

The Messenger

March 2020



**The Newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church
Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey
An ELCA Congregation**

The Church: Proudly Proclaiming Christ since A.D. 33



Who Is Jesus?

Pastor's Message

One of the ways I serve the wider church is by being a member of the New Jersey Synod's Candidacy Committee. The Candidacy Committee shepherds people who feel a call to become deacons and pastors. We review applications, conduct countless interviews, and require candidates to write a bunch of essays. The candidacy process isn't easy, but it's one of the most fun things I get to be a part of. After every meeting, I leave spiritually exhausted but faithfully full because I got a glimpse of the future of the church. I know that we all, regardless of our age, are members of the body of Christ. Yet there's a kind of joy that comes when we baptize someone new and when we see someone take their first steps to become a future leader in the church. It's at that moment that we get a glimpse of the Spirit building a foundation to take the faith someplace new. And that faith is centered in our experiencing, understanding, and belief in who exactly Jesus is.

Who is Jesus? That's a question the candidacy committee asks all our candidates at every stage of the process. We've surprised people by asking this question even though they've never been to seminary. And, we've asked those who just graduated from seminary that same exact question. As Lutherans, we're supposed to share our faith, and we believe that words have power. The words we use should be centered on the Word. So, we proclaim Jesus in all that we do, teach and say. The question "who is Jesus" isn't an easy one to answer. But our ability to answer it is essential whether we're planning to become ordained deacons or not.

So during Lent, we're going to learn how to answer that question on Sundays. We're going to figure out how we, in our own words, can let people know who Jesus is to us. Our answer to that question might not earn an A in some theology class in seminary. But it will be enough to help make Jesus real to the people we're closest to. My hope is that we'll use a tool familiar to our friends at *Pixar* to help us share Jesus. Because when you feel the call to be a future leader in the church – to serve on council, to lead a committee, to head that new project that will help change the world, or to become a deacon or pastor in the church – who Jesus is to you will be the center of your story. And that's a story that all people want to hear.

See you in church!

Pastor Marc

Education and Events for Children, Youth and Adults

Sunday School News

Twice a month we meet after 9:00 am worship to learn more about Jesus, God and why Christ's love changes everything. Each session starts in the sanctuary, singing songs with David Scance, before splitting into our three classes (one for pre-K, one for K-1st grade, one for 2nd grade and up). We've started our memory work for the spring months. Our pre-K students will memorize a verse, our younger elementary students will work on the Lord's Prayer, and our older class will work on the Apostles' Creed. We'll meet again on March 8th and March 22nd.

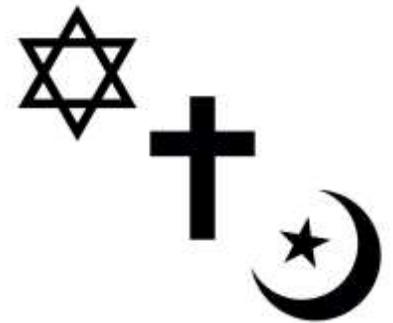
Confirmation

Our partnership with Prince of Peace Lutheran Church continues! Eight youth meet twice a month to tackle what makes us who we are. We've started our work with the gospels and taught each other how the start of each gospel says something specific about Jesus. Our March sessions will meet on March 8th, 22nd, and with a special trip on March 29th.



Abraham's Table: An Interfaith Dialogue Series Begins this Month

Peace Islands Institute, Congregation B'nai Israel, and Christ Lutheran Church invite you to a Muslim-Jewish-Christian dialogue series connecting our lives of faith. Learn from three experts and take part in a participatory interfaith dialogue! Through our practice of interfaith dialogue, we hope to further the path of peace, understanding and collaboration. At each session, we'll be collecting non-perishable food items for the Tri-Boro Food Pantry in Park Ridge. Make sure to save the following dates on your calendar!



