

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

| | |
|---|------------|
| PASTORS' PAGES | 2-3 |
| YOUTHHOUSE | 4 |
| AMONG OUR PEOPLE | 5 |
| CONNECT | 6 |
| SPOTLIGHT | 7 |
| NURSERY SCHOOL | 8 |
| SESSION UPDATE & ANNOUNCE- MENTS | 9 |
| NARRATIVE | 10 |
| MARCH CALENDAR | 11 |

**OVER 80
BIRTHDAYS**

March 22
Ken Wadman

March 27
Jean Whittemore



Lent is one of the oldest seasons observed by the Christian Church. Irenaeus of Lyons, a church father who lived roughly A.D.130-200, wrote about the Lenten observance in the early days of the church. Lent encompasses a 6-week period prior to Easter that is set apart as a time to intentionally focus on the spiritual disciplines of self-examination, confession, fasting and prayer. In the ancient church, Lent was also a time for new believers to receive instruction in preparation for their baptism at Easter.

FPC marks Lent in three ways as a faith community: the Ash Wednesday Agape Supper, a church-wide Lenten small group and worship focus, and special worship services during Holy Week. Read more about these opportunities in the newsletter. Although the practice of Lent is not required in Scripture, as Dallas Willard has said, if a certain spiritual discipline helps you grow in God's grace, then by all means do it!

YOUR MINISTRIES MATTER
-ELLIE TAYLOR

"I have enjoyed the visits from several of our Deacons and children- it is always a joy and the children's gifts are so special. Someone left a lovely plant a couple days ago. The visit to Hilltop was wonderful- I always love it when members of my own church are here and I am so proud... Jan came to visit me the other day (how I appreciated that!) and she and Tim came one day to especially visit those of us who still belong to our church, but live here now. I do brag about our church a lot. It is so good to still be a member even though I cannot attend and participate as I once did. The important thing is belonging to a wonderful outreach church with caring and loving people and excellent leadership... With Christ's Love, Ellie"

GOD IS ON A MISSION IN INDIA

- JAN AND TIM DEVINE, CO-PASTORS

In 2005, when teams from FPC started participating in international mission trips, a Sunday morning was dedicated to sharing each experience with the congregation. Trips happen on such a regular basis now, that although each one is important, we can't use Sunday morning as the main venue to share. So, we would like to use our page(s) this month to give you a glimpse of some of the most encouraging aspects of the recent trip to India.

THE CHILDREN AT NANDA

After 40 hours of travel, we arrived at the Nanda Orphanage/Hostel and were greeted by 140 children plus adults- all singing, dancing, showering us with flowers petals, and placing floral necklaces over our heads.



For the next 8 days, we watched and interacted with the most well-behaved, respectful, industrious and contented children we have ever seen. Although they have very few tangible possessions, they possess deep faith, biblical knowledge, and active prayer lives. Their creativity astonished us as they prepared dozens of skits and liturgical dances and presented them as gifts to us.

The staff can take much of the credit for the atmosphere of this place where children are safe, cared for, and valued. One little boy came to Nanda after the persecution. He was so traumatized that he would not speak; he would frequently hide high in a mango tree, refusing to come down. Today, this boy is smiling, talking, singing and playing right along with the rest of the children. Praise God for this place where children are flourishing!

SAFE WATER



To our surprise and delight, the two wells at Nanda that are used for drinking, cooking and bathing tested safe. The third well is only used for irrigation. The water at the leper community was also good. We spent a week prayerfully discerning the most strategic places to install the two chlorinators purchased through the Christmas Eve offering. God opened the door for us to work with the science teacher at the Hindu, government-run, boys' high school where Saima used to teach. By providing clean water there, we were able to ensure that the chlorinator will be maintained, strengthen Christian-Hindu relationships, improve the health of 500 students, and begin to educate the community about safe water and hygiene. The second chlorinator will be placed in Saima's home village, which after being destroyed in 2009 during the persecution, is slowly rebuilding.

DINING PAVILION AND KITCHEN

The children eat their meals squatting on the ground, with few options when it is hot or wet. Work started on a dining pavilion, using the welding equipment that was purchased last spring. The roof was finished before we left; a concrete floor and retaining walls will be added. The primitive kitchen (white building on left) will also be enlarged and improved.



