

CHURCH NEWS

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First Church News

First Church of Christ, Congregational

United Church of Christ

830 Corbin Avenue

New Britain, CT 06052

860-229-3709

www.firstnewbritain.org

MARCH 2016



OFFICE AND GALLERY HOURS

Monday - Friday 9 am - Noon

PROGRAM STAFF

The Rev. Kendrick Norris, Interim Minister

Sharon Chamberlain, Coordinator of Christian Education

James Gower, Director of Music Ministries

Sarah Flythe, Coordinator of Youth Programming

Please go to our website, www.firstnewbritain.org for staff contact information

Copies of sermons and additional newsletters are available in the information rack outside the church office.

SAVE THE DATES . . . LENTEN PROGRAMS

Please save Wednesday, March 9th and Thursday, March 24th, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, for our special mid-week dinners and programs / services. Please sign-up in the church office, so we have an idea of how many to prepare for. For more information . . . please read on!

“ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE.”

Ephesians 3:17

GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR

Easter Joy

Few of us have escaped the suffering of body, heart, mind or soul where we cry out, like Jesus from the cross, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46, Mk 15:34) We are nailed in place and cannot escape.

During those times of threatening illness, tragic loss, massive confusion, formidable transition, deep-well heart-break, we can be subject to a dark night that well-nigh extinguishes any flickering hope. Yet it is important to remember that in the midst of our most raging anxiety or deepest despair, we have good company. Jesus endured crucifixion, experiencing the full human pain of body, heart, mind and soul. That included the profound sense of hopelessness of one abandoned by God just at the worst moment. Dying on the cross, Jesus echoed the beginning of Psalm 22, which reads:

*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?
O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
and by night, but find no rest.*

Being a Christian does not bring exemption from the human experience, from “outrageous fortune” or a “sea of troubles.” But it does put us in good company. We share our life’s lot with Jesus whose complete anguish was wrought into the joy of resurrection. The good company extends: we share our life’s lot with our church family that gathers at our cross, not to mock us, but to be with us, know us and love us in our travail. And, even more, we share our life’s lot within the context of a sacred story where the divine is constantly moving us from imprisonment to freedom, from despair to hope, from old to new, from crucifixion to resurrection.

Like a childhood hymn seared into the depths of our soul memory, so is this knowledge of the final ends of God. So that while Jesus was in abject despair, even as he spoke those first lines from Psalm 22, deep within him and others who stood there that day resonated the ending of the same Psalm:

*For God did not despise or abhor
the affliction of the afflicted;
God did not hide God’s face from me,
but heard when I cried to God. . . .
All the ends of the earth shall . . .
Proclaim God’s deliverance.*

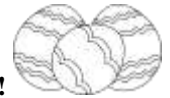
God’s absence may be felt, but God’s redeeming, restoring presence is always real and the final truth. With God, joy will come in the morning, Alleluia.
Kendrick

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Church School Mission Project

Our students brainstormed last Sunday about a Lenten Mission Project. They voted and then selected the CT Humane Society as the recipient of their efforts. Each child was given a metal canister that they covered with paper and decorated. They took them home and will be collecting money in them from now until April 3rd. That Sunday, we will count what’s in the canisters and see who our grand prize winner is!



March 27th, Easter Sunday and our Annual Easter Egg Hunt!

See you in church!
Sharon Chamberlain, Coordinator of Christian Education



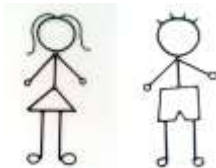
NEWS FROM THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

As you probably know, the Search Committee is hard at work assembling information about the church that will be used to tell our story to prospective candidates for our new settled Senior Minister. The Committee strongly believes in the importance of hearing the thoughts of all of you as we move through this process. With this in mind we have assembled a short survey for you to complete. You will be receiving an email containing this survey within the next week. There will also be copies of the survey in the church office for those of you not on the email distribution.

We expect the survey will take about 10 minutes to complete. This short investment of your time will help us to better understand the hopes and desires of all of you as we move forward in this important journey.

