

SALT & LIGHT

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF SEBASTOPOL

MARCH 2020 NEWSLETTER

The Community
Church of
Sebastopol
United Church
of Christ
707.823.2484
www.uccseb.org
office@uccseb.org

Lead Minister
Rev. Dr. Benjamin
J. Broadbent

**Associate
Minister of Faith
Formation**
Rev. Lacey Hunter

**Associate
Minister of
Congregational
Care**
Rev. Rachel Knuth

**Minister of
Music**
Rev. Brian
Plaugher

Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Gene Nelson

**Handbell
Ensemble
Director**
Karna Roa

Keyboardist
J. Althea

**Congregational
Administrator**
Becca Emerson

Bookkeeper
Julie Reimer

Custodian
Maria Mojica

LENT IS A TIME TO _____

By Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent, Lead Minister

The word "Lent" is a short version of the English word "lengthen." At this time of year in the northern hemisphere, the days are lengthening. Here in Sonoma County daffodils are making their appearance and trees are beginning to blossom. In the Spring air we breathe, there is a sense of possibility and expectation. But in the political air we breathe, there is a sense of conflict and foreboding. We find ourselves in a general atmosphere of tension and uncertainty. That atmosphere is the perfect description of Lent.

In the Christian church, Lent is a season of 40 days and nights, not including Sundays, that begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes at daybreak on Easter morning. Lent is a period of preparation. In the words of Joan Chittister, "Lent is an opportunity to look again at who we are, at where we're going in life, and how we're getting to where we say we want to go." Lent is a time to dip down into the holy interplay of joy and grief, of hope and despair, of faith and doubt, of clarity and dismay.

In February, my wife Brooke and I went to Costa Rica for a 5-day vacation. We met up with some long-time friends from Colorado, walked on the beach, lay by the pool, went snorkeling, and ate yummy meals while laughing and telling stories. I very much enjoyed myself, but I also had unsettling feelings around the morality of this kind of travel. Airplane emissions contribute significantly to atmospheric carbon levels that affect climate change. Tourism can provide economic support to a country, but it can also re-inscribe colonial attitudes and practices. Our trip left me relaxed and delighted, but also ambivalent.

The six weeks of Lent provides an invitation to enter into "holy ambivalence," to acknowledge the fraught reality of our human existence, and to place our confusion in the hands of our living and loving God. Jesus struggled with this ambivalence during his 40 days and nights in the desert where he was tempted by Satan, aka "the deceiver," to deny who he truly was and to rely on his privileged status to save him. Instead, Jesus placed his trust and the fullness of his existence in the care of God who is the only one worthy of total trust.

Lent is a time for many things. A time to choose direction. A time to fast. A time to see anew. A time to strip away the false self. A time to recognize miracles. A time to weep. Our Lenten worship will be guided by the devotional words of Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister and the mural art of artist LMNOPI. As we travel together this path of lengthening days, my hope is that we will learn together to trust God to hold our deep discomfort and holy ambivalence so that we might be surprised again by the newness of life made visible on Easter Day.



WORSHIP & LENTEN FAITH FORMATION

MARCH 2020 WORSHIP

Sundays at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary

*Nursery Care available for newborns through
Kindergarteners*

This year during the Season of Lent, our multi-generational worship will include weekly Communion, confirmands and their mentors as liturgists, and an overall theme: "Lent is a time to _____"

March 1 – 1st Sunday in Lent: "A Time to Fast"

Beginning today and continuing weekly during Lent, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Our Chancel Choir, directed by Rev. Brian Plaugher, sings "Give Me Jesus" and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on Matthew 4: 1 – 11 entitled "Life and Death in the Desert."



March 8 – 2nd Sunday in Lent: "A Time to See Anew"



The Handbell Ensemble, directed by Karna Roa, shares worship music and Pastor Benjamin preaches on John 3:16 a sermon entitled "So What That God So Loved?"

March 15 – 3rd Sunday in Lent: "A Time to Strip Away the False Self"



Today the Chancel Choir sings Joyce Morrow's arrangement of "Be Thou My Vision" and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on John 4: 5 – 42 entitled "Beyond Posturing, Beyond Shame."

