

## IN THIS ISSUE

- ✧ Pastor's Message
- ✧ Seeking Common Ground
- ✧ March Humor
- ✧ March Services
- ✧ Lenten Services
- ✧ Birthdays and Anniversaries
- ✧ Financial Report
- ✧ Shut-Ins & Military
- ✧ Bingo Prizes
- ✧ Beef Vegetable Soup Sale
- ✧ Emmanuel's Closet
- ✧ Men's Group
- ✧ Creative Crew
- ✧ St. Patrick's Day Sock Hop
- ✧ Chair/Gentle Yoga
- ✧ Messy Church
- ✧ Card & Game Club
- ✧ Meditation/Drum Circle
- ✧ W.O.W.
- ✧ Soul Food
- ✧ Just For Kids
- ✧ March Calendar

## *From the Pastor's Keyboard*



Dear friends in this wonderful family of faith,

Can you believe that we are in March of 2025 already? Lent will soon begin. As you know, Lent is the period of 40 days (not including Sundays) from Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday during which many Christians remember the events leading up to and including the death on the cross of Jesus Christ, whose life and teachings are the foundation of our Christian faith. This 40-day period is called Lent after an old English word meaning 'lengthen' because this is the time of year when the days start to get longer as we get closer and closer to spring. It is also a time of reflection and of asking for forgiveness, and when we Christians prepare to celebrate Jesus's resurrection at Easter, which comes at the end of Lent. During Lent, many people decide to give something up that they love—perhaps chocolate, sweets or even using social media. Others might decide to take up something, like helping out more with chores at home or making an effort to do nice things for their family and friends and church.

Here at Blymire's, we begin Lent with our Ash Wednesday service at 7:00 PM on March 5, which includes a dramatic reading of several scriptures, music by our choir, and the imposition of ashes. We will celebrate Holy Communion during Lent three times—on the first Sunday in Lent, March 9; at our 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Tenebrae and Hand Washing Service on April 17; and on Easter Sunday, April 20. During Lent, our worship theme will be to follow Jesus on His ministry journey (sometimes referred to as the heavenly good, bad, and ugly) while asking ourselves what it means to be faithful followers of Jesus in our time.

We will also be celebrating Lent with several of our sister UCC churches in the UCC York Association. For five Thursdays in Lent, starting on March 13, we will have luncheons (at 12 NOON) followed by worship services (at 1:00 PM). Several of the participating UCC churches will be hosting these joint events. Please check the dates and locations elsewhere in this newsletter. Our turn here at Blymire's Church will be Thursday, March 27, when I will be delivering the message "Are we truly listening and hearing God?" from 1 Samuel 3. The overall theme is: "Dreaming God's Dream from Genesis to Revelation".

Another thing which you may know is happening now is that our search committee, who is searching for our next part-time settled pastor who will team up with our Lay Minister Cindy Innerst-Axe, has formed and has earnestly started its work. In the next few weeks, they will be reading pastoral profiles, interviewing candidates, discerning the future of our church, and making their final pastoral recommendation first to the CMT and then to the congregation for the congregation's vote. The search committee members are chairperson Randi John, recording



secretary Mike Axe, corresponding secretary Barb McFatridge, and members at large Hannah Marshall and Marti Leader. They will keep us informed of their process.

I will be sad to finish my interim pastorate here. But the purpose of interim ministries, of course, is “to work ourselves out of a job.” It has been one of the high privileges and honors of my life to serve among you the last 2 ½ years.