GOD IS ON A MISSION IN INDIA



WORKING TOWARD SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The regular diet for the children is rice and dahl, a sauce made with lentils and spices. Since completion of a fence around the 7-acre compound and a new well for irrigation, Nanda has begun gardening. They now add tomatoes, carrots, mustard greens, peas, squash and other vegetables, plus bananas and mangos, to their diet. In the next year, more of the land will be cultivated. Plans are also being made to expand into animal husbandry, beginning with chickens. Extra vegetables, eggs and meat can be sold in the local market. The welding business will be used to train older students and supply goods to the local community. (At Nanda, bunk beds were welded so that each child now has his/her own bed.) It was good to sit with the staff and envision together how agriculture, animals, welding, and sewing can be developed to teach the children trades and help move toward self-sufficiency. It will not happen overnight, but all were encouraged.

EDUCATION

The staff is also committed to help the children succeed academically. An additional incentive will be a Scholarship Fund to help older children get a college education or vocational training. In order to “pay it forward,” young adults who receive scholarships will give 10% of their salary back to the fund for the first 5 years of employment, so that other young adults may also benefit from higher education/training.

WORSHIP

We had the privilege of worshipping each morning & evening with the children at Nanda, on Sunday with the Leper community, Monday with local church leaders who had been through the persecution, and Tuesday evening at the Baptist Women’s District Convention. We were invited into a Christian home during a funeral, a Hindu home during a wedding, and into a Brahmin home for tea. It was a privilege for the team to be invited to pray at each place.

God is doing some amazing things in this little corner of His globe. We are humbled by God and by our brothers and sisters in Christ who live with courage and joy for the sake of the gospel.



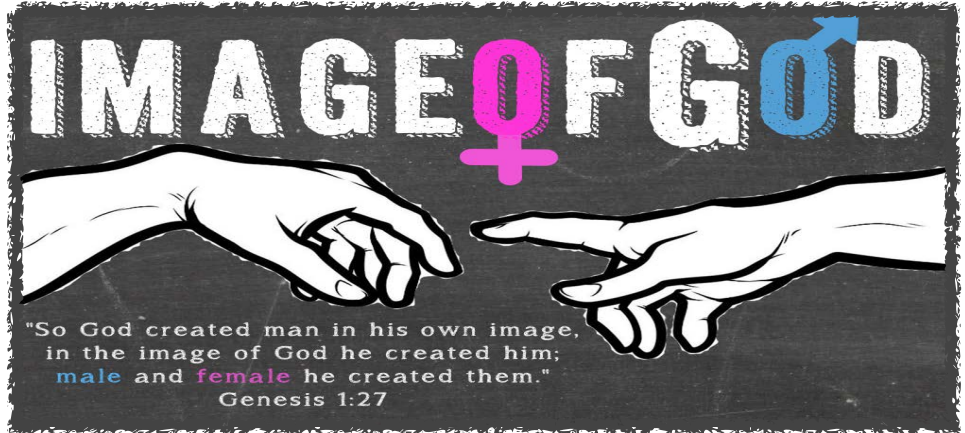
Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

(Ephesians 3:20-21)



FPC YOUTH

March '14



WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN SOMETHING YOU HAVE BUILT BECOMES BROKEN BEYOND REPAIR?

This is precisely what God, the Creator, faced during the days of Noah. The narrative of Genesis describes how sin ruined His creation:

"The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually; Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and the earth was filled with violence." - Genesis 6:5,11

Humans had become completely corrupt in both their thoughts and actions - **MANKIND WAS BROKEN** - A horrific tragedy considering that humans were to glorify God by submitting to His design for their lives - We praise the LORD by reflecting His image:

"God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them." - Genesis 1:27

God the Creator's reaction to the broken condition of man is gut wrenching:

"And the LORD regretted that He made man on the earth, and it grieved Him to His heart." - Genesis 6:6

Sin's devastating mark was so pervasive that God's solution was to eliminate every human from the face of the planet - washing it clean of sin, brokenness, and disfunction (Genesis 6:7).

"But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD...Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God." - Genesis 6:8-9

God does, in fact, wipe out every human not reflecting His image. However, the human race lives on because of the grace/mercy that God extended to Noah. Noah, because he walked with the LORD and bore His image stood in the gap between God's righteous judgement and His grace/mercy.

