



United Presbyterian Church

525 East Front Street • Plainfield, NJ 07060 • 908-756-2666 • <http://www.upcplainfield.org/>

Where God is exalted, Everyone matters, and You belong!

Worship Services: Sunday 11:00 am & Thursday 7pm

January 2022- Newsletter



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Pastor Allegra Hoots



*"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome."
1 John 5:3*

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year and greetings to you in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our blessed Redeemer.

Honor and praise to God, the head of the Church and the head of our lives. Thank God for shepherding us through 2021 and for the wonderful things God will do to, through, and for us in 2022. Also, thank God for the blessed assurance that God will fulfill his promises (2 Peter 3:9) and give us peace if we keep our minds on him (Isaiah 26:3) and do not grow weary in doing good (Galatians 6:9).

Glory to God for inviting us to fellowship with Him. What a fantastic notion! The God of creation chooses to converse with us. The Holy Spirit stirs within us the desire to accept the invitation. How marvelous is that!

The following information is posited to assist us in our pursuit to live 365-days Christ-centered, beginning January 1, 2022. Let us start by answering the following questions. What does it mean to live Christ-centered? How do we accomplish the goal?

First, living Christ-centered is possible only if we "love God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind" (Matthew 22: 37). We develop love for God as we get to know Him. We get to know God by spending time with God. To know God is to love Him. When we love God, we want to please him, not simply find favor with him. Our love for God drives us to want to make God happy.

The amazing and beautiful thing is, Scripture teaches that we please God when we obey God. In Genesis 22, Abraham pleased God by obeying God's command

to willingly sacrifice Isaac. But God did not require Abraham to make the sacrifice. Instead, God provided a ram in the bush for Abraham to sacrifice. Obedience, not sacrifice, is what God wanted and received from Abraham.

The author of 1 Samuel 15:22 explicitly asserts, "obedience is better than sacrifice." That statement implies that making sacrifices, including fasting, praying, reading the Bible, and doing charitable deeds, is of no value to God if our motives are wrong (read 1 Corinthians 13). The critical point is obedience to God must be fueled by love.

Furthermore, in John 14:15, Jesus makes the claim that obedience to God, to love God and others, is the only evidence of our love for God. The referenced passage reads, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

Our desire to live Christ-centered is proof of our love for God. That yearning compels us to reflect on and assess our personal relationship with God in the light of Scripture. It forces us to question our motives and not simply be satisfied with our actions. We accomplish this through prayerfully reading and meditating on Jesus' teachings and incorporating those teachings into our daily lives. The Holy Spirit empowers us to know when we are pleasing God. When we are out of sync with God, the Spirit convicts us by shining a light on our transgressions. Thus, allowing us to repent.

Contd. on page 3

ALL INPERSON WORSHIP SERVICES AND MEETINGS
HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Sunday Worship (Traditional)

Pastor Allegra Hoots

11:00am

Via YouTube*

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**Sunday Fellowship**

Via Zoom following the Worship service

JOIN US

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Contemporary Worship Service

Will resume on

Thursday, January 6th @ at 7:00pm

Via YouTube*



Bible Study & Noon Day Prayers

No meetings during the month of January

Sunday School—Via Zoom

Sundays — 10:00am: Youth and Young Adult

Theme ~ Parables: The Big 3

- ◆ Luke 15:11-32: The Prodigal Son
- ◆ Matthew 25:14-30: Parable of the Talents
- ◆ Luke 10:25-37: The Good Samaritan

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” ~ Psalm 51:10 KJV

Father, draw me close to Your heart. I open up my heart to You, and I invite You to search my heart and renew my spirit. Bring me into alignment with your Spirit. Thank you for the work you do in me. Teach me your ways, Father. Reveal to me any area that I am not in agreement with your Word. I pray for a deep revelation and understanding of your truth. I trust you, Father, and I love that I can open my heart up to you. I know that your love is unconditional, everlasting love.

Be encouraged to embrace a new beginning with the strength of the Lord.