It is more important than ever, now that the search committee is doing its work and eventually honing in on your new pastor, to continue to ask ourselves the questions I have asked us to consider throughout my interim ministry here: Who are we as St. John’s Blymire’s United Church of Christ? Who are our neighbors? Who is God calling us to become as we journey into God’s future? What is our unique niche here in Dallastown? God has yet a lot in store for us here at St. John’s Blymire’s United Church of Christ for service to God and others and for the glory and honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

See you around this month of March, Pastor Rick

### “Seeking Common Ground”

As we have announced previously, “Seeking Common Ground” is a grassroots, nationwide movement that has taken hold in our country recently, particularly in light of last year’s tumultuous election campaigns and the consequences of our recent election. “Seeking Common Ground” involves organizations (such as churches) to sponsor groups that are purposely comprised of “red”, “blue”, and independent people. By design, these groups consist of folks with varying political and theological positions who meet together, with ground rules, to talk about real issues and values that are important to each person and to not gloss over differences. The purpose of these groups is to get folks to truly listen to those with opposing views from theirs, to fully appreciate our differences, to understand others better, and to truly respect each other.

Pastor Rick has been contacting folks, both inside and outside of Blymire’s Church, who are interested in helping them set up such a group. Several of you from St. John’s Blymire’s UCC have already expressed an interest. We hope to get this off the ground soon. Can the church, in fact, model for the world what it means to have faith-based honesty, respect, and inclusivity?

Please contact Pastor Rick if you have questions or an interest.

#### ***March Humor:***

You come from dust.

You will return to dust

That’s why I don’t dust.

It could be someone I know.

*About Ash Wednesday from Instagram:*

Mickey told his mom he was afraid the pastor would throw an egg at him because in his sermon the pastor said: “Take my yoke upon you.”

*from Church Chuckles, by Ellen P. Blooming and Paul Seaburn, New Seasons, Publications International, Ltd., 2005*

Atheist: Do you honestly believe that Jonah spent three days and nights in the belly of a whale?

Preacher: I don’t know, Sir, but when I get to heaven, I’ll ask him.

Atheist: But suppose he isn’t in heaven?

Preacher: Then you ask him!

*from The Best of the Good Clean Jokes, by Bob Phillips, Harvest House Publishers, 1989*

## **MONTH OF SUNDAYS WORSHIP SERVICES FOR MARCH 2025**

### **MARCH 2, 2025 – TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY**

Message Scripture: Luke 9:28-43a      Centering Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:2

Message: “Bursts of Light” Theme: Transfiguration—bursts of light in the midst of gray”

Reflection/Question Time and Sunday School

### **MARCH 5, 2025 – ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE AT 7:00 PM**

Scriptures: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10;

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21      Centering Scripture: Isaiah 58:6-7

Message: “Practicing Life and Death with the Ashes”

Theme: What is the meaning underneath the ashes? Imposition of Ashes

### **MARCH 9, 2025 – FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT—HOLY COMMUNION**

Message Scripture: Luke 4:1-13      Centering Scripture: Romans 10:12-13

Message: What Do You Think of the Devil?”

Theme: What Two Mistakes Do We Often Make When It Comes To The Devil?

Reflection/Question Time and Sunday School following worship

### **MARCH 16, 2025 – SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT**

Message Scripture: Luke 13:31-35      Centering Scripture: Psalm 27:13-14

Message: Cindy Innerst-Axe

Reflection/Question Time and Sunday School

### **MARCH 23, 2025 – THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT – AMISTAD SUNDAY**

Message Scriptures: Isaiah 55:1-9, Luke 13:1-9      Centering Scripture: Psalm 63:3-4

Message: “Who is the Real American Idol?”

Theme: What is God’s economy when our treasures will no longer have value?

Reflection/Question Time and Sunday School following worship

### **THURSDAY, MARCH 27 – OUR TURN HOSTING THE UCC YORK ASSOCIATION LENTEN LUNCHESES (12 NOON) AND WORSHIP SERVICES (1:00 PM)**

Overall Theme: Dreaming God’s Dream...From Genesis to Revelation

Message this Week: “Are We Truly Listening and Hearing God?” 1 Samuel 3,

Pastor Rick preaching

### **MARCH 30, 2025 – FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT**

Message Scripture: Luke 15:1-3, 11-32      Centering Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:17-19

Message: “How Do We Come Clean With Ourselves?”