Noah becomes a type of the Messiah - Jesus - who perfectly bore both the image of God and our sin upon Himself.

"He [Jesus] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature, and He upholds the universe by the word of His power. After making purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High." - Hebrews 1:3

JESUS death and resurrection has **REPAIRED US!** Live for Him! Submit to His shaping of your life! Bare his image! **WORSHIP HIM!**

BE_THE_CHURCH



BREAKFAST



IGNITE BIKES
STAY TUNED FOR PROJECT IGNITE
UPDATES AND INVITES
WINTER SCHEDULE



SMALL GROUP
Sunday Mornings!
10:45-11:45am
See you at The yOuthouse!



WINTER WEEKEND 2014
-IMAGE OF GOD-
The Loft Camp - Great Bend, PA
March 7-9
LOCK IT IN!

WHAT'S NEW AMONG OUR PEOPLE?

- NATHAN JACOBS

Our time since the last FPP update began with tragic news- Bob Heinle's niece, Joy Trudell, passed away at 35 following a stroke. Bob fell the following week and broke his leg, placing him in a wheelchair while he heals. He has also let us know that his sister, Janet, has been diagnosed with cancer recently as well. Please continue to pray

for the Heinle family in this difficult season of their lives. Dave Meza's father, Ralph, also passed away this last month, on Feb. 2.

Several of our members and friends have been in and out of the hospital: Mary Pierce, who broke her arm; Patti Stillings, who is recovering from a knee replacement; Jason Mitchell, who had back

surgery; Dawn Weber's brother-in-law, Ralph, who has been struggling with many health concerns; Carol Cockrell, who fell and badly injured her ankle; Sue Tuch's cousin, Phillip, who was in a sledding accident, but has recovered remarkably well; Bob Thomas, who is regaining his strength following a hospitalization; and Bev Conklin and

On February 17, our Schantz pipe organ console was removed from the sanctuary and taken to Parson's Organ Company in Canandaigua. Barring no further unforeseen complications, we anticipate it will take 4-6 weeks to complete repairs from the major damage our pipe organ sustained during a lightning strike on the church. We are truly blessed to have our Steinway piano to use in our worship services until our organ console is repaired.

EVENTS AT HOME...

Maynard Koplín, who both had cataract surgery this month. Please keep all of these people in your prayers as they continue to heal.

As we face the trials of life with a steadfast faith in our Heavenly Father, so we celebrate with joy the goodness of his blessings. We had much to celebrate this last month. Our church family is blessed

to have both those who can give great wisdom and those who can bring new vitality, as we celebrate Caroline Thompson's 105th year, and Landon King's first. Caroline is our oldest member of FPC; Landon is the newest grandchild of John and Grace King. Brendan Flannagan also celebrated February properly, getting engaged

to Anne Defourq. Anne lives in Paris and they are planning a wedding for next spring in southern France.

Thanks to the hard work of Alisha Finn and her team, Tina Houser was able to come and spend a weekend with us, teaching, preaching, and generally having a fun time as she shared her story of her walk with God.

...AND ABROAD

Thank you to all who made the Leadership Conference weekend a success!

We also saw the successful completion of several mission trips- to the Dominican Republic, Kenya, and India. You can read more about the India trip in this FPP and you can find more

information about the Kenya and Dominican Republic trips both on the church website and our facebook page. We praise God for the successful partnerships in these countries and for the safe return of our missionaries!



