, at a specific time, with specific customs, and unique circumstances that are vastly different from our own. So within that is a recognition that we need to be patient with things that don’t seem to make sense to us today and also that it is wise to seek resources that will help to understand some of those circumstances.

Second, remember that every translation is an interpretation. Every translation is translated by groups of people with particular theological understandings that guide the ways that they translate

from the Greek and Heberw manuscripts that we have. There is no theologically-neutral translation of the Bible.

**Why read the Bible when there’s so much in there that is hard to read and understand?**

I continue to read the Bible almost every day because it is the core text that has formed the faith that I have centered my life upon. Even with parts that I don’t understand (and some that I really don’t like), I continue to hear God’s Spirit speak through these ancient words and stories. Sometimes what I hear are directions for life and sometimes I hear more questions pushing me to go deeper. Without reading the Bible on a regular basis, I wouldn’t experience either of those things.

**I get tripped up on the names I read throughout the Bible. Its frustrating.**

I totally get it — there’s a *lot* of names in the Bible of places and peoples that are not only hard to pronounce but also sometimes hard to follow. But, like I often tell people helping to lead in worship, not too many people are going to recognize today if you mispronounce someone’s name from 2 Chronicles 14:2 (I just randomly chose a Bible reference, so I don’t even know if there’s a name in there). So try to not get caught up on those details but instead focus on opening yourself up to allow God’s Spirit to take these ancient stories and allow you to hear them as God’s Word for you today.

## RJC Clean Out Days

April 18 and 25

In the transition to our becoming ResoundingJoy Church, one reality that has emerged is that we have a lot of stuff. When you have three congregations merge into one, that is going to happen. As a result, we need to take some time to look at all that we have and decide what we need to hold onto and what should we let go of. So, mark your calendars for **Saturdays April 18 and 25 starting at 9 a.m.** for two “clean out” days here at RJC. We will be going through closets, rooms, the POD in the parking lot, and more.

## Photos from the Easter Egg Hunt



# April Bible Readings

4/1/26	Numbers 31:1-33:39,	Luke 4:31-5:11,	Psalm 64:1-10,	Proverbs 11:22
4/2/26	Numbers 33:40-35:34	Luke 5:12-28,	Psalm 65:1-13,	Proverbs 11:23
4/3/26	Numbers 36:1-Deutonomy 1:46,	Luke 5:39-6:11.	Psalm 66:1-20,	Proverbs 11:23
4/4/26	Deuteronomy 2:1-3:29,	Luke 6:12-38,	Psalm 67:1-7,	Proverbs 11:27
4/5/26	Deuteronomy 4:1-49,	Luke 6:39-7:10,	Psalm 68:1-18,	Proverbs 11:28
4/6/26	Deuteronomy 5:1-6:25,	Luke 7:11-35,	Psalm 68:19-35,	Proverbs 11:29-31
4/7/26	Deuteronomy 7:1-8:20,	Luke 7:36-8:3,	Psalm 69:1-18,	Proverbs 12:1
4/8/26	Deuteronomy 9:1-10:22,	Luke 8:4-21,	Psalm 69:19-36,	Proverbs 12:2-3
4/9/26	Deuteronomy 11:1-12:32,	Luke 8:22-39,	Psalm 70:1-5,	Proverbs 12:4
4/10/26	Deuteronomy 13:1-15:23,	Luke 8:40-9:6,	Psalm 71:1-24,	Proverbs 12:5-7
4/11/26	Deuteronomy 16:1-17:20,	Luke 9:7-27,	Psalm 72:1-20,	Proverbs 12:8-9
4/12/26	Deuteronomy 18:1-20:20	Luke 9:28-50	Psalm 73:1-28	Proverbs 12:10
4/13/26	Deuteronomy 21:1-22:30	Luke 9:51-10:12	Psalm 74:1-23	Proverbs 12:11
4/14/26	Deuteronomy 23:1-25:19	Luke 10:13-37	Psalm 75:1-10	Proverbs 12:12-14
4/15/26	Deuteronomy 26:1-27:26	Luke 10:38-11:13	Psalm 76:1-12	Proverbs 12:15-17
4/16/26	Deuteronomy 28:1-68	Luke 11:14-36	Psalm 77:1-20	Proverbs 12:18
4/17/26	Deuteronomy 29:1-30:20	Luke 11:37-12:7	Psalm 78:1-31	Proverbs 12:19-20
4/18/26	Deuteronomy 31:1-32:27	Luke 12:8-34	Psalm 78:32-55	Proverbs 12:21-23
4/19/26	Deuteronomy 32:28-52	Luke 12:35-59	Psalm 78:56-64	Proverbs 12:24
4/20/26	Deuteronomy 33:1-29	Luke 13:1-21	Psalm 78:65-72	Proverbs 12:25
4/21/26	Deuteronomy 34:1-Joshua 2:24	Luke 13:22-14:6	Psalm 79:1-13	Proverbs 12:26
4/22/26	Joshua 3:1-4:24	Luke 14:7-35	Psalm 80:1-19	Proverbs 12:27-28
4/23/26	Joshua 5:1-7:15	Luke 15:1-32	Psalm 81:1-16	Proverbs 13:1
4/24/26	Joshua 7:16-9:2	Luke 16:1-18	Psalm 82:1-8	Proverbs 13:2-3
4/25/26	Joshua 9:3-10:43	Luke 16:19-17:10	Psalm 83:1-18	Proverbs 13:4
4/26/26	Joshua 11:1-12:24	Luke 17:11-37	Psalm 84:1-12	Proverbs 13:5-6
4/27/26	Joshua 13:1-14:15	Luke 18:1-17	Psalm 85:1-13	Proverbs 13:7-8
4/28/26	Joshua 15:1-63	Luke 18:18-43	Psalm 86:1-17	Proverbs 13:9-10
4/29/26	Joshua 16:1-18:28	Luke 19:1-27	Psalm 87:1-7	Proverbs 13:11
4/30/26	Joshua 19:1-20:9	Luke 19:28-48	Psalm 88:1-18	Proverbs 13:12-14