Theme: What about the bath? Where’s the justice here? Why bother being good?

Reflection/Question Time and Sunday School following worship

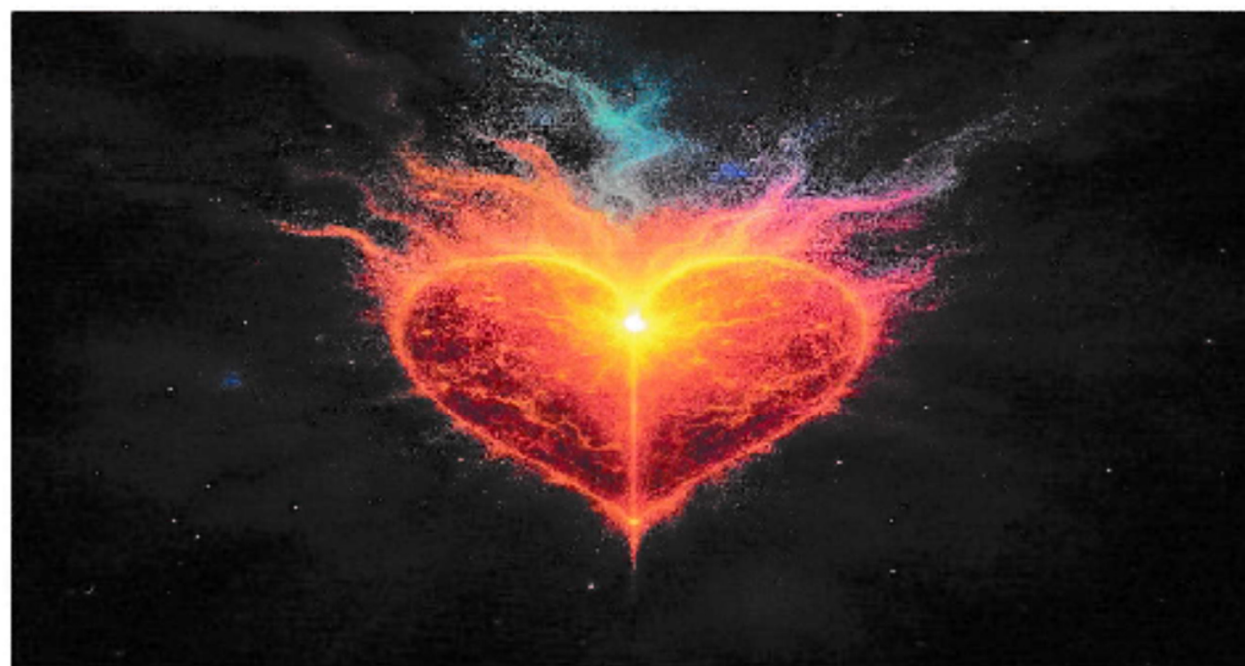


If you don’t want to be late for church on Sunday, March 9, remember to turn your clocks ahead by one hour before going to bed on Saturday, March 8. Daylight saving time begins at 2:00 AM that Sunday.

York Community Lenten Services with Lunch, 2025

Thursdays: Lunch beginning at noon, Service at 1 pm

# "Dreaming God's Dream... from Genesis to Revelation"



**March 13:** at Starview United Church of Christ, 4832 N Sherman St Ext, Mt Wolf, PA 17347, Rev. Laura Baker, Genesis 1-2

**March 20:** at Dover United Church of Christ, 45 W Canal St, Dover, PA 17315, Rev. Cam Richesson, Sarah: Genesis 15, Rachel: Genesis 25, and Rebekah: Genesis 29

**March 27:** at St. John's Blymire's United Church of Christ, 1009 Blymire Rd, Dallastown, PA 17313, Rev. Rick Pulling, 1 Samuel 13