Sunday, March 22nd at 2:00 pm: Inner Peace

Peace Islands Institute, 777 Terrace Ave Unit 109 in Hasbrouck Heights

Tuesday, May 19th at 7:00 pm: Fasting (with an Iftar dinner afterwards)

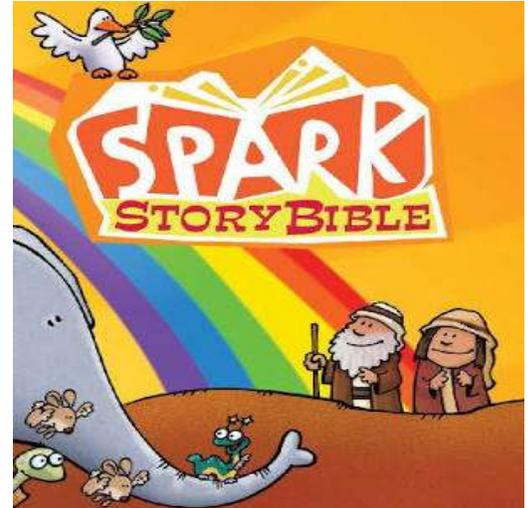
Congregation B'nai Israel, 53 Palisade Ave in Emerson

Sunday, June 14th at 7:00pm: Prayer and its Daily Practice

Christ Lutheran Church, 32 Pascack Road in Woodcliff Lake

Sharing the Good News on March 8th

As you heard in the Pastor's Message, we're spending this Lenten season learning how to share our faith story. One way we will do this as a congregation is by entrusting the Bible into the hands of some of the youngest Christians in the church. Join us at both worship services on March 8th as we give Story Bibles and other Bibles to kids attending Sunday School. And if you can, bring your own well-read Bible to show them how reading God's word has made an impact on your life.



CROSS ROADS

CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER

Summer Camp and Employment

Cross Roads is a joint Episcopal-Lutheran camp located in Warren County. Children encounter God in nature, in worship and in relationships during youth camp. Cross Roads certified staff members provide a safe and loving space for each camper. Visit <https://crossroadsretreat.com/summer-programs/> for more information or make a plan to visit their Open House on April 25th, May 16th, or June 6th.

If you're a college student or a recent high school graduate, consider applying for a summer position: <https://www.crossroadsretreat.com/employment/>.



From the Church Library

It's time for some new books in our library. If you have a favorite title, subject or author you would like to see added, e-mail me or leave a note in my mail slot at church.

Look for a continuing display of titles on "Caring for Creation", our theme for Lent and beyond.

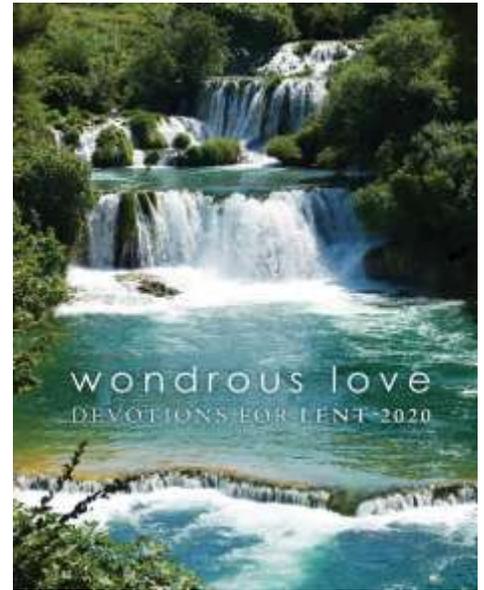
Dot Dohrmann

Lent at CLC

Wondrous Love: Devotions for Lent 2020

Our at-home devotion for Lent is available for pickup! Here's the description from the publisher:

Wondrous Love explores Jesus' journey from baptism to the cross and the empty tomb, as depicted in Matthew. Jesus predicts that he will be betrayed, arrested, abandoned, and put to death, yet he continues on to Jerusalem and the cross. The wondrous love shown by Jesus on this journey guides us on our baptismal journeys and inspires us to sing, serve, and share God's love with others.



We encourage you to pick up the devotion and spend time with it this Lent!

“The Bible Stories Behind Our Caring For Creation”

This Mid-Day Study Starts Thursday, February 27th at 11:30 am

Our denomination, the ELCA, crafts and releases social statements that provide broad frameworks to assist us in thinking about and discussing social issues in the context of faith and life. In 1993, the social statement “Caring for Creation” was adopted at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly. We’ll spend our weeks in Lent digging into that statement and the Biblical stories that define our relationship to God’s world. Bring your Bible and let Pastor Marc know you’ll be there (pastormarc@clc4u.com).