CONNECTING THOUGHTS

-SHARON EARLY

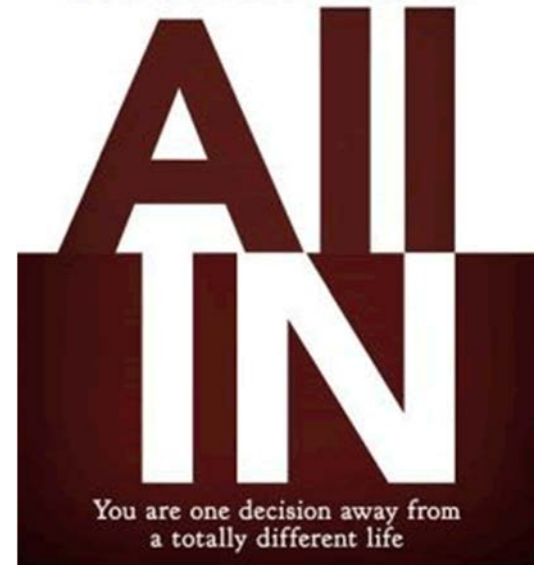
On February 8th, leaders from our children's ministry and small group ministry spent an extended morning in a shared leadership conference. They heard Tina Houser share the twists and turns her life has taken and her wrestling with what being 'All In' means to her. The small group leaders ended the day with a preview of the Lenten study "All In" by Mark Batterson. Needless to say, all of us wrestle with what it means to be "All In" and whether our lives reflect being "All In" for Christ or whether we have succumbed to being "All In" for something else entirely? This study can (and I am sure will) be overwhelming. Many of us may be reluctant to take the challenge, because in reality, we will never be "All In" this side of eternity. So why bother?

Hopefully, we "bother" because we are so overwhelmed by the love Christ has for us that we desire to model our life after Him. We know we will constantly have challenges to our understanding of being "All In," but we do have a choice on how we handle our sinful nature. Do we sell our soul for "30 pieces of silver" as Judas did, and that is the end of the story, or do we choose to start again as Peter did after he betrayed Jesus? Both had been "All In" following their savior and both stumbled... After seeking forgiveness, Peter once again committed to becoming "All In."

That would be one of our goals in this study, to discern where we may be struggling to be "All In" and to take steps to take back that area of our life for Christ! All too often we can create idols in our routines, finding our security within the boundaries we establish in our lives, fearful of change. But behold, "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17) May we continue to let go of the old and welcome Christ's new creation in us on a day-to-day basis!

LENTEN SMALL GROUPS – "ALL IN" BY MARK BATTERSON

Hopefully by now you have had an opportunity to sign up for a small group this Lent. If not, or if you still have questions about what it means to be in a small group, please contact Sharon Early at 748-8196 or Sharon@FirstPresEndicott.org to discuss what groups still have availability. As we work with small groups to maintain healthiness, some groups are already "at capacity." This may seem confusing, but we have found it is not good for a group to grow too big for intimacy or a leader's ability to shepherd the group. We desire to be intentional in our groups to be primarily about discipling and not just meeting for fellowship. Here at FPC we do not want to be known as a lukewarm church (see Revelations 3:15-17), so we continue to seek to know Scripture and be in community discerning how Scripture is speaking into our lives today. As Americans, one of our biggest challenges is our level of comfort!



Have you signed up to for a small group this Lent? If not, there is still time - Contact Sharon Today!

SPOTLIGHT ON THE STAFF: SHARON EARLY

— RICH KASTL

Sharon Early is our staff member for Connecting Ministries. Connecting Ministries are those ministries that connect people, make them feel like they belong, help them grow in faith, and give them the desire to serve within and beyond this congregation. From Weekend Update e-mails, to the First Pres. website, to encouraging participa-

tion in the Small Group Ministry, she is front and center in many of the ongoing activities in our church life. Sharon's primary focus is the Small Group ministry. As the Lenten season draws near, Sharon is excited about the congregation-wide study "All In" by Mark Batterson.

When asked for any Bible verses that particularly resonate with her, Sharon mentioned two: Jeremiah 29:11 and Ephesians 3:20-21. Jeremiah says: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." We often make "our plans," but they are

not always God's plans, and often those plans can change. This passage is especially pertinent in light of the Lenten "All In" study, as we, as a congregation, prepare to wrestle with questions of what it means to be "All In" for Christ. Sharon, an engineer at heart, heard God calling her to a ministry position



within this church. When her job was transferred out of state, she took time to study the ministry needs of this congregation and attend conferences. Through prayer, fasting, study and conversation, she was able to discern God leading her to call us as a congregation to take risks in discipleship and service.

The Ephesians passage reads: "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever, Amen." This passage speaks to God

in our lives—that is, God as an active, constant presence in our lives. The "All In" study will ask us to be "All In" when following Christ and to experience the kind of life God has created us to live.

Connecting Ministries by her husband Bryan and their three children.