March 22 – 4th Sunday in Lent: "A Time to Recognize Miracles"

On this weekend of the annual Women's Retreat, our worship will include a vocal ensemble singing "Open My Eyes." Pastor Benjamin preaches on John 9: 1 – 41 a sermon entitled "Signs of Life in the Valley of Death."

March 29 – 5th Sunday in Lent: "A Time to Weep"



This morning our Chancel Choir sings "Like a Lighthouse" and Pastor Benjamin preaches a sermon on John 11: 1 – 45 entitled "The Gospel's Shortest Sentence."

Coming in April... Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Sunday, Easter Season

FAITH FORMATION HOUR LENT
GROUP FOR
HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH & ADULTS
Sundays March 1-April 5, 9-
10:15am, Faith Chapel

**Imagining Beyond Empire:
Spiritual Practices to Unlearn
Oppression**
Facilitated by Sharon Fennema

Lent provides us with the opportunity to take stock of our spiritual lives and consider ways that we might need to grow and change. While practices of "giving up" or "taking on" something are often how we think of marking this time, our Lent formation group invites us into the deeper work of understanding the multiple overlapping forms of oppression we often inadvertently participate in perpetuating and developing spiritual practices that enable us to take an honest look at ourselves and to imagine beyond these oppressive dynamics. Because the season of Lent includes both Black History/Futures Month and Women's History/Futures Month, we will focus on cultivating spiritual practices that form us for the work of dismantling racism, white supremacy, misogyny and patriarchy, both in our world and in ourselves. "To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains or to work for the liberation of others, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." - Nelson Mandela

**"FOR TO BE FREE
IS NOT MERELY TO
CAST OFF ONE'S CHAINS,
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THE FREEDOM OF OTHERS"**

Nelson Rolihlabla Mandela

BALCONY VIEW & FAITH JOURNEYS

THE BALCONY VIEW... VISIONING A FUTURE CHURCH By Michael Ott, Moderator



At our February meeting, the Leadership Council discussed plans for a March retreat – this year's retreat will afford us an opportunity to refresh and consider opportunities to lead our church forward. Pastor Ben did some initial brainstorming on the retreat content, what he calls the Meat of the Retreat. The menu includes:

- Gaining a clear understanding of pledging, giving, budgeting, and the monthly financial report.
- Developing a "balcony view" and a visioning capacity.
- Clarifying roles and council/staff partnerships – each Council member has a staff partner that aligns with their ministry area.
- Identifying our congregation's leadership values and developing leadership practices.
- Prioritizing Council's use of time at meetings and in-between meetings.

The most attractive menu item for me is developing a visioning capacity. P.K. Bernard wrote that "A person without a vision is a person without a future. A person without a future will always return to their past."

Kris Vallotton wrote that vision is the bridge between the present and the future. Vision is what we see, but it is also the way in which we see. We perceive with our eyes but we see with our hearts. The things we believe to be true determine the way in which we interpret life. These "things" are called core values.

Vision has three components. Foresight is like looking at life through a telescope. This outlook allows us to know what is ahead as it connects us to our future. Insight is like viewing life through a microscope. This perception gives us an understanding of why things happen in life. Oversight puts life into context. Another way of describing oversight is "balcony view", that is, to stay above the fray and look at all of our church's activities, concerns and possibilities objectively and with a capacity to see a future.

The Leadership Council Retreat will provide a venue to articulate a vision of our future church that will pull the vision from our hearts and minds into the world so others can capture it in their hearts. And we will pray that our collective vision will be honestly birthed by God, who will be delighted to direct our steps forward.



FAITH JOURNEYS SOUP DINNER & CONVERSATION

Tuesdays March 10, 17, 24, 31, 6-8pm

Everyone has a different faith journey, different questions that compel and give meaning to life, different practices that ground and sustain. During Lent, we take a moment to bear witness to and support these journeys. All are invited to gather in Fellowship Hall for a simple soup dinner and time to share a bit of your story with your neighbor. Following dinner, folks gather in Faith Chapel to participate in a presentation led by various members of the community. This year's Faith Journeys will be offered by:

- ♦ Ruth Grant (March 10)
- ♦ Pastor Lacey (March 17)
- ♦ Harry Simms (March 24)
- ♦ Members of the High School Youth Group (March 31)



FAITH FORMATION AND SALT TRIPS

SALT

FAITH FORMATION: PUTTING OUR FAITH INTO ACTION
By Pastor Lacey, Associate Minister of Faith Formation

SALT

What are Service and Learning Together (SALT) Trips?