Mid-week Worship: Taizé and Contemplation

Starts Wednesday, March 4th at 7:00 pm

In the middle of all our busy, it’s sometimes hard to just be with God. These short worship services on Wednesday nights will center us in God’s presence through the power of Taizé and contemplation. Taizé style worship uses repetitive sung prayer, silence, and meditative worship to help us engage with the anxiety we feel in our daily lives. We’ll meet in the chapel space by the church office for this worship.

Growing in Generosity

Super Bowl of Caring: Thank You!

You made a big difference in February. We delivered 279 cans of soup and raised over \$270 in pocket change to benefit the Center for Food Action in Englewood. Thank you for being the change needed in the world.

Annual Lenten Hunger Appeal

Sponsored by the Care Committee



On Sunday, March 1st, our coffee and bake sale supporting ELCA World Hunger will begin. During Lent, the Care Committee will have bagels, coffee cake and other amazing treats for you to buy (and eat) after worship. Over 800 million people across the world are hungry. By working with and through our congregations, other Lutheran churches and other partners, ELCA World Hunger is uniquely positioned to reach communities in need. From health clinics to microloans, water wells to animal husbandry, community meals to advocacy, ELCA World Hunger makes it possible for all of us to support sustainable solutions that get at the root causes of hunger and poverty. We invite you to stick around after worship, chat with someone new and help end hunger.

Items Needed for CFA

We're collecting food donations for the Center for Food Action (CFA) in Englewood all year long. Feel free to pick-up an item from this list and place in the yellow bin in the church lobby (aka narthex).

Canned Meat and Fish
Canned Pastas, Stews, Chili, Hearty Soup
Canned Tomatoes and Vegetables
Pasta, White/Brown Rice, Dried Beans
Cold Cereal, Oatmeal, Pancake Mix
Peanut Butter and Jelly
Coffee

Shelf Stable Milk
Baby Formula and Diapers (size 4, 5, 6)
Toilet Paper and Paper Towels
Low Sodium and Low Sugar Foods
Cleaning Products/Laundry Detergent
Toothpaste, Shampoo, Body Wash

UPcoming EVENTS

Trash and Treasure: The Sale is Saturday, May 2nd!

Just a reminder to start setting aside your treasures and cleaning out your closets in anticipation of the Annual Trash & Treasure Sale which will be held on Saturday, May 2nd. Clothing collection begins Monday, April 6th in Mitchell Commons, and Trash and Treasure collection (meaning anything not in the clothing category) begins April 19th. If you are interested in helping, please call Ann Christensen at 201-666-5078. New helpers (of any age) are always welcome . . . no experience necessary. It's a lot of fun and a chance to make new friends. We'll feed you well, and you'll feel better knowing that you've helped our church raise funds for improvements here and for many deserving charities.

The Care Committee Presents: Our Next Gab Session

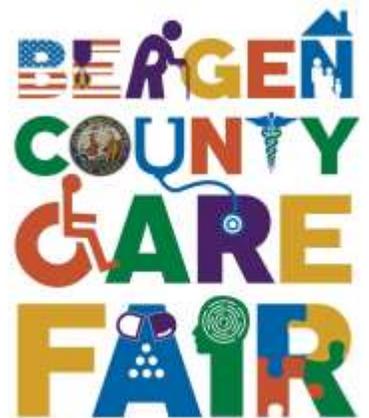
Want to know more about the people you sit next to in the pews? Join us on Wednesday, March 25th for the next Gab Session at 11:30 am.

We share a lunch (typically potluck style), socialize, have fun and discover the amazing lives of the people at CLC. If you would like to join us, please RSVP with Debbie Louis, 201-358-6435.

Save the Date: 2020 Bergen County Care Fair

Sunday, May 3rd, 12 Noon – 4:00 pm

This annual fair at Farleigh Dickinson University in Hackensack New Jersey showcases providers of health care, wellness, and support services where residents can make connections and access vital information leading to lower costs and improved care for themselves and those they love. Learn more by visiting www.bergencarefair.org.



Save the Date: Sunday, June 7th

Pascack Valley Interfaith Creation Care - Water Wellness

The Upper Pascack Valley Interfaith Clergy Group is organizing a clean-up day for all our congregations. We're looking to either help at a local park, a body of water, or maybe the Woodcliff Lake Reservoir. More information will be available soon!

From our Ministry Partners: Camp Koinonia

For almost 60 years, CLC has been one of the owners of Camp Koinonia in Highland Lake, NY. The camp is an outdoor Christian ministry supported by congregations in New York and New Jersey. In August 2018, the camp closed due to mold issues in their buildings. Since then, we've been working with the other owners of the camp to see where the Spirit is leading us.

