

From The Pastor's Pen,

In the writings of Paul the Apostle, he mentions that he suffered from what he called a “thorn in the flesh.” In II Corinthians he says, “A thorn was given to me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me” (II Cor. 12:7). We don’t know what this thorn in the flesh was because he doesn’t explain it. It may have been a physical ailment, which caused him considerable pain, like bleeding ulcers or the crippling effect of epileptic seizures. Others have suggested it was some kind of temptation he was not able to overcome. Whatever it was, it tormented him greatly. So, he asked God to rid him of it: “Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me” (II Cor. 12:8).

That is, Paul did what is appropriate for the followers of Jesus to do when the difficulties and struggles of life are pressing in upon us. He prayed. He asked that God relieve him of it, that God remove the “thorn.” But God would not remove it. Instead, God’s response to Paul was this: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (II Cor. 12:9). God’s answer was no, he did not give Paul what he asked for because he could use Paul’s suffering for a redemptive purpose. God made his redemptive power alive in Paul by not giving him what he wanted. “My power is made perfect in weakness.”

When Paul came to an acceptance of this, he was able to recognize how God was able to use his weakness for good. And so, he says, “Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ, for whenever I am weak, then I am strong” (II Cor. 12:10). There is often more redemption in God depriving us of what we want than in giving us what we want. Think of those thorns in the flesh in your life, which you have fervently prayed to God to release you of. When you have asked, and the answer is silence, when you have searched and there is nothing to reach out to, when you knock and the door seems bolted shut. It could be this is exactly the time when the power of God was doing its most significant redemptive work with you. As we enter the season of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18, it would do us well to consider the “thorns” in our lives and how the power of God’s grace is sufficient.

Pastor Peter

The Pulse Rocky River Presbyterian Church



FEBRUARY 1: On this first Sunday of February, we will continue to look at excerpts from Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount. The text for day is Matthew 7:7-11 and the message is called, “Ask, Seek, and Knock.” We will also be celebrating the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

FEBRUARY 8: Jesus concludes his Sermon on the Mount, telling his audience, “Everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like the wise man who built his house on rock” (Matt. 7:24). The message is called, “Rocks and Sand.”

FEBRUARY 15: This day is called, Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday. It recalls when Jesus took three of his disciples up a high mountain and he was “transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white...And there appeared to them Elijah and Moses who were talking with him” (Mark 9:2-4).

FEBRUARY 18: ASH WEDNESDAY: On this day the season of Lent begins, we will be offering two services of worship: 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m., both in Sanctuary. In these services, we will offer the Imposition of Ashes (for those who wish to receive them), which is a sign of the cross on the forehead, symbolizing our common human frailty. This is an appropriate way to begin this season of reflection and penitence.

FEBRUARY 22: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT: Jesus says in the Gospel of John, “I have come that they may have life, and that they have it abundantly” (John 10:10). In the Gospel of Mark he says, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” (Mark 8:34). How do we reconcile these two verses? The message is called “Abundant Life and Cross-bearing.”



Amy Solak	02/01
Heath Fredrickson	02/01
Connor Flynn	02/03
Hugo Stickney	02/04
Kathy Hartzell	02/05
Michelle Quinones- Davis	02/07
Brendan Mach	02/07
Charlotte Zinda	02/08
Jan Erml	02/09
Emma Poole	02/12
John Roth	02/14
Stephen Bohannon	02/14
Michelle Behar	02/15
Katherine Timmons	02/16
Thomas Krizman	02/16
Greg Ward	02/19
Marilyn Harris	02/22
Jayne Hoon	02/22
Michael Wilson	02/22
Deborah Radcliffe	02/24
Trina Nummela	02/24
Adam Smith	02/28

**Reminder President's Day is February 16th
Church Offices will be CLOSED**

Note we have a new sign at Entrance B. Do not be offended if you are asked by staff to identify yourself for safety and security we are now asking your name and reason for entry.

To enter during: Weekday business hours:

Press the **"red light button"** of the video intercom.

Please state your name and reason for visiting.

When directed by greeter, pull on the **LEFT** door.

If you are here for Kathleen Winters, Preschool Director, please wait in lobby outside Fellowship Hall.

Stay Informed: Monitor weather reports and alerts for winter storms. Sign up for local emergency notifications to stay updated on conditions.

Your Home: Insulate water lines, caulk windows, and ensure your heating system is functional. Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and keep a fire extinguisher accessible.