Have you ever participated in a town/beach clean-up day; volunteered at a local soup kitchen; or traveled to another town, state, or country to work alongside others serving the local community? If you answered "Yes" to any of these, then you have participated in a kind of Service and Learning Together (SALT) Trip, it just might have been called something else—Mission Trip. Many of us in the Christian Church have grown up understanding Mission Trips to be crucial opportunities for justice-making in the world. The word "mission" denotes intention, purpose, passion for the call to discipleship and service. But "mission" also conjures up other more problematic meanings and legacies in the Christian context. Mission comes with a history of Christian colonization and dominance. Mission comes with a legacy grounded in "othering," where Christians are wiser and morally superior to others. A shift from "Mission" to "Service and Learning Together" is an invitation into a different kind of justice work. Rather than continuing to use language that has participated in systems of oppression, "Service and Learning Together" forms us in tactics of justice-making that are grounded in relationships of solidarity and guided by the wisdom and experiences of those most impacted by injustice. SALT is a reminder that we are called to co-create and conspire together, that we are all in this, learning together for the sake of God's kingdom.

Service and Learning Together (SALT)

Emily Sayl, Community Church's former Interim Director of Youth Ministry first brought this emerging understanding of justice ministry to our congregation last year and we are continuing to develop these ministries now. This shift from Mission to SALT is an unfolding journey, something that we are all coming to understand together. One way that we are preparing for this summer's Middle and High School SALT Trips, is to engage in the following formational discussions:

Why Do We Do Service Work?: Becoming Co-Conspirators

Witnessing to Resiliency and Joy: Learning From the Wisdom of Those Most Impacted

Solidarity Widely and Locally

SALT

Interested in exploring more about how we can serve and learn together? Let's talk!

ALL CHURCH DANCE & SILENT AUCTION:

A FUNDRAISER FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL SALT TRIPS

Friday, March 27, 7-9pm, Memorial Hall

Sliding scale donations at the door

Big-ticket auction item includes 24-session dance class with Norquist Dance Company

Desserts & fun, non-alcoholic beverages provided



The night will kick-off with Nordquist Dance Company leading ballroom dancing, followed by Slab Dance (caller-led dancing) led by Kathy Bell and the youth groups, and finally free dance DJ'ed by youth members.



R JUSTICE!
UNITE IN FAITH!

2020 NATIONAL YOUTH EVENT

UNITE! Purdue University | July 22-25

ucc.org/nye

We are excited to travel to Indiana this summer with young people who have completed 9th grade through 12th grade. United Church of Christ's National Youth Event will take place at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. This 4-day event is celebrated as the largest denominational gathering! Bringing in 4,000 participants, this time together is centered on faith, leadership, service, and social justice to empower our youth.

The Northern California Nevada Conference youth delegation is planned for July 19-25, 2020. The group will fly to Chicago for a Day of Service and sightseeing first, then bus to Purdue University for NYE.

We also have our very own Sana Sunia of Wellspring UCC, Santa Rosa, as one of the NYE speakers. Sana currently serves as the Youth Minister and President of the Wellspring UCC. And he currently serves as the National Vice Moderator of Pacific Asian American Ministries (PAAM).

For National Youth Event 2020 Schedule visit: <http://www.uccpages.org/nye2020/schedule/>

Deadlines:

Registration and Deposit of \$300.00 Due-	March 15, 2020
Installment payment of \$400.00 Due-	April 1, 2020
Installment payment of \$400.00 Due-	May 1, 2020
Installment payment of \$400.00 Due-	June 1, 2020-Final payment

***** For more information and to find out how to participate contact **Pastor Lacey** asap at pastorlacey@uccseb.org or 971.344.5378.**

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

LENT: A SEASON TO CULTIVATE GRIEF RESOURCES WITH (AND FOR) CHILDREN

How can families talk about the death of Jesus? And, what resources are out there for families, when a loved one dies? As Hope Edelman, author of *Motherless Daughters*, writes, *"Grief is not linear. It's not predictable." So how can we walk through a journey of grief with children?*

Lent is a season when the church acknowledges liturgically that death is part of life. It can be an opportunity for parents and grandparents to bring conversations about death and dying into family life, to normalize the topic at a time when death may not be imminent in the life of the family.