On Sunday, February 9th, the Koinonia annual meeting was held at St. Luke's in New Rochelle, NY. Reports from the current board and the Advisory Task Force were presented and discussed. The Board discussed the financial status, the 2020 proposed budget and the state of the property. Over the course of 2019, the Board regained control of finances, began communicating with the greater Koinonia community and did an excellent job maintaining the property as best as possible.

The Advisory Task Force, of which I was a member, was asked to review the overall Koinonia status and make proposals on a path forward. The task force initially decided a new mold assessment of all the buildings should be completed. That was completed and while the assessment was similar, the protocol to remediation was quite different, and significantly less expensive. Contractors were also brought in to review the protocol and give their estimate of what needed to be done and what the cost would be. Again, their estimates were well below the original estimates. While nothing is guaranteed, the task force now felt that we had found a viable path forward to remediate all the buildings.

Secondly, the task force suggested that a Transition Board be appointed for a one-year term with the express task of getting the buildings remediated and the camp back up and operational. The task force also suggested there be a group of people appointed to handle the day to day operation of the camp so that the interim board can focus on its mission.

These suggestions were discussed and supported by vote of delegates at the meeting.

We are hopeful that in the coming months the momentum of progress will be maintained and that Koinonia will be able to open its doors and once again be a place we can use to reflect and renew our faith.

Tom Kearns



From St. John's Lutheran in Passaic

In December, one of our projects funded by Special Gifts delivered 48 hygiene kits to our friends at St. John's Lutheran in Passaic. The kits were given to people who attend their ministry in the Home Depot parking lot. They recently shared this letter with us:

First of all, I want to thank you for the kits donated to us, it was a blessing for our ministry. Pan de Vida Ministry is a Ministry with the mission to help the migrant workers in Passaic. Most of these workers are men but we occasionally have women. We meet every Sunday in the church around 7 a.m. to prepare breakfast and then carpool to Home Depot, where the workers start their day early waiting for someone to give them a chance to work. Most, if not all workers, are very poor or homeless, so we take this opportunity to feed them breakfast while also spreading the Word of God. Usually, the last Sunday of the month communion is served. Volunteers are always welcome if you ever want to join us. We occasionally have churches that support us with their presence and food, as well as college students who have joined to do community service. Thank you!

From Meals on Wheels North Jersey

Meals on Wheels of North Jersey is our regular benevolence partner. A portion of your financial gift to CLC goes to support their work in feeding the hungry in our community.

Dear Friend,

This will acknowledge, with our sincere and heartfelt thanks, your donation made to Meals on Wheels North Jersey as part of our 2019 Holiday Appeal. This contribution allows us to continue providing nutritious meals, delivered to the elderly and/or disabled, five days a week by our 500+ unpaid volunteer drivers. It will also help to support our "more than a meal" initiative which provide necessary social services to our clients in most need. Thank you for your continued support!

Yours truly, Joanne F. Martin, Executive Director

From Iglesia Luterana Santa Maria (in Exile) Irving Texas

Pastor Gus & Congregation of Santa María in exile sent out their annual report and we're thrilled with the amazing ministry they are doing. Their highlights from 2019 include ending the year with 113 baptized and 77 confirmed members. Their average weekly attendance to worship was 66. They celebrated 59 worship services at the church building and 57 services in private homes. They had 8 "Posadas" gatherings preceding Christmas, hosted a VBS, and regularly celebrated Quinceañeras. They also started a new ministry helping people on the US-Mexico border. We're grateful for their ministry, and please continue to keep them in your prayers.

From the Finance Committee

Restricted Funds Update

In June 3, 2018, the congregation voted to allow up-to \$50,000 from our 'Restricted' funds to cover our current operating cash flow. The amount available is determined by the value of our investments as well as our income and expenses for the month. At the end of December 2019, we had \$65,336 in funds available to cover our current operations.

Approved amount	\$50,000.00
Previous amount of Total Funds used	\$0.00
<u>Amount accessed from operating funds:</u>	
For January, 2020	-\$7,535.00
Total amount of current available funds	\$57,801.00

Raise the Roof Update

Our Capital Campaign officially ended in 2019, but we still haven't completely paid off the debt we owe to ourselves. After the annual meeting on February 2nd, we still owe \$10,947. If you would like to keep contributing to pay off this debt to ourselves, please use the Raise the Roof envelopes located in the church pews!





