

# MINISTRY@DHUMC



**“No pain, no palm; no thorns, no throne; no gall, no glory; no cross, no crown.” – William Penn**

## MINISTRY@DHUMC

*A monthly newsletter for the membership of Drexel Hill United Methodist Church.*

March 2018

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Everyone!

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Everyone!

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## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

### Lent Alone

*"Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?"*

**Psalm 42:5**

Sometimes I long to be alone. How refreshing to be still! What a tonic to be in precious isolation!

Most of us crave some time to be alone, to recollect, to take stock, to meditate. Being alone seems particularly fitting to this season of Lent.

Jesus needed time to be alone. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus got up very early in the morning and went to a lonely place to pray. Given the number of times Jesus did this he obviously knew it to be good. To be alone can be refreshing, renewing, and revitalizing.

A very different human experience, on the other hand, is loneliness. Even as we are more "connected" than ever through social media, sociologists and psychologists are

marking an increasing number of people, particularly young people, claiming that they are isolated and lonely.

Loneliness is a complex, often quite painful emotion. Whereas we sometimes arrange to be alone, loneliness is usually imposed upon us.

As we all know, we do not have to be alone to be lonely; loneliness can be more severe in a crowd.

Loneliness in an impersonal city, for instance, can be devastating. We can be lonely in the midst of festivities. The elderly in nursing facilities can suffer extreme loneliness surrounded by other lonely people.

In 1950, David Riesman wrote *The Lonely Crowd*, a study assessing the effects of industrialization on the American character which found that although industrial society produced more

leisure, it also created more loneliness.

Riesman's research is ancient now, but it still carries important truths for today. Perhaps since then we have learned better how to use our time and adapt; I'm inclined to believe not.

Perversely, we say we are more "connected" now than ever, with more information and entertainment devices, which serve to isolate us from each other in ever more alluring ways.

And loneliness remains a universal fact of human existence. Those who have run away from important arguments with loved ones know. Those who have had abrupt (and unwelcome) relocations know. Those who have lost spouses know.

Mother Theresa of Calcutta said that loneliness was far more devastating to those to whom she ministered

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## Lent alone

than hunger for food.

How do we live with loneliness? What does our faith tell us? Augustine spoke his loneliness when he said his heart was restless until it found its rest in God. In the pain of loneliness, we also can find redemption in its power to draw us to our Creator.

Jesus, come to think of it, sets the example. During his life he showed us the way to live with loneliness. In his life he spoke to and listened to people, and

touching them. Such were his responses to loneliness. Zacchaeus was rich but lonely. When Jesus called him by name, Zacchaeus realized a relief from loneliness money could not provide.

Jesus surely suffered the epitome of loneliness. On the cross he echoes the psalmist: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" In the end, however, resurrection and renewal of life come for him and, as a result, for us. Jesus drew

his power from knowing that God abided with him, and he shared that power to end all loneliness with us by coming and living among us. "Love one another," he said, and, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

May the blessings of the abiding presence of Christ be in your consciousness this Lent and always.

**Russell J. Atkinson**

## WORSHIP NOTES

### Healing and Wholeness service set March 28

Join with your friends at church for our Holy Wednesday Service of Healing and Wholeness, 7:30 p.m., March 28.

Healing was central to the ministry of Jesus. It was a sign of God's reign, bringing renewal and wholeness of life to those who turned to God in their need. Jesus sent out his disciples with the commission to 'proclaim the reign of God and to heal' (Luke 9:2).

In every act of worship, the Church celebrates the grace of God who desires wholeness of body, mind, and spirit for all

people. At a service of healing, we focus on that aspect of God's character.

We bring to God our own frailty and brokenness not just in physical illness, but in guilt, anxiety, and all the burdens which weigh us down.

We also bring our concerns for others and for the world.

Above all, we come to the God who knows our needs before we ask, and whose love revealed in Jesus Christ is stronger than suffering and death.