**April 3:** at Hayshire UCC, 100 Haybrook Dr, York, PA 17406, Jamie Gruber, Rev. Brenda Marin, Peter in Acts 10

**April 10:** at Trinity UCC, 32 W Market St, York, PA 17401, Rev. Kellie Turner, Rev. Dr. Dominique Denman, Revelation 21 and 7:9-10

*MARCH*  
*BIRTHDAYS*



2. Sarah Smith  
Lexus Luckenbaugh
7. Matthew John
9. Madison Nugent
10. Patrick Michaels
12. Joel Frey
16. Lillie Eberly
19. Nicki Barley
20. Erin Michaels
22. Joyce Raver
24. David Morton  
Jamison Rost
28. Maya Ness  
Peter Busch  
Diane Ness
29. Wayne Althoff
31. Marshall Geesey

*May God Bless You*  
*On Your*  
*Birthday*



# FINANCIAL REPORT

Undesignated General Fund

Red Brick Chapel

Cemetery

Month-2024	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Income	Expense
January	\$7,763.00	\$10,980.79	\$3001.83	\$384.30	\$1,127.63	\$0.00
February						
March						
April						
May						
June						
July						
August						
September						
October						
November						
December						
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,763.00</b>	<b>\$10,980.79</b>	<b>\$3001.83</b>	<b>\$384.30</b>	<b>\$1,127.63</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

Balance of Undesignated General Fund @ February 1, 2025

\$533.37

Balance of Red Brick Chapel Fund @ February 1, 2025  
(Includes \$63,672.70 Endowment)

\$74,772.73

Balance of Cemetery Fund @ February 1, 2025  
(Includes \$916,449.27 CD's, Trusts, UCC Foundation)

\$936,335.92

## Financial Assistance Given through Hand of Hope Fund - 2025

	#	Total	Monthly	Available
	Families	\$\$\$	Donations	Balance
<b>Beginning</b>				\$ 542.38
January	4	\$225.00	\$ 81.00	\$ 398.38
February				
March				
April				
May				
June				
July				
August				
September				
October				
November				
December				
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>\$225.00</b>	<b>\$ 81.00</b>	

# REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS and those in need of PRAYER

**Terry & Fran Doll**  
Room 346  
Residence @ Fitz Farm  
2200 Springwood Rd.  
York, PA 17403  
Terry's cell (717) 968-2454  
Fran's cell (717) 968-8754

**Peggy Luckenbaugh**  
Room 710B  
York View Nursing Home  
970 Colonial Avenue  
York, PA 17403



**Linda Trone**  
Room 604  
York View Nursing Home  
970 Colonial Avenue  
York, PA 17403

Keeping in our prayers

**Cindie McKinsey**  
**Friends battling cancer**  
**Covid 19 patients**

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**Remember**  
and pray for  
**Our Members**  
in the  
**Military**

**A1C Ness, Brandon**  
6907 S. Camino de la Humanidad  
Tucson, AZ 85756

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## ***B - I - N - G - O***

We are continuing to collect bingo prizes. Some suggestions are chocolate and other candy, single serving snack items, small holiday trinkets for all seasons, word search puzzles, small stuffed animals and Dove bar soap. Please place BINGO prize donations in the box in Fellowship hall—they will be given to Homewood Homes.



### ***Beef Vegetable Soup Sale***

Place your orders now!! Only \$13 for a quart of John Herbst's famous homemade beef vegetable soup. Mike Axe and Cindy Innerst-Axe will be apprenticing in the kitchen with John.

Proceeds from the sale will go to the church's General Fund. Soup that is left after orders are filled will be delivered by John and his apprentice to people who are alone and/or in need in our local area.

There is a signup sheet in the Gathering Room to place your orders. Deadline is Sunday, March 9. Soup may be picked up on Friday, March 14, between 3:00 and 6:00 PM. Thank you in advance for supporting this effort to benefit the church and the community.