Dress Appropriately: Wear layers of loose clothing, including a warm coat, hat, mittens, and waterproof boots. This helps retain body heat and protects against frostbite.

Avoid Overexertion: Be cautious when shoveling snow or performing outdoor activities. Overexertion can lead to heart attacks, especially in cold weather.

Check on Others: Reach out to neighbors, especially the elderly or those with health issues, to ensure they are safe and have the resources they need.

If you must travel, slow down, increase following distances, and keep an emergency kit in your vehicle. Avoid driving during severe weather if possible.



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING RESCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 8: The Annual Meeting of the Congregation for confirmed members has been rescheduled for Sunday, February 8, in Fellowship Hall following worship. Worship will be in Fellowship Hall also. The Deacons will be providing brunch and will begin serving at 10:15 a.m. The purpose of the meeting is to receive annual reports from the various committees and organizations of the church. The Annual Reports were previously sent out by email. Printed annual reports will be available at the entrance to Fellowship Hall.

ICE ACTION ALERT: Our denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA), has recently put out a statement denouncing the actions of ICE agents in Minneapolis. It is an appeal for Presbyterians and other faith communities to take a stand against what they understand to be unjust and brutal actions. The full statement can be found using the link below.

[https://www.votervoice.net/PCUSA/Campaigns/133070/Respond?
utm_content=366677783&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&hss_channel=fbp-22627435207](https://www.votervoice.net/PCUSA/Campaigns/133070/Respond?utm_content=366677783&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&hss_channel=fbp-22627435207)



Palace of Versailles

March 5 – March 8, 2026

Step into the glittering world of the Sun King with Palace of Versailles, a sumptuous program celebrating the splendor of 17th-century France. Apollo's Fire visits the court of Louis XIV—who famously dressed as Apollo himself—bringing to life the elegant and theatrical music that filled his royal halls.

Led by Associate Artistic Director Alan Choo, the orchestra performs radiant works by Lully, Leclair, and Rameau. Flutes, oboes, and theorbos join the strings in a richly colored soundscape full of grandeur, grace, and irresistible French flair.

Alan Choo's appearance is generously sponsored by Vivian & Malcolm Henoch.

Performances:

Saturday, March 7, 2026, 7:30 PM
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Cleveland Heights

Sunday, March 8, 2026, 4:00 PM
Rocky River Presbyterian Church

Buy tickets here!

<https://apollosfire.org/tickets/?id=palace2026>





**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8
2 PM**

**Rocky River
Presbyterian
Church**

**21750 DETROIT RD
ROCKY RIVER, OH**

IN CONCERT

*The Thorpe
Ensemble*

**Hadar Zaidel, violin
Michael Strauss, viola
Julie Myers King, cello**

PERFORMING

Beethoven | Mozart | Handel-Halvorsen

**440-333-4888
info@riverpres.org**

Save the Date:

Sunday March 8th at 5 PM

**Hot Dogs and Mac and Cheese Available
for Children.**

**Sign Up Sheet on Bulletin board outside
Fellowship Hall.**



7 WAYS TO HELP MAKE KINDNESS THE NORM®

1 Scroll until you see someone's creative effort—a drawing, a recipe, a photo—and leave a genuine, specific compliment.

2 Ask someone, "What's good in your world today?" Then listen without rushing in to fix or compare.

3 Do at least three acts of kindness—one for a friend, one for family, and one for a stranger.

4 We always trade big news; today, share a tiny victory. You'll invite others to celebrate their small joys too.

5 Drop a surprise note in a library book.

6 Let someone merge in traffic, go ahead in line, or take their time when they're frustrated.

7 Make a playlist of songs that make you feel loved and send it to a friend.

Celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Day by focusing on the most important person in your life—YOU.

Take this day to reset, relax, and recharge so you're ready for your next call to action.

Whether it's spreading love to others or taking on your next big goal, a refreshed mind and heart make all the difference.

Here are some self-kindness ideas to inspire you:

Take a deep breath and enjoy a moment of stillness.

Unplug for an hour to do something you love.

Write down three things you're proud of or grateful for.

Rest, reset, and remind yourself it's o.k. to pause.