## Thanks for Helping!

On behalf of the Buildings and Grounds team and the congregation, we want to give a big **thank you** to Cub Scout pack 710, that started our version of Clean Up and Clean Out by picking up sticks and branches, and piling them up for easy pickup and removal by our mowing firm for disposal.

We also want to acknowledge the efforts of our own Paul Sabla and Sam Bradley who cut up the larger downed branches and brought them up to the memorial for pick up.

And lastly, we want to thank Allen Rahm for undertaking cleaning out the barn, power room and for cutting the grass plants down.

## Attendance

March 1:	67
March 8:	76
March 15:	84
March 22:	88
March 29:	92

Online has averaged  
25 unique viewers per Sunday

## Forever Young

Forever Young is a social group for members of all ages that go out to lunch once a month. We will be meeting **Friday, April 10 at 12:00 p.m. at Lake Nina**, 7200 Pippin Rd. If you plan to join us, please contact **Jill Pepple** at (513) 739-6828 or **pepplejill@gmail.com** or **Pat Ossenschmidt** at (513) 385-9154 or **patio9154@fuse.net**

## A Joyful Sound This Holy Week

ResoundingJoy Church has something special in store this Holy Week! Thanks to support from the CYM fund and the generosity of several donors, we have rented a beautiful organ for this sacred season.

The instrument is a two-manual Allen electronic pipe organ, offering a rich and inspiring sound. Its presence will enhance our worship in a meaningful way, especially during Holy Week services.

Because of this experience, we are forming an exploratory committee to consider the possibility of purchasing an organ for our church. This group will focus on creative and thoughtful ways to fund such a project, with a commitment to avoiding

any burden on church finances.

An organ would open new doors for our music ministry. More than half of our choral library is written specifically for organ accompaniment, and many of the hymns we cherish—particularly traditional favorites—were originally composed with the organ in mind. Incorporating this instrument would allow us to more fully experience the depth and beauty of these pieces.