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## Characteristics of Missionary Congregations

Have you ever felt missionary zeal? How can we know if we are being who we are called to be as a congregation of disciples? One way is to rely on our feelings; does our activity seem right, does our congregation feel comfortable? Another way is to measure. Consider the following work done by Claude E. Payne and Hamilton Beasley that appeared in 2001 issue of *Congregations*, a publication of the Washington, DC, based Alban Institute. How does our Drexel Hill congregation live out our mission in the world?

Missionary congregations are invigorating places to be. Alive with the presence of the Holy Spirit, they:

- 1)** Embrace evangelism and the Great Commission as fundamental to their ministry and church growth as a natural and desirable result.
- 2)** Focus on making disciples and on the spiritual development of their members, which leads to miraculous expectation and to the glorious transformation of lives rather than to maintenance of the status quo.
- 3)** Make the Christian faith and the church relevant to everyday life, especially as a source of meaning, challenge, direction, and inspiration.
- 4)** Communicate the Good News in clear language that is devoid of Christian jargon and is therefore meaningful to seekers and newcomers.
- 5)** Emphasize the power and importance of prayer and provide multiple opportunities for individuals and groups to pray.
- 6)** Create many small groups within the congregation through which individuals can experience community, meet personal and spiritual needs, and share their faith and fears.
- 7)** Provide diverse educational opportunities for both adults and children to learn more about the tenets of the Christian faith, about spiritual growth, about the mission of the church, and about how to share their spiritual treasure with others.
- 8)** Offer many and varied lay ministries developed to meet the needs of both church members and the unchurched in order to teach service and discipleship and to involve the vast majority of the congregation in Christian service.
- 9)** Explain the uniqueness of the denomination's religious tradition so that newcomers and members can understand the beauty and richness of the Christian faith as it is expressed in the denomination.
- 10)** Accept doubt and disbelief as part of faith; welcome difficult questions about God and the church; and are supportive and tolerant of seekers, newcomers, and others who are still "disciples in the making."
- 11)** Encourage open and honest sharing among members about their faith and its powerful effect on their lives, including stories of the miraculous and the transformative.
- 12)** Understand the importance of biblically literate members and so offer multiple opportunities for biblical studies, including regular Sunday Bible study classes, Bible study in other Sunday school classes, weekday Bible study groups, and special Bible study groups such as Disciple Bible studies.
- 13)** Provide meaningful and enthusiastic worship experiences that feature a spiritual component, offer an encounter with God, and carry a powerful homiletic message that is relevant to the struggles and joys of daily life for both visitors and disciples.
- 14)** Enthusiastically welcome visitors and newcomers and attempt to integrate them rapidly and deeply into the life of the congregation.



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## Ash Wednesday service has hopeful message to start Lent



A beautiful, thoughtful and intimate Ash Wednesday service kicked off Lent on Feb. 14. The evening service, held in the chancel, featured members of Drexel Hill United Methodist Church and the St. Mary Magdalene Community. At left, Pastor Russell Atkinson administers ashes to a congregant.

Rev. Caryl Conroy Johnson offers a blessing before implementation of the ashes. The blessing, from "Circle of Grace," reads ***"Let us be marked not for sorrow, not for shame, not for false humility or for thinking we are less than we are, but for claiming what God can do within the dust, within the dirt, within the stuff of which the world is made and the stars that blaze in our bones and the galaxies that spiral inside the smudge we bear."***



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**Photos by  
David Bjorkgren**



Above, Pastor Russell offers an impassioned homily. At left, Rev. Johnson blesses a congregant with ashes. At right, the symbolic closed doors of the altar during Lent. Pastor Russell lights the altar candles (bottom left, right) and places ashes upon an attendee.



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## Lenten Primer

Lent is a season of 40 days, not counting Sundays, beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending on Holy Saturday (March 31).

The word "Lent" comes from the same Anglo-Saxon root as the word "lengthen," that is: *lencten*, meaning "spring."

As we move toward spring the days lengthen – Lent. Lent is a preparation

for Easter.