Here are some ideas to talk with children about the death of Jesus:

- Lent is a great time to attend Godly Play and worship. The Godly Play class usually addresses the events of Holy Week—especially on Palm Sunday—and is very age-appropriate in its approach.
- Deepen your family's Holy Week practices
- Attend the Good Friday cemetery walk that our church offers. It's usually a good mix of children, youth, and adults— and a chance to walk through a cemetery when it's for a liturgical reason (rather than a death of someone close).

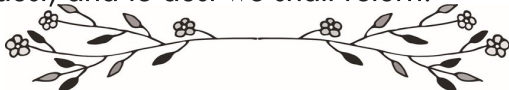
Good picture-books of the events of Holy Week:

- *The Easter Story* by Brian Wildsmith
- *The Mystic Bible* by Alexandra Sangster

Here are some good children's books on death and dying:

- *Dragonflies & Waterbugs*
- *Badger's Parting Gifts*
- *The Goodbye Book* (younger children)
- *Kindred Souls* (older elementary)
- *Remembering Your Grandparent* workbook by Rev. Molly Phinney Baskette
- *When Dinosaurs Die*
- *Death is Stupid*

Your Pastors can be a source of spiritual support to you and your family in a time of grief. And, the grief services side of Hospice provides free counseling to any community member who has experienced a recent loss. May the Holy One bless you this Lenten season, when we remember that we have come from dust, and to dust we shall return.



SPRING NINE-TO-DINE

If you are in a Spring Nine-to-Dine group, here are the conversation-starter questions for your March gathering:

- What is the most beautiful place you have been?
- What do you do to relieve stress in your life?
- What is God calling out of you during this season of Lent?

The next Nine-to-Dine groups will form in August, for Fall 2020. For more information about Nine-to-Dine, contact **Pastor Rachel**: pastorrachel@uccseb.org.

KINDRED GROUPS USHERING

The Kindred Groups that are serving together as ushers in March:

- 1 — Golden Delicious
- 15 — Gravensteins
- 22 — Braeburns



PRAYER CIRCLE

We hold in prayer... All people who welcome babies with joy and love, including **Leslie Bagley**, **Stephanie Camara**, and big sister **Anabelle**, upon the birth of baby **Nico**. All people who are separated from loved ones by physical, emotional, or medical barriers. All people who are homebound, including **Evelyn Bishop**, **Gladys Chappell**, and **Glenda Elvy**.

God, we pray your Presence surround these beloveds with comfort and care. Amen.





Easter Lily Dedications



~Honor a loved one with an Easter Lily on Easter Sunday, April 12~

To order a beautiful living plant that will grace our sanctuary on Easter Sunday, please fill out the order form below and drop it in the labeled basket in the church office.

Each lily is \$15, please make checks payable to Community Church.

Deadline to order Easter Lilies: April 5

This lily is in (circle one) Honor / Memory of

Dedicated by (your name)

____ I will pick up my lily at 12:15 on Easter Sunday

____ Please deliver my lily to someone on the Visitation Ministry List



(For multiple dedications, please use additional forms)

WORK GROUPS



SHASTA COUNTY WORK GROUP

By Joyce Cox



Join us for the 2020 Disaster Recovery Work Group May 31-June 5, 2020 in Redding California.

We are forming a group of hardy souls to go to Redding to help rebuild houses destroyed in the Carr Fire. We can use both skilled and unskilled people who are willing and able to work. We often do things such as painting, laying floors, hanging and finishing drywall as well as more skilled tasks. We always work hard, sweat a lot and have good times. We don't know exactly what the tasks are until we get there. The key is to be flexible and of good humor. Working, eating and living together for a week creates a special bond within the group. We will be staying at a local church, sleeping on air mattresses and eating fabulous food.