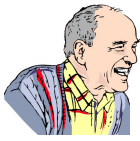
## ***Emmanuel's Closet***



Thank you again for your ongoing support of Emmanuel's Closet. Here is a list items that are currently needed the most: **Peanut butter/jelly, canned meat such as ham, spam, beef stew, roast beef, chicken, pork (no tuna, we have plenty of that).** Of course, other non-perishable food items, as well as paper products, cleaning supplies and toiletries are always welcome.

**Life Path Christian Ministries** has offered a way for us to dispose of items that we are no longer using and help the clients who come to Emmanuel's Closet at the same time. When you donate clothing, books, toys, household items, furniture, etc. at the Life Path Thrift Store at the Cape Horn shopping center, tell them you are donating for St. John's Blymire's UCC. They will keep track of what is donated and will in turn give us gift cards for the Emmanuel's Closet clients to use in their store. If you have a large amount of donations or pieces of furniture that you are unable to bring yourself, call the store at (717) 229-7300 and they will arrange to come to your house to pick up your items.

Since Emmanuel's Closet no longer offers clothing or household items, this is a great way to help our clients while de-cluttering our homes!



## **MEN'S GROUP**



The Men's Group will hold their next meeting on Tuesday, March 11, at 7:00 PM at the church. This month's program will be a well known person where we can't even give out his name since he will be a mystery guest. To scratch the surface, the presenter loves art. After guessing their field of interest, they will present a great program that everyone will be interested in. All are welcome, including the females (we will just call you Bob for the evening).

Also, we will meet at Parma Pizza on East Main Street in Dallastown at 5:30 PM for supper for those interested. And yes, the mystery guest will be present.



We will hold our next meeting on Sunday, March 9, from 2:00-4:30 PM. Bring whatever craft project you are currently working on as you enjoy the company of other crafters.

## **St. Patrick's Day Sock Hop**

Because of the inclement weather, our Valentine's Day sock hop has been rescheduled. It has now become a St. Patrick's Day sock hop on March 15, at 6:00 PM. The evening will feature a dessert buffet and music provided by DJ Mike Hertzog. The event is free of charge. Come out and share an evening of fellowship and fun! There is a sign-up sheet in the Gathering Room.



## **CHAIR/GENTLE YOGA**

Are you looking for some gentle, easy exercise? Come check out our Chair Yoga classes! These classes are especially good for beginners. No equipment is necessary. Yoga is one of the most highly recommended forms of exercise for seniors! You can come occasionally, once, twice or three times a week. Classes are Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:00-11:00 AM here at the church. There is a \$10 fee for each class.

What is Messy Church? It's church, but not as you know it! Messy Church is a form of Community Outreach for families, friends and neighbors. It involves creativity, celebration and hospitality! It's church for people of any age and at all stages of their faith journey. A meal will be provided.



Our next Messy Church planning meeting will be Thursday, March 6, at 6:00 PM. Our next Messy Church gathering will be held on Friday, March 21, 6:00-8:00 PM.



## **CARD and GAME CLUB**



We have started a group to play card and board games here at the church. Everyone is welcome, and if you don't know how to play certain games, there will be someone who can teach you. You can bring lunch or order in.

We meet the second Wednesday of each month starting at 11:00 AM and playing until people are ready to stop. March's meeting will be on the 12th.

## **GUIDED MEDITATION and DRUM CIRCLE**



Meditation and Music are very good ways to deepen your personal spiritual practice. Relax, let go of worldly thoughts, and sink into your soul. We invite you to join us on Saturday, March 15, at 10:00 AM, for Guided Meditation, followed by Drum Circle, with a variety of instruments available. We meet at the home of Cindy Innerst-Axe, 2285 Swamp Road, Dallastown. Questions, call Cindy (717) 855-6330.