In the earliest Christian communities, the season began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and, by mediaeval times, had become a time of penance for all Christians.

The First Sunday's gospel reading describes Jesus' temptation by Satan; and the Sixth

Sunday's reading (Passion/Palm Sunday), Christ's entry into Jerusalem and his consequent passion and death.

Because Sundays are always "little Easters," the penitential aspect of Lent should properly be replaced each Sabbath day with joyful expectation of the Resurrection.

## March Sunday services

### **March 5, Third Sunday in Lent (Communion, Musical Setting C, Page 20)**

John 2:13-22

Sermon: "Know Jesus, Know Peace" *Pastor Atkinson*

289 Ah, Holy Jesus

Psalter UMH 750 response 2

2089 Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice

2112 Jesus Walked

### **March 11, Fourth Sunday in Lent**

John 3:14-21

Sermon: "A Vote For Intolerance" *Pastor Atkinson*

108 God Hath Spoken by the Prophets

Psalter UMH 7

102 Now Thank We All Our God

378 Amazing Grace

### **March 18, Fifth Sunday in Lent**

John 12:20-33

Sermon: "The Story of Our Lives" *Pastor Atkinson*

413 A Charge to Keep I Have

157 Jesus Shall Reign

Psalter UMH 785

2137 Would I Have Answered When You Called

413 A Charge to Keep Have I

### **March 25, Passion/Palm Sunday**

Call to Worship: Mark 11:1-11; Isaiah 50:4-9a; Mark 14:1 – 15:4

**No Sermon this Sunday**, instead, The Passion Narrative According to Mark

### **March 28, Wednesday Healing Service, 7:30 p.m.**

### **March 29, Maundy Thursday**

Mark 14:22-25 "The Cup of Salvation"

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## Lenten Bible Study



Pastor Russell Atkinson is leading a special Lenten Bible Study "Embracing the Uncertain," on Thursday nights during Lent. Remaining sessions are March 1, 8 and 15. Feel

free to come even if you cannot make every session.

Come around 6 p.m. and enjoy a simple meal of soup and bread, or arrive for the book discussion from 6:30 to 7:25 p.m.

The Study will take place in the Rainbow Room, through the doors across from the church parking lot on School Lane and down the stairs to the left.

"Embracing the Uncertain" invites readers this Lent to engage and wrestle with life's uncertainties, not ignore them.

The first six chapters focus on six post-Transfiguration, pre-Passion stories in the Gospels.

Each of these stories are signposts in the gospel narrative, pointing down at a world filled with uncertainty, but pointing us forward to a cross that can show us how to follow Jesus with courage, hope, and obedience.

The Study includes discussion questions that can be used in a small-group Bible study session or for personal growth.

## Tuesday Morning Faith Bible Study

Our congregation continues its Bible Study/Faith Formation Class led by Pastor Russell. The class meets on Tuesdays, 9:30 to 11 a.m., in the Bohn Parlor. This group is open to everyone, so please be liberal with your invitations. A vital congregation needs to ponder the scriptures.

## Bacon, Toast, and the Heavenly Host!

If you've got an appetite for the Word of God and a good breakfast, come on out to the Perkins Restaurant, 706 N. Lansdowne Avenue in Drexel Hill (just a short hop from the high school) the first Thursday of each month. Led by Pastor Russell, you will eat eggs and hear about Ecclesiastes, partake of tea and the Pentateuch, bagels and Bible! The devotional breakfast begins at 9 a.m. The next breakfast was March 1. The April breakfast will be April 5. Come out for breakfast, a short devotional, and fellowship.



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## Easter plant orders



It's the time of year with think of colorful plants. Now is the time to order a beautiful plant to decorate the altar on Easter Sunday. Last day to order will be Sunday, March 25. Please fill out the form printed in the bulletin and return it to the office or give it to Sally Mullin or Cindy Carper.

## Welcome to our new church treasurer

The finance committee would like to welcome our new treasurer Frank Whitehead to Drexel Hill UMC.