This is our 14th year of going on trips. We have been to New Orleans 3 times, twice to New Jersey, Indiana, Weed CA and Middletown CA, and once to Alabama and Tennessee. Each year we have some new members and old timers in the group. You are welcome to join the group. Please see <https://uccseb.org/docs/2020-Shasta-Work-Group-Application.pdf> for more information and the printable application. Application packets are also available in the church office. The deadline to apply is March 27.



Two previous disaster recovery work groups.

CALLING ALL PAINTERS

By Jane Huneke, Facilities Committee

The Facilities Committee has several major goals this year for the repair and maintenance of our buildings and campus. We have already repaired the playground gate and replaced a section of the retaining wall on the south end of our parking lot, just since January. There are many other projects coming up and we need your help!!! There will be several opportunities throughout the year to find the best fit for you as we care for our church campus.

Our next project is painting the interior of Fellowship Hall on Saturday, **April 18th starting at 9:30 a.m.** Our team will be led by Kim Buckman, who was a professional painter for many years. If you have painting skills and would like to lend your talents to our project, please sign up in the church office. We appreciate your help.

Blessings from all us old fogies on the facilities committee.



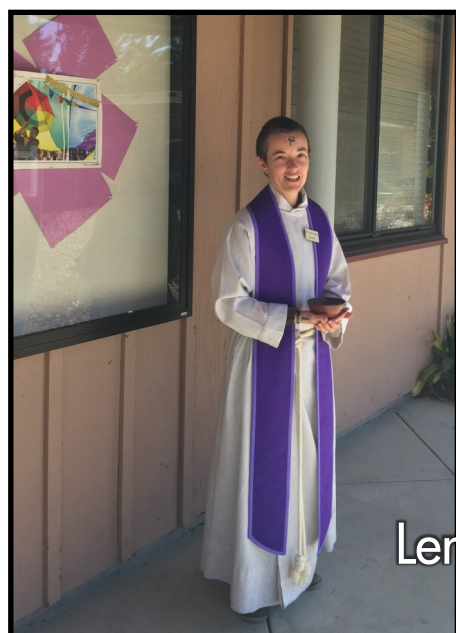
WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING AT COMMUNITY CHURCH



Facilities Repairs



Piano Refurbishment and Special Concert



Lent Begins...Ashes Out and About

Religious Teachings on the Rights of Mother Earth: An Interfaith Event



Panel:

Rose Hammock, Traditional Pomo Feather Dancer
Rachel Mansfield-Howlett, Zen Roshi
Rabbi George Gittleman, Jewish Rabbi
Rev. Lacey Hunter, Christian Minister

Moderator:

Leticia Romero, President North Bay Organizing Project

Sunday, March 8, 3:00 - 4:30 pm
Community Church of Sebastopol
1000 Gravenstein Hwy North
Sebastopol, CA 95472



NORTH BAY ORGANIZING PROJECT
PROYECTO ORGANIZATIVO DEL NORTE DE LA BAHIA

OUTREACH & BIRTHDAYS

MEATBALL MARCH MANIA

By Peggy Porter, Member of Mission & Outreach Committee

Mission and Outreach has been working together with the Sam Jones Shelter to identify ways that the Community Church can put our faith into action. The Sam Jones Shelter provides temporary shelter to homeless people and also have the Nightingale Room, which provides for homeless people who have recently had surgery or been hospitalized.



In December the Community church provided shoe boxes of supplies as well as warm hats and scarves to the Sam Jones Shelter. Then in February the Mission and Outreach Committee collected Games and Gloves to share with the folks at the shelter.

Now in March Mission and Outreach will plan for a Pasta and Meatball dinner to 120 people at Sam Jones Shelter. We are calling it Meatball March Mania!

Please join us in making meatballs or cookies. You can sign up in the courtyard after worship on March 1 and 8 to make meatballs to freeze or cookies right before the dinner. If you don't have a favorite meatball recipe you can pick one up at the sign up table.

We ask that you cook and freeze two dozen golf ball size meatballs and place them in a ziplock bag (provided) and return them to church or call **Peggy Porter** at 291-6353 for pickup, before the end of March. Cookies will be collected April 5th.