As with any questions or input you have, please contact one of the members of the Search Committee:

Mike Chamberlain, Mike Duncan (Co-Chair), John Gemmell, Mike Gorzoch, Margo Hunt, Sylvia Lucas, June McCarthy, Arlyd Munoz-Snyder, Deborah Ortega, Don Robertson and Beth Sticca (Co-Chair)



YOUTH NEWS

Thanks to our First Church family for making the Super Bowl grinder sale another success. \$39.00 was raised to go towards a worthy cause supported by First Church youth. Special thanks to Hannah Mangan, Andrew Baker, Rod Baker and Scott Mangan in helping to make the grinders.

Regards,
Sarah Flythe, Coordinator of Youth Programming



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO PROVIDE RIDES

There are a number of folks in our congregation who periodically need assistance getting to the church on Sundays and I am in the process of assembling a list of names of people willing to provide rides.

If you are willing to help out, please provide your name, email address and phone number to Mike Duncan by email at mdunc58@gmail.com or by leaving this information with the church office.

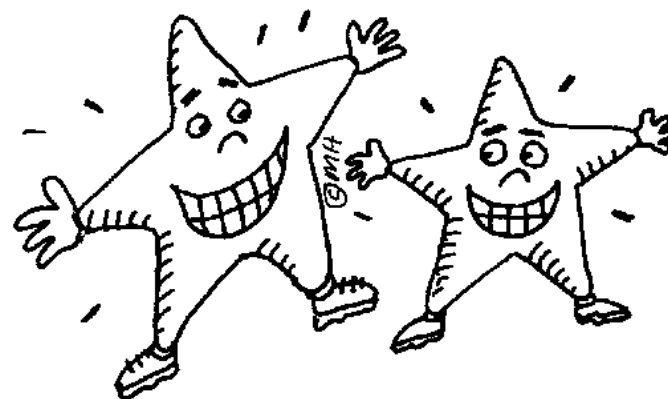
This is yet another way that you can help make a difference!



BREAD BAKING

Thank you to Arlyd Munoz-Snyder, Teri Grecki, Lois MacFarlane and AnneMarie Duncan for baking during the month of February. AnneMarie Duncan will be baking for Sunday, February 28th, Arlyd Munoz-Snyder will be baking for Sunday, March 6th, Amanda Costa will be baking for Sunday, March 13th, Lois Zink will be baking for Sunday, March 20th, Martha Moses will be baking for Sunday, March 27th, Lois MacFarlane will be baking for Sunday, April 2nd and Mabel Yeterian will be baking for Sunday, April 9th.

Bakers are needed for all Sundays after April 9th. Please sign up, in the Narthex before church or during coffee hour, to bake two welcome breads to be given out to visitors, returning members or those having difficulty in their lives. Any kind of homemade bread is appreciated, from yeast breads to sweet breads to bread from mixes.



CALLING ALL CROONERS, ASPIRING BALLADEERS AND TALENT ACTS OF ALL KINDS! ALL AGES WELCOME!

Do you have a favorite Broadway, folk or other genre tune you love to sing? How about a magic trick or some juggling to woo a crowd? Perhaps it's time to recite that Opus Magnum poem you've been penning all your life? Here's your chance to sing your heart out and share your talents! Some are even going to sing about feeling like they have no (performing) talent, if you'd like to join them. First Church is hosting our own Coffee House event on March 6, from 3-5 pm, and we need YOU! Contact Chris with the act or song and sheet music (Jim Gower will be happy to accompany on the piano). All ages welcome! We have room for about 15 acts so please call or email Chris ASAP, usmap@sbcglobal.net or call 860-389-1363!



CHURCH COFFEE HOUSE, MARCH 6th An Afternoon of Music, Fun, Sweets and More! 3 pm – 5 pm in Fellowship Hall

Come enjoy great music spanning many genres, shared by church members of all ages! Bring your friends, family and neighbors to enjoy good tunes and talents, along with some tasty treats! Free admission. Donations for desserts will benefit an outreach mission chosen by our youth.



A reminder that a current church directory can be found in the back of your Annual Report. They contain updated addresses, phone numbers and birthdays. Additional copies of the Annual Report can be found in the rack to the left of Kendrick's office door.



OUR SEXTON'S TRAVELS

This bag was found in the church safe in a sad state of disrepair. If you know anything about it, its history or who it may belong to, please see Glenn Anderson. We hope to find its rightful home.