Frank has previous experience as treasurer for the Colonial Education Association, where he is a technology teacher.

With increased rental income and increased giving, Kurt, Frank, and I look forward to moving toward a stronger future for Drexel Hill UMC.

Also, the committee would like to again thank Lois Smith for her faithful service as treasurer for the last 17 years.

**--Dave O'Connell- Finance Chairperson**

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

### Coffee and conversation

By now everyone is looking forward to gathering in the Narthex immediately after the church service for a cup of coffee or tea and maybe a few cookies or pretzels.

Congregants have been encouraged to put a halt to the various duties of the church for the first 10 minutes after the service and come back to greet each other and welcome newcomers in particular.

New attendees feel welcomed, make some connections and are more likely to return for another visit.

Volunteers are needed to set up the coffee, hot water and provide a simple snack. This is best done before the service begins, so whoever is setting up usually arrives 15-20 minutes earlier that morning.



All supplies are kept handy in a closet in the Narthex, as are directions for making the coffee.

Someone will be available to assist if it is your first time to help out.

Please volunteer for a Sunday so that more than just a few people are doing this essential activity designed to welcome and encourage newcomers to begin friendships and find reasons to consider making this their home church.

The sign up sheet will be available this Sunday in the Social Hall and in the Narthex on subsequent Sundays.

**Thank you from the Membership Committee**

*The following thank you notes were received at Drexel Hill United Methodist Church:*



#### ***To the Congregation,***

Thank you very much for the lovely card of a sunset and the flowers. I hope the church has a better year. *Sincerely, Jane Rickards*

#### ***Dear Leaders and Pack 92,***

Thank you so much for all of your hard work collecting food donations this past year. You did an awesome job and we really appreciate your efforts. You have helped us to feed the hungry in our area. *Sincerely, Debbie Miller and the Upper Darby Food Cupboard*



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### BLAST FROM THE PAST

## Highlights of life at our church from 1930 to 1933

(from a timeline listed in "A History of the Drexel Hill United Methodist Church")

### 1930—

1. Dr. George Babcock became the pastor of what was then referred to as Broad Street Methodist Church in Drexel Hill. He launched a building program but because of the economic Depression, the building plans were deferred.
2. The first minstrel show was presented.
3. Broad Street was a charter member of the Eastern Delaware County Church Bowling League.

### 1932—

1. Broad Street Methodist had the largest membership of any church in Drexel Hill.
2. No political speakers were allowed to speak in the church.
3. The pastor found it extremely difficult to find new members due to the economic Depression.
4. The first Annual Halloween Party was held.
5. The Young Ladies' Bible Class had grown to 34 members. They were taking trips to farms, factories, Sears, etc. and the class was taking charge of some Wednesday and Sunday evening services.

### 1933—

1. Dr. Arthur James was named pastor and directed the completion of the building program began in 1930. He was well known in the community for his travelogues and lectures.
2. Because of large crowds on Sunday mornings, church officials were asked to sit in the side rooms and leave the better seats for others.
3. The Trustees voted to do away with the collection plates for three months, except for Communion and Easter. Benevolences were 80 percent ahead of 1932.
4. The Committee on Social and Recreational Life was very active, presenting an orchestra on two occasions, a play, four outings to the seashore and lectures.

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## IN THE COMMUNITY

### FOOD BANK LENTEN CHALLENGE



Our Outreach Committee's food bank ministry wants to challenge you to an experiment in Christian stewardship for the season of Lent. *Tithe your groceries!* Consider buying 10% more groceries from Ash Wednesday until Easter (or calculating the 10% cash equivalent) and donating it to the food bank. We have been very fortunate - the fortunes of needy families in our community could be uplifted by our Lenten pilgrimage to deeper faith.

Please bring canned and boxed nonperishable foods such as: **cereal, tuna, jello & pudding, pasta, soup and canned pasta meals.** Our Drexel Hill United Methodist Church food chest is kept in the narthex.