If you would like to help out during the dinner you may sign up for that as well.

Monetary donations for pasta and salad will be gratefully accepted.



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1	Maya Malone	15	Luis Quezada	25	Kathy Smith
3	Connie Blackstone		Ethan Kauffman	26	Josephine Nirmala
4	Pam Kruse		Mirabelle Kauffman		Josh Bradley
5	Denelle Tognozzi	16	Cecelia MacKillop		Olivia Stoll
	Hope Madden	17	Lori Babcock		Elliot Butterfield
	Susan Olson	18	Karyl Clendenen Drennon		Erin Butterfield
6	Ross Galleto		Lloyd Lerum	30	Margarette Murakami
	Laura Emerson		Jerry Coleman		Lois Michelsen
9	Julie Davis		Jane Austin	31	Zoë Dillard
10	Leslie Wood	19	Jude Melone		
11	Joella Falkingham	20	Joyce Cox		
	Curt Nichols	21	Eliana Curtis		
12	Avy Card	22	Taylor Davison		
	Owen Thomas	23	Nao Noguchi		
	Reece Thomas		Esme Arendt		
14	Michelle Brueggemann		Bridget Hole		



EVENTS IN MARCH AT COMMUNITY CHURCH



Mar 1	1 st Sunday in Lent High School Youth Group, 12:00 pm, Youth Lounge
Mar 4	Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Fireside Room Men's Group, 7:00 pm, Faith Chapel
Mar 8	2 nd Sunday in Lent Faith in Action Team, 9:30 am, Women's Fellowship Office Youth Ministry Team, 1:30 pm, Youth Lounge
Mar 9	Mission & Outreach Committee, 7:00 pm, Fireside Room
Mar 10	Lead Minister Pastor-Parish Relations Team, 4:00 pm, Fireside Room Lenten Soup Supper & Faith Journey, 6:00 pm, Fellowship Hall & Faith Chapel
Mar 11	Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Fireside Room
Mar 12	Card Writing Ministry, 11:00 am, Women's Fellowship Office
Mar 13	Kindred Group Leader Team, 12:00 pm, Fireside Room
Mar 14	Second Saturday Lunch, 12:00 pm, Fellowship Hall
Mar 15	3 rd Sunday in Lent Granny Smith Gathering, 11:45 am, Choir Room High School Youth Group, 12:00 pm, Youth Lounge
Mar 16	Prayer Shawl Group, 10:00 am, Fireside Room
Mar 17	Health & Safety Team, 1:00 pm, Fireside Room Lenten Soup Supper & Faith Journey, 6:00 pm, Fellowship Hall & Faith Chapel
Mar 18	Facilities Team, 1:00 pm, Fireside Room Leadership Council, 6:30 pm, Media Room
Mar 20	Women's Retreat, Bishop's Ranch
Mar 22	4 th Sunday in Lent
Mar 24	Lenten Soup Supper & Faith Journey, 6:00 pm, Fellowship Hall & Faith Chapel
Mar 25	Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Fireside Room
Mar 27	All Church Dance: Youth Group Fundraiser, Memorial Hall
Mar 28	Leadership Council Retreat, 8:00 am
Mar 29	5 th Sunday in Lent Associate Minister Pastor-Parish Relations Team (Rachel), 12:00 pm, Fireside Room
Mar 31	Lenten Soup Supper & Faith Journey, 6:00 pm, Fellowship Hall & Faith Chapel

March Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday, 9:00 am—2:30 pm
Office will be closed Mondays in Lent

Coming Up in April

- Palm Sunday
- Maundy Thursday
- Good Friday
- Easter



Sundays at 9:00 am—Faith Formation Hour

- ◇ Godly Play, Preschool-5th Grade in Classroom 5
- ◇ Middle School Youth, 6th-8th Grade in the Youth Lounge
- ◇ Bible Study, Adults in the Fireside Room

Sundays at 10:30 am—Worship in the Sanctuary

Tuesdays at 4:00 pm—Handbell Ensemble rehearses in the Sanctuary

Thursdays at 7:15 pm—Chancel Choir rehearses in the Choir Room

Fridays at 10:00 am—Uke Stars meet in Fellowship Hall

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