PRAYER SHAWLS NEEDED

Interested in making prayer shawls? Whether you are an old pro or a new learner, please come pick up some yarn, learn a new stitch, and enjoy some fellowship next Sunday, February 28 at an extended coffee hour in Fireside. Bring a sandwich and stay as long as you would like as together we create these wonderful and warm expressions of our love and prayers. A new "pocket prayer" square will also be introduced! Contact Mary Norris with any questions.

We recently received a note from Millie Crumb thanking us for her "wonderful surprise, a prayer shawl." She goes on to say, "I love it! Miss you all and hope to see you. Please keep me in your prayers. God is Good."

Please remember that our prayer shawl ministry is an outreach ministry. Yes, prayer shawls are for those in our congregation who are ill or grieving. And, they are also for people outside our membership. So if you have a family member, a friend, or a co-worker who you think might appreciate a soft, warm symbol of God's love please let me know and I will get you one of our beautiful prayer shawls.

We are down to only three shawls in reserve. If you have time to knit, packages of yarn are available any time in my office. ~ Kendrick



BIBLE STUDY

We are considering holding Bible Study towards the end of March. Please see Kendrick after worship if you are interested in participating.



IN OUR FIRST CHURCH FAMILY

- Our thoughts and prayers are with Shelly and Jeff Jones, on the passing of their mother, Jay Jones, on Saturday, February 13, 2016. A celebration of her life will be held on Saturday, June 25th at Shuttle Meadow Country Club. Cards can be sent to 169 Virginia Avenue, New Britain, CT 06052.
- Our thoughts and prayers are with Jane Sittambalam, who was diagnosed with a curable form of head and neck cancer. She will begin eight weeks of chemotherapy and radiation, which will make speaking difficult. Well wishes can be sent to 1903 South Ocean Blvd, #1002, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582.
- Our thoughts and prayers are with Steve Anderson, who is recovering from a recent knee replacement. His address is 272 Spring Meadow Lane, Keswick, VA 22947.
- Our thoughts and prayers are with Millie Crumb, who recently fell and broke a hip. Cards can be sent to her care of Cassena Care of New Britain (formerly Andrews House), 66 Clinic Drive, room 112A, New Britain, CT 06051.
- Our thoughts and prayers are with the Furman family, as Bill and Lynne's sixteen-year-old great nephew, Ben Guckel, awaits a heart transplant. See following article.
- Happy news for the Chamberlain Family! Weston Michael Bellis was born on Monday, January 25, 2016. Parents are Brian and Kate (Chamberlain) Bellis and grandparents are Sharon and Mike Chamberlain. Kate's address is 10265 Peony Lane, Waco, TX 76708-5733. Congratulations to all!
- Our thoughts and prayers are with Bea Crumb as she continues cancer treatments. Well wishes can be sent to 22 Overlook Ave, New Britain, CT 06053.

These are opportunities to use our Sunshine Post Office, to send good cheer, see later article. Cards, pens, an address book and a mailbox are set up in the Fireside Room . . . just write one out during Coffee Hour. They are a nice and easy way to send caring thoughts to our church family and are greatly appreciated by, and comforting to, those who receive them.



BEN GUCKEL'S HEART TRANSPLANT

In December, Ben Guckel, great nephew of Bill and Lynne Furman, was an active 16 year old High School Junior from Somers, CT. In early January everything changed when Ben, who hadn't been feeling well, went to the doctor. They thought he might have pneumonia and he was sent for a chest X-ray. It was discovered that he was in heart failure and his liver was beginning to fail. He was admitted immediately and many different medications were tried to combat the virus Doctors at CCMC suspected had attacked his heart. Ben was transferred to Boston's Childrens' Hospital where he remains on a waiting list for a new heart.

Heart transplants are among the most complicated of procedures, carrying great risk. Once a heart is found, preparation for the surgery is lengthy and expensive. Costs for surgery can be up to \$1 million. Anti-rejection drugs can cost up to \$2,500 a month. Even with good jobs and health insurance, there are enormous fees associated with food and lodging for his family as they remain close to him in Boston.

There will be a collection bucket in the Narthex and in Coffee Hour for anyone who would like to donate. There is also a "go-fund-me" page set up on line for contributions, www.gofundme.com/2dkwxpv9. Thank you!