### OPEN CHURCH ON THE PARKWAY

Once a month, on a Sunday afternoon (usually the day after our monthly RSC luncheon on Saturday), sandwiches and snacks are collected for those in Philadelphia having a tough time and delivered to them at Aviator Park across from the Franklin Institute. The Open Church on the Parkway visit includes a small worship service. Volunteers are welcome to join Pastor Russell for the next visit, scheduled for March 25. If you'd like to make difference in the lives of others, please contact Pastor Atkinson.



### RSC LUNCHEON



The next RSC luncheon is scheduled for the fourth Saturday of March, on March 24, 2018, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the Rainbow Room (Fellowship Hall). The Project Reach Serve Care program provides a free hot catered lunch and friendly fellowship, to anyone in the community who wishes to attend.





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## Church honors chartered Scouts at its annual Scout Sunday service

Photos by  
Alex Mullin



### Blue and Gold Banquet

Cub Scout Pack 92 will celebrate Scouting Anniversary Week March 10 with its annual blue and gold banquet held at the church. The event includes a luncheon, entertainment and awards for scouts, including awards for Pinewood Derby winners.

**For decades**, Boy Scout Troop 32 and Cub Scout Pack 92 of Drexel Hill have participated in our annual Scout Sunday service. The Scouts, who are chartered by Drexel Hill United Methodist Church, helped out at the Feb. 18, 2018 service. Above, the Cub Scouts prepare to enter the sanctuary at the start of services.

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At left, the Scouts take an Oath. Below (left), the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts line up at the front of the church.



A member of Boy Scout Troop 32 reads a Scripture lesson during the Feb. 18 services.



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The Scouts repeated their Oath and Law, then led the congregation in the Pledge of Allegiance (above). At left, this year's large group of Scouts and their Scoutmasters get ready to recite the Scout Oath and Law. The Drexel Hill Boy Scout troop and Cub Scout pack have been meeting for decades at Drexel Hill Methodist Church. A video of the Scouts at the Feb. 18 service can be seen on the church's [Facebook](#) page.

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## RSC luncheon keeps packing them in!



**Our monthly RSC luncheon**, held on the fourth Saturday of each month in the Rainbow room, continues to be a success. The most recent luncheon took place Saturday, Feb. 24, with the next scheduled for Saturday, March 25. Alex Mullin was on hand to take some photos at the Feb. 24 lunch. The community is invited in for the free lunch to share some food and fellowship and hopefully to find out more about what goes on here at Drexel Hill Methodist.



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Project RSC (Reach, Serve and Care) began at the suggestion of Cindy Carper and now church volunteers work each month to prepare the food, as they welcome guests to enjoy a meal.

## EASTER FOOD BASKETS

As Easter approaches the Outreach Committee is busy putting together Easter Food Baskets. We will be giving them to families from the Upper Darby School District selected by the social workers. We are gratefully accepting donations to this project. Special envelopes are in the pews at church or donations can be sent to the church office. The baskets will be packed after church on Sunday, March 18. Everyone is invited to help.

**Thank you from the Outreach Committee.**

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Congratulations to everyone involved with the RSC luncheon for helping us connect with our neighbors and friends outside the church. You can see a photo gallery of the RSC luncheon on our [Facebook](#) page.



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## Open registration/tours for nursery school

We are having a great year and we want to spread the news!!

The Nursery School is opening registration for the 2018 – 2019 school year to families outside our school.

We are scheduling tours from 9:45 to 11:30 a.m., Monday through Friday.



To make an appointment, call 610-259-1444 or email us at [dhums@verizon.net](mailto:dhums@verizon.net).

Upcoming events at the nursery school include Green Day on Friday, March 16 in honor of St. Patrick's Day. Children are invited to wear green and bring a green object to class.

There will be an Easter Party on Friday, March 23. The school will be closed for Spring Break March 26 to April 2.

## DHUMC supports an end to gun violence

Twenty years ago this April, our country was shocked by the mass shooting at Columbine High School in Colorado. On Valentine's Day, 2018, an eerily similar mass shooting took place in Parkland, Florida killing 17 persons, including both students and teachers.