Sharon feels blessed to be supported in the



LOOK WHO'S IN THE HOUSE! - RONNE SISCO, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

National speaker and author **Tina Houser** creatively connected with our staff on the afternoon of Friday, February 7. We were treated to a smorgasbord of Tina's educational ideas and strategies to **FASCINATE** our students! Fellow preschool professionals from neighboring programs were able to join us as well for an afternoon of enlightenment and laughs.



Clockwise from upper left: Tina demonstrates the importance of collaboration and connecting for children using the Energy Stick; **Sheri Mayer** and M-E's **Jim Tokos** play purposefully; **Val O'Neill**, **Terry Meredith** and **Julie Murphy** get a kick out of Tina's delivery; "The Light Up Pickle?"; **Alisha Finn** carefully assists hoping not to get wet!



Springing Ahead...**Our 2nd Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament: Saturday, May 10!**



Traditions at the Glen will be the site of this year's challenge with a great time planned **for golfers and non-golfers alike!** Try for **prizes** with your **4 Person Captain 'N' Crew!** Golfing's not your bag? Join us later instead under the party tent for **dinner** and **dancing** to live entertainment by "**Brotherhood!**" Flyers will be featured in the back of the sanctuary. Interested in sponsoring a hole or contributing goodies for the **Silent Auction?** Please contact Derek Washburn @ 607.748.1744 or e-mail him at derek@firstpresendicott.org. All proceeds go to the Janet Cook Scholarship Fund.

SESSION UPDATE

-JANET FREDERICK, CLERK OF SESSION

Although it's only been six weeks since our last update, it has been a busy six weeks for church business.

At our January meeting, the majority of our time was spent in considering the budget for 2014, as well as the longer-term concerns regarding the financial future at First Pres. We committed to spending time at each of this year's meetings to address these concerns.

On January 26, we held the church's Annual Meeting. The Annual

Report was available to the congregation in advance of the meeting, by hard copy and digitally, and opportunity for comment was provided during the meeting. Following a review of the financial reports, the congregation approved the Terms of Call for the co-pastors and also approved a motion to use up to \$60,000 from the Wagner Fund in 2014 to cover Local and General Mission expenses, if needed.

Our February monthly Session meeting was

held on the 12th, and we heard about the mission trip to India, approved plans for some summer camp experiences for the children, and discussed how to proceed with addressing some concerns about the stained glass windows in the sanctuary.

On February 22, the elders and staff members will be meeting together to examine and define our different roles and responsibilities and determine how we can move forward

together to deal with the challenges ahead of us.

We know that there are many challenges facing us in 2014. We are continually asking God to guide and direct our work and our decisions, and we covet your prayers and support as well. The Leadership listing of Session members is posted on the bulletin board outside the Library; please feel free to share with any of us your thoughts and concerns.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastoral Caregivers

"Carry each other's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" Galatians 6:2

In addition to the compassion and care that Deacons offer to our senior saints, FPC is blessed to have a team of members who walk alongside Jan and Tim to offer pastoral care to those who are hospitalized. These servants cover while Jan and Tim are away or when they are not available to offer prayer before surgery and hospital visits to those recovering from surgery or illness. We are grateful for those who are currently part of this ministry of healing: Maynard Koplin, Linda Glajch, Bev Conklin, Gordie Pollard, and for those who have been involved over the years.

Mystery Dinner Theatre

Due to many extenuating circumstances, we have decided to cancel this year's play. Thanks to all who have put time into this event, and to those who have volunteered to play a part. Hopefully we can reschedule sometime in the future. If you have scripts, please return them to the church office.

Agape Supper

A tradition rich with meaning that nurtures our community is our Agape Supper/Worship on Ash Wednesday, which is March 5 this year. This time of preparation begins at 6:00pm with a sacrificial meal of soup, bread, cheese and fruit. We then continue in an attitude of worship in preparation for partaking of communion. There will be childcare provided after the meal. Tickets can be bought on Sunday, Feb. 23, or Sunday, March 2. (\$3.50 for adults; \$1.00 for children). If you are able to help with the meal, we could use help during these time frames: 1:30 for set-up (about an hour), 4:45 for food prep, 6:00 for serving, and at the conclusion of the service for clean-up (usually done by 8:30). Please let JoAnn Betka know at bjbetka@yahoo.com.