## **WOMEN OF WONDER**

Who? What? Where? When? We are a group of women who simply enjoy each other's company, conversation and compassion...while sharing a message of God's love to each other, our church family, and our community. We read scripture and share devotions. We offer advice, support, and sometimes a shoulder. We laugh together and find joy. If this sounds like something you or a friend would like to do, we meet on the 4th Saturday of every month at 11:00 AM at the church. (We also go out to lunch afterward). Hope to see you in the Gathering Room at our next meeting on March 22.





**MARCH  
2025**

You don't get to choose how you're going to die. Or when. You can only decide how you're going to live. NOW.

Joan Baez



**THE WAY I SEE IT**

*People are not intended to see through the eyes of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain. Each human creature has individual endowment, power and responsibility in the creative plan of God.*

**Abdu'l-Baha**

It's important to keep things like this in mind when we try to make others "see things our way." Whenever we try to convince someone else that we see things in the only truly "right" way, we reduce the world to a very limited, very narrow place indeed.

The way I see the world is unique to me, and I value my perspective for exactly what it is: a limited perspective on an unlimited world.

But if I'm to be fair in life, then I must value the perspectives of others, too, as being just as valid as my own. Other people have grown with different experiences and different input into their lives, and it's not up to me to impose my way of seeing things upon others. Once I do so, I'm showing a lack of respect for another person's uniqueness and individuality.

I am who I am, and if I respect that fully then it's easier for me to respect the fact that other people are who they are, and that it's not important for me to try to get them to see the world through my eyes, to understand things the way I understand them. Rather, if I can try to understand the way they see things, I can learn much more about life, living, and this wonderful world of ours by seeing everything in a new light, from a new perspective.

**Tom Walsh**

**A PRAYER FOR GROWING OLDER**

Lord, You know better than I myself, that I am growing older and will someday be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy.

With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all; but You know, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end. Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening sureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet, for a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people; and give, O Lord, the grace to tell them so.

Amen

**Teresa of Avila**

**EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES**

Legalism is a systematic process of defending self, explaining self, exalting self, and justifying self. Legalists are obsessed with self, not God. Legalism turns my opinion into your burden. There's only room for one opinion, and guess who's wrong?

Spiritual life is not a human endeavor. It's rooted in and orchestrated by the Holy Spirit. Every spiritual achievement is created and energized by God.

The Bible says, "everyone who believes can have eternal life." Not "everyone who *achieves*." " Not "everyone who *agrees*." But "everyone who *believes*."

Listen. Salvation is God's idea. It's his business, his work, his expense. He offers it to whom he desires, when he desires. Our job in the process is to *inform* people, not to *screen* the people.

**Max Lucado**

May God grant you always  
A sunbeam to warm you,  
A moonbeam to charm you,  
A sheltering angel, so nothing can harm you.  
May brooks and trees and singing hills.  
Join in the chorus too,  
And every gentle wind that blows  
Send happiness to you!

"We are like crayons... I may not be your favorite color, And you may not favor the hues of others... But one day, we'll find that we need each other to complete the masterpiece...For it's in the blending of differences that the most beautiful pictures are painted.... And together, we create a story far greater than any single color could tell."



### HOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO A GRATEFUL WORLD

Some practices to cultivate gratitude!

Take a moment each day to notice the sky... the changing clouds, the colors. Try saying "thank you" aloud to the sky and its elements. Does this change your experience?

Each day commit to looking directly into the face of another and simply smile without words. What happens? How does it feel to show appreciation for someone? Can you feel this in your heart?

Write down something at the end of the day that describes how you may have left the day better than you found it. Realize the positive impact you can and do have on the world.

Go for a walk and notice anything natural, or human-made that gives you a sense of awe.

Commit at least one month a year, to begin each day with a gratitude practice that, no matter what, you will approach with an open heart.

### HOW YOU LOVE SHOWS WHAT YOU BELIEVE!

"Sometimes we think what we need to do is give people more information about Jesus when what they need is evidence of what we believe unveiled in our lives. The truth is most people have all the information they need: what they need are examples. And you and I get to be those.