The tragedies of Newtown, Orlando, and Las Vegas have only magnified the need for some action on the issue of sensible gun control. What can we as Christians do besides the "thoughts and prayers" often uttered by our politicians after these events?

**Heeding God's Call to end gun violence** is a faith-based organization in the Philadelphia area that tries to bring awareness of gun violence to the public in creative ways. One method uses an outside display of T-shirts representing the gun deaths in our country.

From April 14 through April 28, Drexel Hill UMC will be displaying Heeding God's Calls T-shirts on church property.

Volunteers are needed to help to put up and take down the display.

A second group affiliated with Heeding God's Call is planning a demonstration March 21 at Sen. Pat Toomey's Philadelphia office. Delco United for Sensible Gun Policy hopes to convince Sen. Toomey to be a co-sponsor of a Senate bill to ban the sale of assault weapons. They will be melting an assault weapon into a garden tool to symbolize the ban and marching to the Senator's office.

For more information on this local organization and rally, visit

[www.delcounited.net](http://www.delcounited.net).

--Dave O'Connell





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(The following article comes from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference website)



## Pastors, churches respond to Florida high school massacre

By Sam Hodges

Feb. 15, 2018 | UMNS |

The Rev. Vance Rains had expected that his church's Ash Wednesday evening service would be just like the noon service. But in-between, a mass shooting occurred at nearby Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, in Parkland, Florida.

So evening worship at First United Methodist Church of Coral Springs, became a time for grieving, consoling and praying, with Rains improvising a new message.

"I talked about Jesus calming the storm and basically said that Jesus obviously doesn't calm all the storms, but he's with us in the storms, and he's bigger than the storms," Rains said.

Authorities **have accused 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz**, who had been expelled from the school, of using a semi-automatic AR-15 rifle in a Feb. 14 massacre that claimed 17 lives, including students and teachers. [SEE MORE](#)





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## AROUND THE WORLD

(The following article comes from the People of the United Methodist Church website)



*Photo*

*by Mike DuBose, UMNS*

Parishioners pray during worship at Canaan United Methodist Church in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Church leaders have been working to determine which parts of The United Methodist Church's policy book must apply throughout the multinational denomination and what parts can be adapted for use in Africa, Europe and Asia.

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## Progress in making a global Discipline

By Heather Hahn

Feb. 27, 2018 | ABIDJAN, Côte d'Ivoire (UMNS)

Slowly but surely, church leaders are combing through The United Methodist Church's main policy book with one goal in mind. They want to make clear what parts are essentials that bind all United Methodists together and what parts are nonessentials that can be adapted in Africa, Europe and Asia. [SEE MORE](#)

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## MARCH 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1 Breakfast Devotion, 9 a.m., Lenten Bible Study, 6 p.m Choir 7:30pm	2	3
4	5	6 BIBLE STUDY 9:30-11 a.m., Bohn Parlor FINANCE COMMITTEE 6 p.m.	7 CUB SCOUTS	8 Lenten Bible Study, 6 pm. Choir rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.	9	10 Cub Scout Blue and Gold Banquet
11	12 ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL 7 p.m	13 BIBLE STUDY 9:30-11 a.m., Bohn Parlor	14 CUB SCOUTS	15 Lenten Bible Study, 6 p.m. Choir rehearsal 7:30 p.m.	16	17
18 EASTER BASKETS PACKED	19	20 BIBLE STUDY 9:30-11 a.m., Bohn Parlor	21 CUB SCOUTS	22 CHOIR REHEARSAL 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary	23 Easter Party, Nursery School	24 RSC LUNCH 11:30a.m.-1 p.m.
25 PALM SUNDAY Open Church	26 Nursery School, Spring Break begins	27 TRUSTEES MEETING 7 p.m. Church office	28 HEALING SERVICE, 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary	29 MAUNDY THURSDAY Service	30 GOOD FRIDAY	31