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING (OGHS) SPECIAL MISSION OFFERING

For almost seven decades, One Great Hour of Sharing had made a difference in the lives of people and communities around the world. This special mission offering provides support to health, education, refugee, agricultural, and emergency relief initiatives in 138 countries by pooling resources from and working with partners from Church World Service and nine Protestant denominations, including our own United Church of Christ. As a result of our gifts, people in poverty learn a trade, raise their own food, and grow in faith; we help to provide access to healthy food, good education, excellent health care, and shelter after devastating storms. Please give generously on Sunday, March 6th. Special offering envelopes will be available in our worship bulletins on February 28th and March 6th. Thank you!



THE OSGOOD FOOD PANTRY . . . NEEDS AND THANKS!

Our shopping cart was overflowing, so Glenn Anderson just delivered many bags of groceries to the Osgood Food Pantry. Pasta, sauce, canned pasta and boxed mac and cheese were donated, along with soup and many other grocery items. Thank you to all!

March will be tuna month . . . an easy, versatile and healthy meal. As always, any and all donations are welcome Sunday and during office hours.



LENTEN OFFERINGS

We planned two Lenten Suppers and program that will be adult, child and family friendly. The second one is planned for Wednesday, March 9th. We will eat at 6pm with the program beginning at 6:45. We will play some B-I-B-L-E Wheel of Fortune; don't miss Sharon Chamberlain as Vanna White. This will be a fun, challenging and educational experience for all ages.

Wednesday, March 9th, Lent 2

Dinner, 6 pm, prepared by Christian Education

Program: 6:45 pm, "B-I-B-L-E Wheel of Fortune" for all ages

Palm Sunday, March 20th

Worship, 10 am

Maundy Thursday, March 24th

Soup Dinner, 6-7 pm

Tenebrae Service in the Sanctuary, 7-8pm

Easter Sunday, March 27th

Worship, 10 am



PLEASE USE OUR SUNSHINE POST OFFICE

We have had lots happening in our First Church Family lately. Following the Apostle Paul's call to "Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep," (Romans 12:15), we have greeting cards for you to write to someone who has been mentioned during our "Prayers of the People" or in "Our First Church Family" or anyone you would like to reach out to. Cards, pens, and an address book are available during Coffee Hour, on a card table in the Fireside Room. Just place your cards in the Sunshine Post Office box and they will be stamped and mailed out on Monday. This is an easy way to show you care. Please challenge yourself to write at least one card a month. As Jesus made it abundantly clear, as we do it for another so we do it for him. ~ Kendrick



CHILI COOK-OFF 2016

Thanks To all for making our Chili Cook-Off another successful, fun event! Despite the change in date, due to inclement weather, over 45 people made and /or enjoyed 13 different chili entries along with the fixings and our famous First Church Apple Crisp!

This year’s winners are:

Mom’s best:	3 Bean Delight	Kirsty Naples
Best Vegetarian:	Yummy Vegetarian	Arlyd Munoz-Snyder
First Church Best:	Humility Chili	Don DelCegno
Best Spiciest:	Spicy Stout	Jonathan Snyder



LAST CALL

Spend a Week at Camp in God’s Backyard . . . Registration forms for Silver Lake kids’ sessions this summer are now available. Please see Sharon Chamberlain if you would like one!



MEN’S BREAKFAST, SUNDAY MARCH 20TH

Calling all men to join us for breakfast at 8:30 am, on (usually) the third Sunday of each month. We take turns cooking and cleaning up and put our wonderful church kitchen to good use. A hearty breakfast and good conversation is the perfect way to get ready for church. Other upcoming dates are: April 17th and May 22nd.



PEW CARDS

You will notice green and yellow cards in the pew card holder.

- The green card is for Joys and Concerns that you would like shared during the “Prayers of the People.” You can simply list a name—yours, another person’s or a family or group – and indicate if you’d like it listed in *Our First Church Family*. If you want, you can add a reason for the concern or for the joy. Please put your card in the offering plate as the offering is taken so, they can be used in today’s prayers.
- The yellow one is a card for visitors to fill out if they’d like more information on First Church, to be contacted or be put on our mailing list.