Lent begins

Ash Wednesday – February 26th

12 noon (in chapel space)

7:30 pm (in sanctuary)

Healing Worship on March 15th

All who sense the need for God's healing in any aspect of your lives may come to receive a blessing. The laying on of hands and anointing of oil, signs first given in baptism, tell us we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked forever with the cross of Christ. On March 15th, we will offer a special ritual of healing at the 9:00 am and 10:30 am services. The healing we might need could be physical, mental, emotional or spiritual. Through the laying on of hands and anointing of oil, you will be prayed for.

Missed a Sermon? They're Online!

Every week, Pastor Marc posts his weekly bulletin reflections and sermons online. You can read his writing by visiting www.clc4u.com/Reflections and listening to sermons at www.clc4u.com/Sermons.

The Prayer Experiment Continues Each Month

On the fourth Sunday of this month (March 22nd), you will be handed a piece of green paper. Please write your name on that paper and place into the baptismal font during worship. On the next Sunday (March 29th), we'll choose a name from the font and commit ourselves to praying for that person throughout the month of April.

Come, Sing for Easter!

On most Sunday mornings, parishioners at Christ Lutheran Church can anticipate at least one musical anthem sung by our Chancel Choir. We enjoy not only singing but also the fellowship among members of our choir at rehearsals on Wednesday nights. Easter provides a very special moment for all of us—choir and congregation. We invite anyone with musical ability to consider joining us in the coming weeks, as we begin rehearsing Easter anthems. As Martin Luther once said: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world."

Contact Argine Safari (arginesafari@gmail.com) if you would like to know more!

Your 2020-2021 Congregation Council

The following individuals currently serve as the “board of directors” for the church. The council oversees the business and ministerial activities at Christ Lutheran. These 13 individuals meet monthly to manage budgets, coordinate activities with our various committees and prayerfully discover where God is taking us as a congregation. As we go to press, the officers and committee assignments for the church council have not been selected (but will be at the February 20th meeting).

Council Members

Noel Ulanday	Meredith Drobinske
Jerry Miano, Treasurer	Coleen Daub
Lynn Lesko	Martin Thalmann
Carla Hoenigmann	Kyle Ritter
Bill Daub	Kim Kearns
Ed Bailey	Mary Zeigler
	Pastor Marc A. Stutzel

We are grateful for Darleen Castellano and Janet Post who completed their terms on Council. Your faithfulness and commitment to Christ’s church was a gift to the entire community. Thank you for making leading this part of the body of Christ!

Annual Meeting Review

Thank you to the 54 members who attended our annual meeting on February 2nd. We shared the ministry we accomplished in 2019 and some of our initial plans for 2020. The following is a short list of action items accomplished at the meeting:

- The election of three council members.
- We shared a resolution of thanks for the various gifts given to us by the Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer in Dumont.
- Passage of the 2020 budget.
- Funding of several Special Gifts projects including Special Congregational Music, Heart for Lebanon charity organization, Backpacks for Veterans charity organization, meals to seniors at Easter, groceries for CFA and backpacks full of school supplies for kids. We also supported ministry at church by funding our Raise the Roof campaign and our emergency fund.
- We sent an additional \$3,000 gift to Santa Isabel Lutheran Church in Elizabeth.
- We elected two delegates to work with Camp Koinonia during their rebuilding.

There are still a few opportunities for leadership over the next year. We have one open spot left on our church council. We're also looking for people willing to attend the NJ Synod on May 1 to May 2. If you're interested in those positions or curious to know more, contact Pastor Marc at pastormarc@clc4u.com

News from the New Jersey Synod

As Pastor Marc shared in his bulletin reflection on February 16th, the Bishop of the New Jersey Synod recently requested clergy to re-certify their boundary training workshops. Below is a re-print of some of Pastor Marc's reflection.