For many in our congregation, the sound of the organ is deeply rooted in our shared history. Each of the three churches that came together to form ResoundingJoy once had organs, though some have since fallen into disrepair. Bringing this

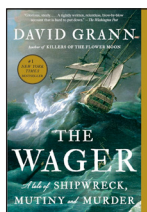
tradition back is something that many have expressed a longing for. There is also excitement among our younger members. Several of our high school choral scholars are eager for the opportunity to learn to play the organ and sing with its accompaniment—an encouraging sign for the future of our music ministry.

We are truly blessed to have the Steinway piano in our sanctuary, which continues to serve us beautifully. Adding an organ would not replace it, but rather enrich and expand the ways we worship together. We look forward to sharing this special Holy Week experience with you—and to exploring what might be possible for the future of music at ResoundingJoy Church.

# Bookies Book Club

On **Tuesday April 28 at 3 p.m.**, Bookies Book Club will meet at **StoneBridge Clubhouse, 10290 Mill Rd. 45231**. The book to be discussed will be:

1) *The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder* by David Grann. For **May 28**:



2) *Buckeye: a novel* by Patrick Ryan. The library has many holds on this book, so it should be reserved now. All are welcome.



Questions can be directed to Nancy Wade: [nlwemail@aol.com](mailto:nlwemail@aol.com)



## Thank You!

Thank you to Doris Nell for planting 90+ tulip bulbs last fall. They have raised their foliage and flowers just in time to welcome all who will attend RJC's Holy week events. Thank you, Doris Nell!

# Session Summary

March 18, 2026

**The Session opened in prayer and reflection led by Pastor Ed that encouraged all to share Christ's love in authentic ways.**

### • Deacons Update

The meeting focused on strengthening congregational care and connection. Work is underway to identify homebound members so that visitation, communion, and other forms of support can be offered more consistently. There is also growing interest in developing a meal ministry to serve those in need within the church family.

### • Financial Update

There is good news. While challenges remain, February showed a significantly reduced deficit compared to January, a positive step forward. January also had further revisions which reduced the deficit from that month.

### • Pillar of Truth Ethiopian Congregation Update.

The Session approved Pillar of Truth to continue to stay on their same schedule for the month of April since RJC did not have firm plans for the use of that part of the building on Sunday mornings in April. However, the Session did reaffirm previous communications that beginning in May, Pillar of Truth will need to shift to Sunday afternoon usage through the end of June or until they have secured a new meeting space.

### • Looking Ahead

Plans are taking shape for several events and opportunities:

- A possible **“Grand Opening” celebration**, with Pentecost or the church's one-year anniversary under consideration

- A summer study, “Meeting Jesus at the Table,” to be held in homes and at church
- Continued preparation for Palm Sunday and Easter, including Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services
- The church will also host an Easter Egg Hunt on March 28, featuring over 1,500 eggs, activities for children, and possibly a visit from the Easter Bunny.

### • Mission and Outreach

- Resounding Joy continues to be deeply engaged in outreach:
- Collections for One Great Hour of Sharing (March 22 & 29)
  - Support for those affected by recent tornadoes
  - Upcoming community events, including a **dinner on April 24** and a visit from the **513 Bus on April 30**
  - A **May 5 fundraiser** for the Help Squad

### • Caring for the RJC Space

Work continues around the church property, with plans for two **“Clean Up and Clean Out” days (April 18 and 25)** to help organize and refresh shared spaces. Members are encouraged to participate as the church stewards its facilities for ministry.

### • Other Updates

- Efforts are underway to ensure RJC appears on Google Maps
- New RJC logo t-shirts are being developed
- Giving envelopes are now available

*This summary was initially created by ChatGPT using the Session minutes but was reviewed and edited by Pastor Ed, Clerk of Session Lori McDonough, and Church Treasurer Lee Sanders.*

# Mission News

## Collection for SON Ministries

For April, please bring 1-lb. boxes of spaghetti.

## The Hamilton County 513Relief Bus, is coming to RJC on April 30 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Co-hosted with The Help Squad, this Community Help Day, will help Colerain and other Hamilton County residents access and learn about resources and support for a variety of needs such as medical, mental health, debt management, housing, utilities, addiction, employment, and more from the 513Relief staff and additional resource providers — absolutely free.