<https://www.christianity.com/wiki/bible/bible-verses-about-new-beginnings-inspirational-scriptures.html>

Upcoming Events

See calendars for more activities and events

January			February		
Date	Time	Event	Date	Time	Event
6		Epiphany of our Lord			Black History Month
9		Baptism of our Lord	12	10:00am	Administrative Meeting
11	10:00am	Administrative Meeting	16	7:30pm	Session Meeting
15	7:30pm	Session Meeting	21		Presidents Day
17		Martin Luther King Jr., Birthday	27		Transfiguration of our Lord
18		Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins			

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)
Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

FOR VIRTUAL EVENTS:
TO CONNECT BY COMPUTER OR TELEPHONE, GO TO THE CHURCH'S WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION:
<http://www.upcplainfield.org>

Pastor's Message

Contd. from page 1

To assist us in our plan to spend one year living each day Christ-centered, let us commit to reading and studying all four Gospels between January 1 and April 17 - Resurrection Sunday. While analyzing Jesus' teachings and actions, let us ask God daily to create a clean heart and renew a right spirit in each of us. Then we will not "Do anything out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Instead, in humility, we will value others above ourselves, not looking to our own interests but to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:3-4). Then, each day we will fulfill the two greatest commandments: to love God and love others. In doing so, we will live Christ-centered.

May the Spirit of the living God encourage, guide, strengthen, and protect us as we start this 365-day journey of Christ-centered living.

Peace and blessings,
Pastor Allegra

Epiphany of the Lord

January 6, 2022

Epiphany is the celebration of God's manifestation or self-revelation to the world in Jesus Christ. We celebrate the revelation of God's promise and purpose to the nations of the world, as the magi came from the East to worship to the Christ child, and God's covenant of grace is extended to all who believe the good news of Christ Jesus. The symbolism of light is important: not only because of the star that guided the magi (wisemen), but as it relates to the bright dawning of God's self-revelation in Christ.

The word "epiphany" means "appearance" or "manifestation" of God.

Epiphany celebrates the appearance of the Lord in the midst of humanity.

For Christians, Christmas marks the coming of God to us; Epiphany celebrates the appearance of the Lord in the midst of humanity. The Christmas stories of the birth of Immanuel declare the divine entry; Epiphany extols the revelation of God to the world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

In our celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany we rejoice in the dawning and the arising of Light in darkness. ... Epiphany not only discloses the Savior to the world but also calls the world to show forth Christ, to be witnesses to God's true Light. The timeless mystery of the incarnation, God in flesh, leads us forth to show and tell of Christ as God's gift of grace and salvation for all persons. Some call this ongoing epiphany the work of Christmas.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/christianyear/epiphany/>

THIS IS STEWARDSHIP!
tithes & offering
Worship the Lord in Giving



To bless the Church with your tithes and offering you may:

1. Drop it off at the church office
2. Mail your check (not cash) to the church
3. Log in to <https://bit.ly/3oyj1J6> or
4. Go to the UPC website homepage and click on the "Give Now" button

~ Thank you ~



Baptism of the Lord

January 9, 2022

At the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus presents himself to John to be baptized in the Jordan. The heavens open, the Holy Spirit descends as a dove and we hear the voice of God: “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased” (see Psalm 2:7).

At this festival of the Christian year, we not only remember Jesus’ baptism, but we celebrate our own: the baptism we share with Christ. It also foreshadows the season of Lent, as Jesus was immediately driven into the wilderness for 40 days after his own Baptism.