This kind of boundary training (focusing on adult-to-adult situations) is something all pastors in our denomination go through every 5 years. It's not fun, and it usually disrupts the plans we've already made for the day. But the workshop is important because it reminds us that the relationship between a pastor and the people they serve is something sacred. The pastor's commitment to serving God and God's people is built on a trust we are given to protect and nourish. But since pastors are people and live their lives as saint-and-sinner (like we all do), his sacred trust is sometimes broken. This usually happens when a pastor fails to stay mindful of their own spiritual, emotional, and mental health needs. Instead of caring for their congregation, the congregation ends up filling a void the pastor is missing in their life. This unhealthy behavior can seem small - like favoring one group of people over others. But it can also grow into something more problematic such as sexual harassment. In fact, over the last few years, there have been incidents in our synod where pastors broke their marital vows with members of their own congregations.

This boundary crossing is unacceptable and is not tolerated in our synod. When a pastor does this, they are removed from the place they serve, and they are no longer a pastor in the Lutheran church. Yet, their removal from a congregation does not end the suffering within the congregation. A violation of sacred trust can reverberate in a community even decades later.

One thing the Bishop wanted us to share with you is a document of the Synod's guidelines pertaining to this kind of boundary crossing. Copies are available in the church office, and these guidelines do not have a statute of limitations because there's no time-limit when it comes to trauma. As a church, we are our most faithful when we are honest about the harm we've caused. And since we all are members of the body of Christ, any violation in any church in any Christian denomination impacts us all. If a clergy person in your life has harmed you or if you have been part of a community where a clergy person has broken that sacred trust: I am sorry. We see you. We believe you. And may the Spirit guide every clergy person and leader in the church to hold fast to the sacred trust that keeps us all working together as God's servants.

You can view this policy by visiting www.njsynod.org/policies or picking up a copy from the church office.

Our Celebrations in March!

Birthdays

David Crouse
Brian Capone
Janine Capone
Abigail Lintner
Ava Ariatabar
Rosemarie Bella
Lois Hainsselin
Stacy Hoenigmann
Kim Kearns
Diane Meberg
Dylan Scance
Cody Scheidle
Coryn Thalmann
Kristen Tomasso
Gertrud Wintersteiger

Wedding Anniversary

Sarah and Neil Christensen

Baptisms

Kelly Rubino
Linda Calise
Brianna Osenbruck
Michael Pasch
Dylan Scance
Brian Sladovich
Richard Weissenborn
Logan Timberg



[You are invited to contact the church office to update our records on your important upcoming celebrations.]



**Don't Forget to "Spring Ahead" One Hour
2:00 am, Sunday, March 8th
(Or, you will be late for church!)**

2020



2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <u>Worship</u> With Communion Contemporary- 9:00am Traditional 10:30 am Bake/Bagel Sale	2 Family Promise Dinner	3 Worship Committee Meeting 8:00 pm	4 Worship—Taizé/ Contemplation 7:00 pm-Chapel Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	5 Caring for Creation Mid Week Study 11:30 am	6	7
8 <u>Daylight Time Begins—2:00 am</u> <u>Worship</u> With Communion Contemporary- 9:00am Traditional 10:30 am Sunday School 9:45 am Bake/Bagel Sale CLCW Board meets ~11:30 am Confirmation Class 6:30 pm	9 Property Work Night 7:30 pm	10 Care Committee Meeting 9:30 am	11 Worship—Taizé/ Contemplation 7:00 pm-Chapel Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	12 Caring for Creation Mid Week Study 11:30 am	13	14
15 <u>Healing Worship</u> With Communion Contemporary- 9:00am Traditional 10:30 am Bake/Bagel Sale	16 Mary Circle meets 7:30 pm	17  Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	18 Worship—Taizé/ Contemplation 7:00 pm-Chapel Finance Committee 8:00 pm	19 Caring for Creation Mid Week Study 11:30 am Congregation Council Meeting 8:00 pm	20 Articles Due For April Newsletter 	21
22 <u>Worship</u> With Communion Contemporary- 9:00am Traditional 10:30 am Sunday School 9:45 am Bake/Bagel Sale Confirmation Class 6:30 pm	23	24 Knit 1, Crochet Too 10:00 am 	25 Gab Session 11:30 am Worship—Taizé/ Contemplation 7:00 pm-Chapel Chancel Choir Rehearsal 8:00 pm	26 Caring for Creation Mid Week Study 11:30 am	27	28
29 <u>Worship</u> With Communion Contemporary- 9:00am Traditional 10:30 am Rispoli Bake Sale Conf. Class Trip	30	31				

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Pastor: The Rev. Marc A. Stutzel
Director of Music: Argine Safari
Director of Youth Choirs: David Scance
Administrative Assistant: Doris Crouse