*Let today be a reminder that *you are worth it.*
What will you do for YOU today?*

**make
kindness
the norm.**

randomactsofkindness.org

KINDNESS STARTS WITHIN.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS FOUNDATION®

Brenda Peterson, Parish Counselor

Christian Education

bpeterson@riverpres.org

Sunday School: We are waiting for YOU!! Please volunteer to come and be a helper with us or be the leader for a Sunday! We have fun time in Sunday School and would like you to experience it. Miss Jill has been teaching us a song to sing. She brings her guitar and sometimes we can help her play it. Miss Melanie, always shares her smile with us. She reads our lesson and we talk about it. Crafts are fun and we can be creative. We look forward to seeing you in our classroom. Please contact Brenda Peterson and let her know when you can spend time with us. Soon we will be making an Easter craft for the bags the deacons will be taking to those that cannot join us for church in person.

Youth Fellowship: Thank you for all the warm winter accessories. We collected a few hundred items and delightfully shared them with the Norma Herr Women's Shelter, Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry Men's Shelter and Project Noelle for the youth accessories.

What a beautiful gift you have given to many others. Thank you for supporting our mission to give warmth to others.

Attention please...Due to scheduling and a few others factors we will not be having our annual Shrove Pancake Supper. We are so grateful for your support in the past with this.

We hope to have a brunch after worship service in late March or April.

Adult Education: We are thoroughly enjoying this session on Faith and Belief facilitated by George Geick and Lisa Watts. There are 2 more sessions left. Please join us for the exploration we are on. Lots of inquisitive and inspiring conversation. 9:00-10:00 AM Sundays before worship. We welcome all to come in and join us. We have coffee available!

Our Lenten study will begin the first Sunday in Lent, February 22. We use a DVD and a book (books are available through Brenda Peterson) or just come and watch the DVD with us and enjoy the teachings of Rev. Adam Hamilton on, "***Why Did Jesus Have To Die?***"

Preschool News!



ROCKY RIVER PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL
LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

NOW ENROLLING FOR 2026-2027!

Play-based learning & daily gross motor play

Developmentally appropriate curriculum for ages 2.5-5 years old

Morning and afternoon classes offered, along with lunch bunch options

RRPP has been serving the local community since 1961. Our experienced teachers and engaging curriculum offer children the opportunity to learn and grow in a safe, nurturing environment with many opportunities for parent and family involvement.

Please contact us to schedule a tour!

ENROLL NOW

440-895-5437

Like & Follow on Facebook
[RRPresbyterianPreschool](https://www.facebook.com/RRPresbyterianPreschool)

rrpplearningthroughplay.org

21750 Detroit Road
Rocky River, OH 44116

Open House and Art Show

Rescheduled for February 4th!

All are welcome.

5:30PM to 7PM



Easter is around the corner and the Rocky River Presbyterian Preschool will be selling Malley's Easter candy again this year! Please consider supporting the school while saving yourself time Easter shopping. **The sale runs from February 9- February 27, 2026.** Orders will be available for pick up the week of March 16th. You will be contacted when they are ready. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Tabar at (440) 935-2293 or RRPP Director, Kathleen Winters. Thank you in advance for your support!

**RRPP
Fundraiser
Online Only
Scan to
Order**

February 2026



	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1						
Food Sunday (please bring non-perishables)	2	3	4	5	6	7
Adult Education 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Women's AA 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM	Pastor Nominating Committee	Ladies Mahjong Group	Friday Morning Men's Bible Study	Altered Attitudes AA	
Worship 10:30 AM - 11:30	CE Committee Meeting 8:00 PM - 9:30 PM	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	12:30 PM - 2:00 PM	7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Adult Education 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Women's AA 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM	Expressions of Faith 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Pastor Nominating Committee	RRPP Staff Mtg. 11:45 AM	Friday Morning Men's Bible Study	Altered Attitudes AA
Worship 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Deacons Mtg. TBA	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Ladies Mahjong Group	7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
Annual Mtg. to follow in Fellowship Hall		HR Committee 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM	Men's AA 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM	12:30 PM - 2:00 PM		
		Finance Committee Mtg. 6:30 PM - 8:00				
15	16 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED PRESIDENT'S DAY	17	18 Ash Wednesday	19	20	21
Adult Education 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM	RRPP Board Mtg. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Pastor Nominating Committee	Ladies Mahjong Group	Friday Morning Men's Bible Study	Altered Attitudes AA	
Worship 10:30 AM - 11:30	Women's AA 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	12:30 PM - 2:00 PM	7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
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The Pulse

the monthly newsletter of

Rocky River Presbyterian Church

February 2025

Rocky River Presbyterian Church
Rev. Peter Lawson, Pastor
21750 Detroit Road
Rocky River, OH 44116-2220