NARRATIVE ON THE HEALTH OF MISSION AND MINISTRY

- JANET FREDERICK

Session is in the process of using an evaluative tool that the Fellowship of Presbyterians has provided for PC(USA) and ECO churches and pastors called *The Narrative On The Health Of Mission And Ministry*. It is part of the way that we and several other church sessions will regularly participate in a peer-to-peer review to strengthen the mission and ministry of each participating congregation. Session has been sharing in each newsletter one narrative question that the elders have wrestled with, as we evaluate our purpose *to reach more people and together grow in Christ*. Below is Question #3:

How has the Holy Spirit been evident in your congregation in the past year; through conversions, growth in the fruits of the Spirit, or other transformational experiences that make disciples of Jesus Christ?

We know of children, youth and adults from or associated with our congregation who have committed their lives to Christ during the past year; we have started using the Faith Candle to celebrate these conversions.

The previously unreached Kutia Kondh tribe in India is hearing God's Word, and there have been conversions and baptisms recently as a result of the Grace and Peace Mission.

Through church-wide studies, such as *The Story*, we have seen evidence of growth in our spiritual journeys.

In both the Children's and Youth Ministries, an emphasis on the importance of families and spiritual development at home is challenging families in their roles in the spiritual growth of young people.

We have learned that we can speak of God's love through tragedies, such as unexpected deaths and floods.

In worship we are becoming more intentional about providing experiences that we can carry with us throughout the week and into our everyday lives.

Critical Evaluation:

We are better at reflecting the good news through our actions than by speaking the good news, especially on a personal level. We need to become more comfortable speaking directly about the gospel with people and inviting them to respond.

We need to be more intentional about helping people to move from being nominal Christians to fully devoted disciples, from just attending to becoming invested members, inviting new people to join us in worship and other events, spending more time in corporate and personal prayer/fasting, and creating a desire to use our spiritual gifts for service.

Question 1 (12/13 FPP)- focused on the ways our congregation is seeking the welfare of the community to which we have been called.
Question 2 (1/14 FPP)- focused on how we have/have not extended beyond our bounds through the establishment of new communities of worship and discipleship, expanding the Kingdom of God.

FPP Calendar

March 2014

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | 1 9:00 am Presbytery Meeting |
| 2 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:30 am Children's Ministry 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) | 3 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 6:00 pm Membership Team Meeting 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries | 4 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm Deacons | 5 Ash Wednesday 6:00 am Men's Group 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 6:00 pm Agape Supper 8:00 pm Session | 6 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 6:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal | 7 Winter Weekend for Youth | 8 Winter Weekend for Youth |
| 9 Communion Winter Weekend for Youth 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:30 am Children's Ministry 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) | 10 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries | 11 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper | 12 6:00 am Men's Group 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal | 13 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 7:00 pm Chancel Choir | 14 | 15 |
| 16 Galli Baptism 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:30 am Children's Ministry 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) | 17 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries | 18 11:30 am NS/Staff Luncheon 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper | 19 6:00 am Men's Group 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal | 20 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 6:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm Chancel Choir | 21 | 22 |
| 23 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:30 am Children's Ministry 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) | 24 12:00 pm Women's Club 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 6:30 pm NS Parent Council Meeting 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries | 25 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00pm Worship Ministry Team Meeting | 26 6:00 am Men's Group 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal | 27 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 6:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 pm Chancel Choir | 28 6:00 pm N.S. Art Show | 29 |
| 30 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:30 am Children's Ministry 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) | 31 12:00 pm Women's Club 2:30 pm Homework Cafe 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries | | | | | |

VISION STATEMENT

(What God wants to do)

We believe God wants to transform our community through the saving love of Jesus Christ and calls us to share that hope with the world. To be an agent of hope, our congregation must work together and rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to follow Christ, whatever the cost.¹ This commitment, which is grounded in a deep love of God and neighbor,² sends us out to share the Good News of Christ through our words³ and our actions.⁴

¹ *The Great Commitment*, Matthew 16:24-26

² *The Great Commandment*, Luke 10:27

³ *The Great Commission*, Matthew 28:18-20

⁴ *The Great Compassion*, Matthew 25:31-40

MISSION STATEMENT

(What God wants us to do)

We believe God wants us to share the life-changing power and love of Jesus Christ in such compelling ways that more people become fully devoted followers of Christ.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

(The reason we exist)

To reach more people and together grow in Christ.



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