Everyone has something they say they believe; however, it is what we do, not what we say we believe, that defines us. Every selfless act of love is a declaration of faith. Every day, your actions and mine are saying to the world, 'This is what we believe to be true about who Jesus is,' and every time we do something unselfish, we move everyone a little closer to Him."

Bob Goff

Lord, even though I face a busy day, (or have just lived through one!) even though I find myself running from this to that, from here to there, I still want to crawl into the shelter of Your arms. Even though my life moves at a blur; I want to still myself in Your strength. I want to rest in Your protection and tender care, even when I feel like I'm wrestling alligators. I take refuge in You, Jesus. This day, all day, and all days.

Joni Eareckson Tada

"There are three kinds of men: The ones that learn by reading. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to touch an electric fence."

Will Rogers



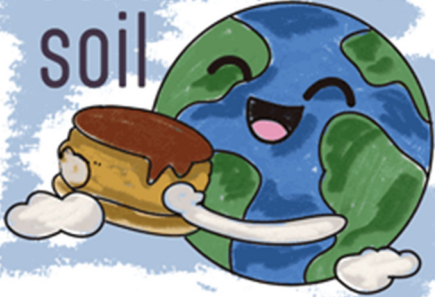
### THIS YEAR I WANT TO BE MORE LIKE JESUS

1. Hang out with sinners
2. Upset religious people
3. Tell stories that make people think
4. Choose unpopular friends
5. Be kind, loving and merciful
6. Take naps on boats




Did you hear about the Irishman visiting the city? He was patiently waiting to cross a busy street. There was a traffic cop manning the intersection. The cop stopped traffic after a few minutes and told those waiting to cross the road, 'Okay pedestrians', he said, 'Let's go'. The man continued waiting, growing more and more frustrated. After five more minutes went by, he shouted to the cop, 'Hey! The pedestrians crossed ages ago – when's it time for the Catholics?!'"

# sweet soil



This snack's layers mimic properties of our planet's crust.

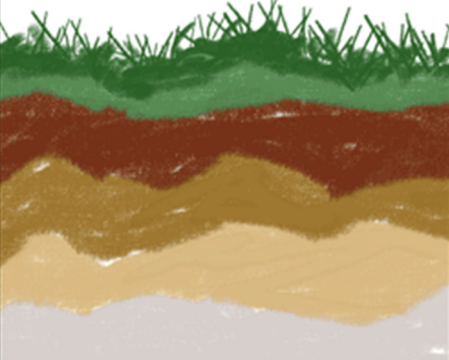


**What you need:**


- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup nut butter (divided)
- ½ cup chocolate chips
- Microwave-safe bowl
- Silicone mini baking cups

**What you do:**

1. Combine the oats and ½ cup of the nut butter. Mix until oats stick together.
2. Place 2 teaspoons of oat mixture in each baking cup. Press with a spoon. Freeze for 10 minutes.
3. Spread remaining nut butter atop the cups. Freeze for 10 more minutes.
4. Microwave the chocolate chips 30 seconds. Stir and keep heating for 30-second intervals until melted.
5. Spread melted chocolate atop the cups. Freeze until chocolate is firm.
6. Remove from the molds and enjoy! Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container.



# PUZZLE



## FROM WORD TO WORLD

Words are important! God spoke and created all things.  
What does the psalmist declare about creation?

---

Directions: Using the word clues, unscramble the letters to complete Psalm 102:25, NIV.

---

A preposition	NI	---
An article	HTE	---
Genesis means this	NINBGEIGN	-----
A second-person pronoun	OUY	---
Past tense of <i>to lay</i>	IDAL	---
An article	HET	---
A plural noun meaning <i>base</i>	SODTAINFONU	-----
A preposition showing possession	FO	---
An article	TEH	---
A concrete noun meaning <i>world</i>	HRTEA	-----

**Psalm 102:25, NIV**

Answer: In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth. (Psalm 102:25, NIV)