We will need volunteers to help us be welcoming to the Bus staff and those coming for assistance. We have the following opportunities to volunteer. You can stay the whole day or just commit to a shift: Food/Refreshments, Welcome Table, Building Host/Hostess, King's Closet Give-away table, Practical Grace Give-away table, Prayer Partners, Work Product Give-away Table, and Setup and Take down. Look for the sign-up poster in the Narthex and thank you for stepping up to help us show the love of Christ to our neighbors.

## Community Dinner

We're going to host another free community dinner on Friday, April 24. This is open to anyone who wants to enjoy a good, hot meal and some fellowship. We'll be using spaghetti sauce gifted to us from Matthew25 Ministries to serve up a meat and spaghetti meal with cheese, salad, garlic bread, and

desserts. Please let Kim Cornett know if you can donate food items. We'll have a sign-up poster for volunteer opportunities.

## Practical Grace Non-Food Pantry:

Practical Grace served 110 families last month! We're grateful for the volunteers that created the paver walkway from the Nursery to the parking lot, making it easier to distribute products during our drive-through giveaways. We have placed a large garbage can in the Gathering Space next to the Deacon collection box for product donations. **Please consider dropping any of these items in the container:** Shampoo, Bar Soap, Pump Soap, Dish Soap, Laundry Detergent, Bleach, All-purpose Cleanser, Deodorant, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Toilet Paper, Paper Towels and Facial Tissue.

The Help Squad, whose Colerain Township office is located in our church and several RJC members are THS officers and volunteers, will have a major fundraiser on May 5, 2026 at the American Sign Museum. Hosted by Sheree Paoello and Mike Dardis of WLWT News 5, there will be food, fun, a tour of

the museum, baskets, raffles, games, music and more. Valet parking included. Get your tickets under News & Events at [thehelpsquadcincy.com](http://thehelpsquadcincy.com) and help those in need right in our local communities.

**Building the pathway from the door to the parking lot in the nursery has been delayed due to weather.** Four adults have agreed to supervise the project. The Boy Scouts and Hamilton DeMolay are interested in helping. Please watch the announcements for construction day and contact the Mission Committee if you want to help.

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**CINCO DE NEON**

HOSTED BY:  
**SHEREE PAOELLO & MIKE DARDIS**

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER

**THE HELP SQUAD**

**AMERICAN SIGN MUSEUM**

**MAY 5, 2026 6PM**

\$75 / per person

American Sign Museum  
1330 Monmouth Ave Cincinnati

Dinner, Valet Parking and Full Museum Access Included

**VISIT THEHELPSQUADCINCY.COM TO BUY TICKETS**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 7 pm—Maundy Thursday Service	3 7 pm—Good Friday Service (Grosebeck Church)	4 11 am—AA Meeting
5 EASTER 9 am—Bible Study 9:15 am—Choir 10:30 am—Worship 11:45 am—Bible Study	6 7:30 pm—AA meets	7 6:30 pm—Cub Scouts 7 pm—Boy Scouts 7:30 pm—Men's Bible Study	8 1 pm—Deacon's Meeting 6 pm—Ministry Night	9	10 12 pm—Forever Young	11 11 am—AA Meeting
12 9 am—Bible Study 9:15 am—Choir 10:30 am—Worship 11:45 am—Bible Study	13 7:30 pm—AA meets	14 6:30 pm—Cub Scouts 7 pm—Boy Scouts 7:30 pm—Men's Bible Study	15	16	17	18 10 am—Practical Grace Pantry 11 am—AA Meeting
19 9 am—Bible Study 9:15 am—Choir 10:30 am—Worship 11:45 am—Bible Study	20 7:30 pm—AA meets	21 6:30 pm—Cub Scouts 7 pm—Boy Scouts 7:30 pm—Men's Bible Study	22 6 pm—Session Meeting	23 10 am—Kissel Park Condo	24	25 11 am—AA Meeting
26 9 am—Bible Study 9:15 am—Choir 10:30 am—Worship 11:45 am—Bible Study	27 7:30 pm—AA meets	28 6:30 pm—Cub Scouts 7 pm—Boy Scouts 7:30 pm—Men's Bible Study	29	30 10 am—513 Relief Bus		