The Baptism of the Lord is closely related to Epiphany and should be considered in relation to that feast. Jesus’ ministry to bring in God’s rule was inaugurated in his baptism. As he came out of the water, the Spirit rested on Jesus and a sign of God’s approval was heard. Baptism joins us to Christ and his church, and with all of the baptized we are called to share in Jesus’ ministry. In the waters of

baptism, we are buried with Christ, cleansed of our sins, and raised to share in his resurrection. The Spirit is given to us, and we are declared the children of God.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/christianyear/baptism-lord/>

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity January 18-25

The **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity** is an ecumenical Christian observance in the Christian calendar that is celebrated internationally. It was started by the World Council of Churches to fulfill Christ’s desire “that [his followers] all may be one” (John 17:21). It is kept annually between Ascension Day and Pentecost in the Southern Hemisphere and between 18 January and 25 January in the Northern Hemisphere. It is an octave, that is, an observance lasting eight days.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is annually coordinated by the World Council of Churches, with participation by its member Churches.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Week_of_Prayer_for_Christian_Unity

FEEDING THE HUNGRY

STAR FISH IS OPEN

To provide food for the hungry

Call 732-742-8762 if pick up is needed.

For monetary donations:
Make the check payable to **Star Fish**

HELP SOMEONE IN NEED—GIVE!



* NEED HELP BUYING GROCERIES? *

Check to see if you are eligible for food assistance (SNAP), cash assistance (WFNJ/TANF or WFNJ/GA), and health Insurance (NJ FamilyCare/Medicaid). From here you can apply for services or learn about additional resources.

Click on this link: <https://www.njhelps.org/>

AN EPIPHANY PRAYER

Lord Jesus
may your light
shine our way,
as once it guided
the steps of the magi:
that we too may be led
into your presence
and worship you,
the Child of Mary,
the Word of the Father,
the King of nations,
the Saviour of mankind;
to whom be glory for ever.

Amen



Toy Drive—December 19th



A friend of the UPC congregation donated over \$500 worth of toys in the name of UPC to the Toys for Kids drive spearheaded by AristaCare. The toys were distributed to neighborhood children at Arista-Care on Sunday, December 19.

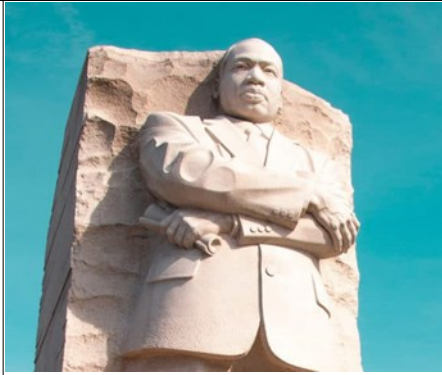
Coat Drive—September 22nd



Above: Ms. Leslie Garry showing two of the fifteen coats along with Pastor Hoots.

These coats were donated to Queen City Academy Charter (elementary) School students. The donation was made possible by a friend to UPC and the UPC Board of Deacons. The coats were delivered to the school and distributed to students on Wednesday, December 22nd.

Pastor Hoots received a text from a Queen City Academy faculty member sharing "The students love their coats."



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – January 17, 2022

Reflect on the work that still needs to be done for racial equality. This January 17, make the holiday more than just a day off and take time to reflect and act on civil rights issues across the globe.

Dr. King was an influential civil rights leader — best known for his work on racial equality and ending racial segregation in the United States. His life and achievements are remembered and celebrated on this day.

HISTORY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

The concept of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a holiday was promoted by labor unions. After King’s death, U.S. Representative John Conyers and U.S. Senator Edward Brooke introduced a bill in Congress to make King’s birthday a national holiday. The bill first came to a vote in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1979; however, it fell five votes short of the number needed for passage. Two of the main arguments mentioned by opponents were that a paid holiday for federal employees would be too expensive and that a holiday to honor a private citizen would be contrary to longstanding tradition, as King never held public office. At the time, only two other figures had national holidays honoring them: George Washington and Christopher Columbus.

Soon after, the King Center looked for support from the corporate community and the general public. The success of this strategy was cemented when musician Stevie Wonder released the single ‘Happy Birthday’ to popularize the campaign in 1980 and hosted the Rally for Peace Press Conference in 1981. Six million signatures were collected for a petition for Congress to pass the law and is considered the largest petition in favor of an issue in U.S. history.