SIGN UP SHEETS

Clip-boards will be in the Narthex before church or in the Fireside Room during coffee hour, with sign-up sheets for the following . . .

- Bread Baking . . . please sign up on any available date, to bake two welcome breads to be given out to visitors or returning members. Any kind of homemade bread is appreciated.
- Ushers and Readers . . . please sign up to read or to usher on select dates or for a whole month.
- Multigenerational **B-I-B-L-E Wheel of Fortune**, please sign up if you plan on attending on Wednesday, March 9th.



SOCK BASKET

With cold weather settling in, we have begun collecting socks during the fall and winter to donate to area social service organizations. To date we have collected and donated many pairs of socks and more are needed. New socks for men, women and children will be gratefully accepted and distributed throughout the upcoming months. ~Missions & Congregational Life



CLIPPED COUPONS FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

The Missions & Congregational Life Working Group will continue to collect coupons for military families to help them provide for their families. We ask that they be already cut out. Please remember to bring in your coupons, drop them off in the basket in the church office and help us continue with this worthwhile venture!

UPCOMING EVENTS FROM MISSIONS AND CONGREGATIONAL LIFE



FIRST CHURCH HERITAGE DINNER FRIDAY, APRIL 22nd

Do you have a favorite dish that has been made by a family member for years and reflects your ethnic heritage? On Friday, April 22nd we will have the opportunity to share the foods of our individual cultures and get to know more about our church family. Please join us and bring an “ethnic” dish to share, along with the recipe, and even share a favorite family story with us. We hope you can attend this fun event!!



SATURDAY, APRIL 30th

Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 30th, as First Church continues our annual tradition of helping our neighbors. We are currently in our house selection process and our projects will include painting, plumbing, light carpentry, power-washing, gutter cleaning, and our world famous First Church yard transformation. Come for the day or as long as you can, we need your help. Work day starts at 8am and runs through the afternoon. Thank you all for your continued help and support in this great local outreach program.



SNEAKER SUNDAY SUNDAY, MAY 1st

First Church adults, families and youth will have an opportunity to walk against hunger here in New Britain on SNEAKER SUNDAY, May 1st. Following the worship service that day, participants are invited to walk from our church to the 1+ mile Walnut Hill Park walking loop to increase awareness of hunger in our community. A light luncheon will then be served back at First Church.

More information, times and sign-up sheets for all events will follow



MARCH 2016 CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

- March 1 Tai Chi, meets Tuesday afternoons at 1 pm
- March 3 NB Women’s Club and Adult Choir meets Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm
- March 6 Carillon Prelude, Communion Sunday, Chris Solimene preaching, Worship in the Sanctuary and Sunday School
- March 9 6 pm, Lenten Supper and 6:45 pm, Lenten Program: “B-I-B-L-E Wheel of Fortune”
- March 13 Worship in the Sanctuary and Sunday School
- March 16 NB Women’s Club Board
- March 17 Happy Saint Patrick’s Day
- March 18 Newsletter Deadline
- March 20 Palm Sunday, Men’s Breakfast, 8:30 am, Worship in the Sanctuary, Sunday School and Council meeting
- March 21 Deadline for Easter Lily orders
- March 24 Maundy Thursday, 6 pm Supper, 7 pm Worship and 8 pm Adult Choir
- March 25 Good Friday, building closed
- March 27 Easter Sunday, Worship in the Sanctuary and 2nd Hour Egg Hunt

THE SIX BRANDENBURG CONCERTI

The CT Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra will perform all six Brandenburg Concerti by J.S. Bach on Sunday, February 28th, here at First Church at 6 pm. Gems of the Baroque era, the six concerti feature a wide spectrum of orchestral instruments in combinations that might still be considered daring and unusual. Performing without a conductor, this program will showcase the Virtuosi’s skill as a chamber ensemble as well as the virtuosity of individual orchestra members, including maestro Adrian Sylveen on violin and viola, concertmaster Brunilda Myftaraj on violin, Julia Caruk on trumpet, Jill Maurer-Davis on flute. The program will also feature a guest harpsichordist Bridget de Moura Castro. Admission will be free with a suggested donation of \$20. Please call the orchestra’s phone number, which is 860-325-2826, for more information.