President Reagan originally opposed the holiday, citing cost concerns. But on November 2, 1983, Reagan signed a bill, proposed by Representative Katie Hall, to create a federal holiday honoring King. The bill had passed the Senate by a count of 78 to 22, and the House of Representatives by 338 to 90. The holiday was observed for the first time on January 20, 1986. It’s observed on the third Monday of January rather than directly on Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday because it follows the guidelines of the Uniform Monday Holiday Act.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY TIMELINE

January 15, 1929	Birth of a King
May 17, 1957	Martin Luther King, Jr. is born in Atlanta, GA.
August 28, 1963	The King's Speech King makes his first address to the nation, 'Give Us the Ballot,' at the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington.
August 28, 1963	The Dream King delivers his famous 'I Have a Dream' speech at the Lincoln Memorial on the day that more than 200,000 demonstrators participate in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.
December 10, 1964	The Ultimate Prize King wins the Nobel Peace Prize.
April 4, 1968	Tragedy Strikes After delivering his final speech, 'I've Been to the Mountaintop,' in Memphis the day before, King is shot and killed on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel.
1980	Stevie Wonder Calls for Action Stevie Wonder releases 'Happy Birthday,' a song in which he not only celebrates Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday but also laments the fact that anyone would oppose the idea of a Dr. King holiday.
1986	The First Day Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is observed for the very first time.
2000	Unity Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is observed by all 50 states for the first time.

Prayers for Healing

Remember our sisters and brothers listed below and call them if you are able to. Let us know if there are members who are not on this list.



Emory Dawson
Karen Edmonds
Helen Foerster
O'Harold Hoots
BJ Klikus
Frank Klikus
Vilvurn Marsh



Bobett Neil
Marianna Perry
Pat Perry
Gail Stokes
Izaiyah Stokes
Jamie Sweeney

Please send your Prayer requests to the Church Office—
You will be placed on the prayer list



January

6 Bola Falowo
15 Izaiyah Stokes
17 Christopher Lecky
19 Jessica Dawson
Stanley Awobue
21 Madison Darius

February

5 Tania Hemans
7 BJ Klikus
27 Kayode Falowo

Flower Ministry

With your donation of \$25 or more to the Flower Fund, the Deacons will provide a beautiful floral arrangement for the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings. After worship, the arrangement will also brighten the day of a member or friend of UPC who is unable to join us for worship.

Flowers may be made in honor or memory of a loved one. Honoree names will be listed in the church bulletin.

You may complete the form below or add your information to the flower chart in the Narthex.

*Blessings,
Zorina Bowers*



Name: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Amount: _____

In Memory of: _____

Thank you for your
generous support of
UPC's Flower Ministry

Board of Deacons

"Those who are gracious to the poor lend to the Lord, and the Lord will fully repay them."
Proverbs 19:17

The Good News: In many ways, the mere act of being charitable is its own reward. But as this verse notes, being compassionate to people who are less fortunate is also something that God will reward.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Parents, please read this to your younger child(ren)

Baptism of Jesus

Theme: The Baptism of the Lord

Object: Photo Album

Scripture: And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:17 (NIV)

I'm sure you recognize what I have in my hand. It's a photo album. Most parents have several photo albums that are full of pictures taken of their children as they were growing up. We have always been very pleased with our children.

We took pictures of our children in school, at church, playing, at Christmas time, on their birthdays, and many other occasions. We were pleased with them as they grew up and we are pleased with them today.

Do you think God was pleased with His son, Jesus?

I know He was, because the Bible tells us that He was. When Jesus was baptized, the Bible tells us that there was a voice from heaven that said, "This is my Son and I love Him. I am very pleased with Him."

Why do you think God was pleased with His son?

Let's read that verse again to see what God said first: "This is my Son and I love him. I am very pleased with him."

What did God say first?

That's right! God said, "This is my Son!" God said, "This is my Son and I love him."

What's the second thing God said? (Allow time for kids to answer.)

That's right! God said, "I love him." God loves His son!

(Show kids the photo album again) These pictures show a lot of things that our children did. But more than anything, these pictures show that these are OUR kids. They belong to us. And we love them!

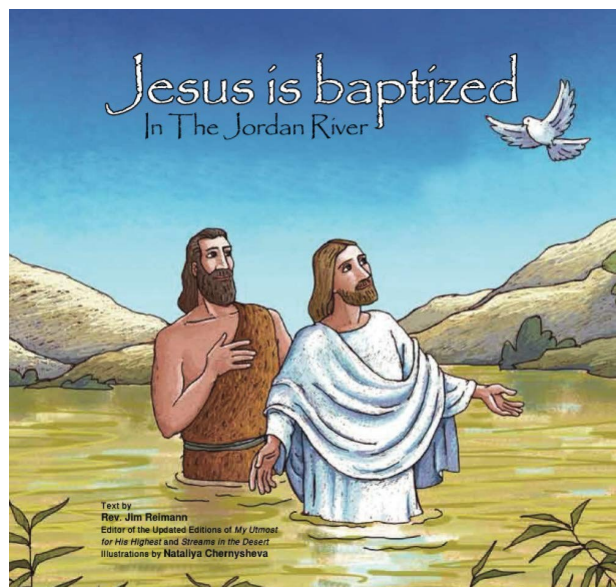
When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, we become the children of God. Our baptism is like an official adoption ceremony. God loves us from the very beginning when we become His children because that is what He wants us to be.

God says to us, "You are my son. You are my daughter. And I love you!" God loves you! That's pretty awesome, isn't it?

I wonder if God has a photo album in heaven with your pictures in it. I know He has a book with all His children's names in it.

God is pleased with you when you become His child. It's wonderful to hear God say, "You are my child. I love you. And I am pleased with you."

Dear God, thank You that You adopt us as Your children. Thank You for loving us so much. In Jesus' name, amen.

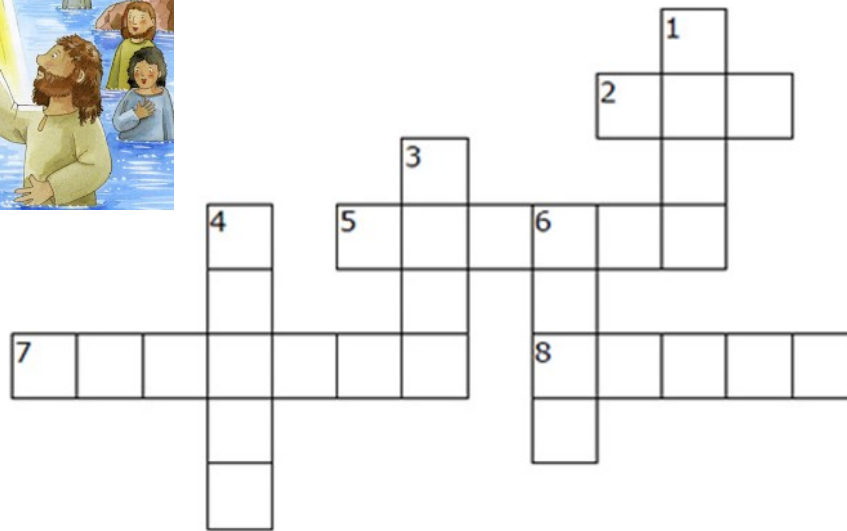


CHILDREN'S CORNER

The Baptism of Jesus

And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Matthew 3:17 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 3:13-17



ACROSS

2. A male offspring
5. The river where Jesus was baptized
7. To cover briefly completely in water or pour water over a person's head
8. The sound produced by vibration of the human vocal cords

DOWN

1. The name of the man who baptized Jesus
3. A deep feeling of affection for a person
4. Clear, colorless, odorless, tasteless liquid; H₂O
6. A bird often used as a symbol of peace

VOICE
SON

LOVE
DOVE

WATER
BAPTIZE

JORDAN
JOHN

2021 PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT
Never too Late!

Your annual Per Capita is \$45.00 and is shared as follows: General Assembly \$8.98, The Synod of the Northeast \$4.10, The Presbytery of the Northeast \$31.92. Per Capita is a member assessment used to fund the operating expenses of governing bodies. (Book of Order; G-9.0404 d).