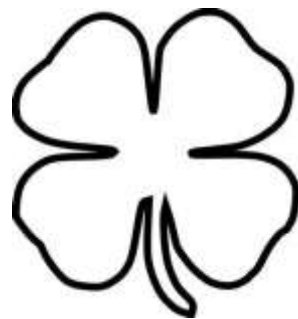
WINTER WEATHER CLOSINGS

In the case of bad weather, please watch WFSB Channel 3 or tune into WTIC am or fm or WRCH fm; for information on church closings or the cancellation of church events. During the week, the church office may close early in bad weather; please call before coming in. Thank you!



HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING

- 2 CAMERON CULTON
- 3 MARGO HUNT
- 4 JASON SITTAMBALAM
PAUL PETRISKO
- 5 JENNIFER STICCA
- 6 ESTHER WOODRUFF
- 9 EDWARD SASSO
- 10 DORIS HADVAB
JAMMY DAVIES
- 13 SARAH FLYTHE
- 16 MICHAEL WEHRLI-ZEMSTA
- 17 MAURICE DAVIES SR
MARK OHANESIAN
- 18 JOYCE ANDERSON
- 19 FRAN RUSSELL
- 20 MEG NEIMAN
- 24 MARK MOSES
JULIA ALLEN
- 25 BETSY TURBACUSKI
- 31 TODD SASSO
ISLA NAPLES
LISA NAPLES



HAPPY SAINT PATRICK'S DAY!



LAST CHANCE TO ORDER EASTER LILIES

Orders are now being accepted for Easter Lilies, which will be placed in the Sanctuary on Sunday, March 27th. They can be ordered in Memory of a loved one or in Honor of someone living. Plants will be delivered to those who cannot come to church, have suffered recent hardship OR you may choose to take yours home. If you would like to make a \$12.00 contribution to the flower fund, please fill out the form below and return it, with payment, by Monday, March 21st. The names of these people will be listed in the March 27th Easter Worship bulletin and the First Church Newsletter. Thank you.

Your Name: _____

In Memory of: 1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Amount Enclosed (\$12 per name) \$ _____

You may deliver plant(s) to a shut in:	Yes	No
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I want to take plant(s) home:	Yes	No
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MARCH 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9:15 am. Staff Meeting 1:00 pm. Tai Chi 7:30 pm. AA (men only)	2	3 NB Women's Club Program 7:30 pm. Adult Choir	4	5
6 ~ Chris Solimene Preaching, Communion Sunday and One Great Hour of Sharing 9:45 Carillon Prelude 10:00 am. Worship in the Sanctuary and Sunday School 3-5 pm. First Church Coffee House 7:00 pm. Alanon	7	8 9:15 am. Staff Meeting 1:00 pm. Tai Chi 7:30 pm. AA (men only)	9 6 pm. Lenten Supper, Christian Education 6:45 pm. Lenten Program, B-I-B-L-E Wheel of Fortune	10 7:30 pm. Adult Choir	11	12
13 10:00 am. Worship in the Sanctuary and Sunday School 7:00 pm. Alanon	14	15 9:15 am. Staff Meeting 1:00 pm. Tai Chi 7:30 pm. AA (men only)	16 9-noon NB Women's Club Board	17 ~ Happy Saint Patrick's Day 7:30 pm. Adult Choir	18 10 am. Newsletter Deadline	19
20 ~ Palm Sunday 8:30 Men's Breakfast 10:00 am. Worship in the Sanctuary and Sunday School 11:15 am. Council meeting 7:00 pm. Alanon	21 10 am. Deadline for Lily Orders	22 9:15 am. Staff Meeting 1:00 pm. Tai Chi 7:30 pm. AA (men only)	23	24 ~ Maundy Thursday, Communion and Tenebrae 6 pm. Supper 7 pm. Worship 8 pm. Adult Choir	25 ~ Good Friday, Building Closed	26
27 ~ Easter Sunday 10:00 am. Worship in the Sanctuary and Sunday School 2nd Hour Egg Hunt 7:00 pm. Alanon	28	29 9:15 am. Staff Meeting 1:00 pm. Tai Chi 7:30 pm. AA (men only)	30 9-noon Conference Committee on Ministry	31 7:30 pm. Adult Choir		