Consider paying more than your share to help cover the cost of others who are unable to pay

Important:

Deadline is the 20th of each month for the Newsletter. Leave your news in the Church Office or email it to upcnews525@gmail.com

Church Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-3pm

Schedule of Pastor's Office Hours

Monday to Friday
9:00am to 1:00pm

Please call the Church Office for an Appointment
or to contact the Pastor

Church Administrators

Pastor Allegra Hoots

Director of Music: Mr. Ronn Daniels
Administrative Assistant: Ms. Pat Perry &
Mr. DaVaughn Hoots
Custodian: Mr. Charles Rivers

Session Members

Al Tate (Clerk)
Emory Dawson
Patricia Dawson
Avril Lecky
Marcia Marsh-Hinds

Board of Deacons

Helen Foerster - Moderator
Daniel Bofah
Thelma Fleming
Virginia Hansen
Desirae Hemans (in training)
Tania Hemans (in training)
Maggie Anglin (Volunteer)
Zorina Bowers (Volunteer)

To contact the deacons for assistance
Call the church office at 908-756-2666

Newsletter

Newsletter Editors

Avril Lecky
George Hansen
Hugh Lecky
James Plummer
Desirae Hemans (Youth)

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Al Tate

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Telephone No.: (908) 756-2666

**If you have information that you would like to
share, send them to
upcnews525@gmail.com**

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 <h2 style="text-align: center;">January 2022</h2>						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 HAPPY NEW YEAR!
2 11am Worship Service Livestream Communion Service	3	4	5	6 7:00pm Contemporary Worship Service Epiphany of the Lord	7	8 10am Administra- tion Mtg
9 11am Worship Service Livestream Youth Sunday Baptism of the Lord	10	11	12	13 7:00pm Contemporary Worship Service	14	15
16 11am Worship Service Livestream	17 Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday	18 Week of Prayer for Christian unity begins	19 7:30pm Session Mtg	20 7:00pm Contemporary Worship Service	21	22
23 11am Worship Service Livestream Dedication Sunday	24	25 Week of Prayer for Christian unity ends	26	27 7:00pm Contemporary Worship Service	28	29
30 11am Worship Service Livestream Dedication Sunday	31					

NOTE:

CALENDAR EVENTS MAY CHANGE BASED ON THE STATES POLICY ON GROUP MEETING. THE CALENDAR REFLECTS REGULARLY OCCURRING EVENTS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. **CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES.**

Communion & Deacon Sunday — 1st Sunday Monthly
 Youth Sunday — 2nd Sunday monthly
 Dedication Sunday — 4th Sunday Monthly


Committee Meetings (unless stated otherwise):
 2nd Saturday @ 10:00am: Administration Meeting
 3rd Wednesday @ 7:30pm: Session Meeting

If you would like to be a member on any committee or help with any project, call the Church Office at 908-756-2666.

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February 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
 HISTORY MONTH			Noon Day Prayer & Bible Study	7:00pm Contemporary Worship Service		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11am Worship Service Livestream			Noon Day Prayer & Bible Study	7:00pm Contemporary Worship Service		10:00am Administra- tive Mtg
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
11am Worship Service Livestream - Youth Sunday -			Noon Day Prayer & Bible Study 7:30pm Session Mtg	7:00pm Contemporary Worship Service		
20	21	22	23	24	25	
11am Worship Service Livestream	Presidents Day		Noon Day Prayer & Bible Study	7:00pm Contemporary Worship Service		
27	28					
11am Worship Service Livestream Dedication Sunday Transfiguration of the Lord						

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