



# 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!**

February 2020

11:00 a.m. Worship ~ 10:00 a.m. Adult Education



## What is Lent?

Lent is the Christian season of preparation before Easter. The Lenten season is a time when many Christians observe a period of fasting, repentance, moderation, self-denial and spiritual discipline. The purpose is to set aside time for reflection on Jesus Christ—his suffering and his sacrifice, his life, death, burial, and resurrection.

Mary Fairchild

<https://www.learnreligions.com/what-is-lent-700774>

## Message from Pastor Allegra Hoots

Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the blessed name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I trust that this letter finds each of you basking in the glorious grace of God as you rejoice in the knowledge – God loves you, is concerned about you, and you have inherent value because you were created by God in God’s image, three-dimensional.

### **TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES TIME, PATIENCE AND HARD WORK**

Our church is going through a transformation that requires time, patience, and hard work. To help us through this critical phase in our history, I am asking you to join me this Lenten season in a partial fast, daily prayer for spiritual courage, increased self-control, and godly wisdom. Also, pray for God to move on our behalf with those with whom we need to work so we can accomplish God’s will in Plainfield and the surrounding communities.

The partial fast starts Ash Wednesday, February 26th and ends after the Maundy Thursday worship service on April 9th. The fast consists of abstaining from:

- Consuming meat (eating fish on Fridays is permitted);
- Drinking alcoholic beverages, all soda, sweetened tea and coffee and
- Eliminating pastries and candy from the diet.

I also invite you to join the church family in a 7-week Lenten study that will begin in February. The study will meet twice weekly to accommodate the varied and busy schedules of our members. One group will meet on Tuesdays from 2:00 – 4:00pm, the other group on Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 8:30pm. All meetings will be held in the Hansen Room.

### **Lenten Study**

March 3rd to April 16th:

Tuesdays from 2:00 – 4:00pm &  
Thursdays from 6:30 – 8:30pm

There is no preaching during the Lenten study. The week before each meeting, participants read assigned passages. At the scheduled time, group members gather and take turns sharing their reflections about the weekly readings. The gatherings will last no more than one hour. After each meeting, participants eat a simple meal of soup, whole grain bread, salad w/o dressing, and may drink water.

The Lenten study book is, *Lent for Everyone: Matthew, Year A: A Daily Devotional*, by N.T. Wright. The book is sold on Amazon and at Barnes and Noble.

May the peace of Christ be with us as we embark on this leg of our joint spiritual journey.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Hoots

**Sunday Morning Worship  
& Treasurer Hour for Youth**

**Sunday Mornings at 11:00am**  
**Pastor Allegra Hoots**  
**JOIN US!**



**Adult Education**  
**10:00am Sundays**  
**Topic “Honoring God”**  
**Instructor: Elder Al Tate**

*Study how God was honored through celebration of the Ark of the Covenant by King Solomon and by the celebration of God, by Jesus through the use of prayer.*  
**NO CLASS MARCH 1ST**

**Lenten Study—Coming in March**

**Schedule of Pastor’s Office Hours**

Monday 1:30 – 4:30  
Tuesday 8: 30 – 4:30  
Wednesday 8: 30 – 3:30

**What** - A seven-week Lenten Study that takes participants through the Gospel of Matthew.

**Purpose** - The purpose of the Lenten Study is to nurture spiritual growth and strength through the daily reading and reflecting on a common Scripture, and to increase fellowship by gathering weekly to discuss the readings and share a simple meal.

**Upcoming Events**

**February**

Date	Time	Event
8	10:00am	Administration Meeting
9	11:00am	Youth Sunday Pastor’s Lunch
20	7:30pm	Board of Session Meeting
26	12:30 –2:30 & 6:30—8:30	<b>Ash Wednesday Service</b> Foot washing and beginning of the Fasting period

**March**

Date	Time	Event
<b>Lenten Study</b> March 3rd to April 16th Tuesdays @ 2-4pm & Thursdays @ 6:30-8:30pm		
8	11:00am	Youth Sunday
	12:30pm	Deacon’s Meeting
19	7:30pm	Board of Session Meeting

**See calendars for more activities and events**

**Church Administrators**

**Pastor Allegra Hoots**  
**Director of Music:** Ronn Daniels  
**Executive Assistant:** Pat Perry  
**Sexton:** Sue Terry

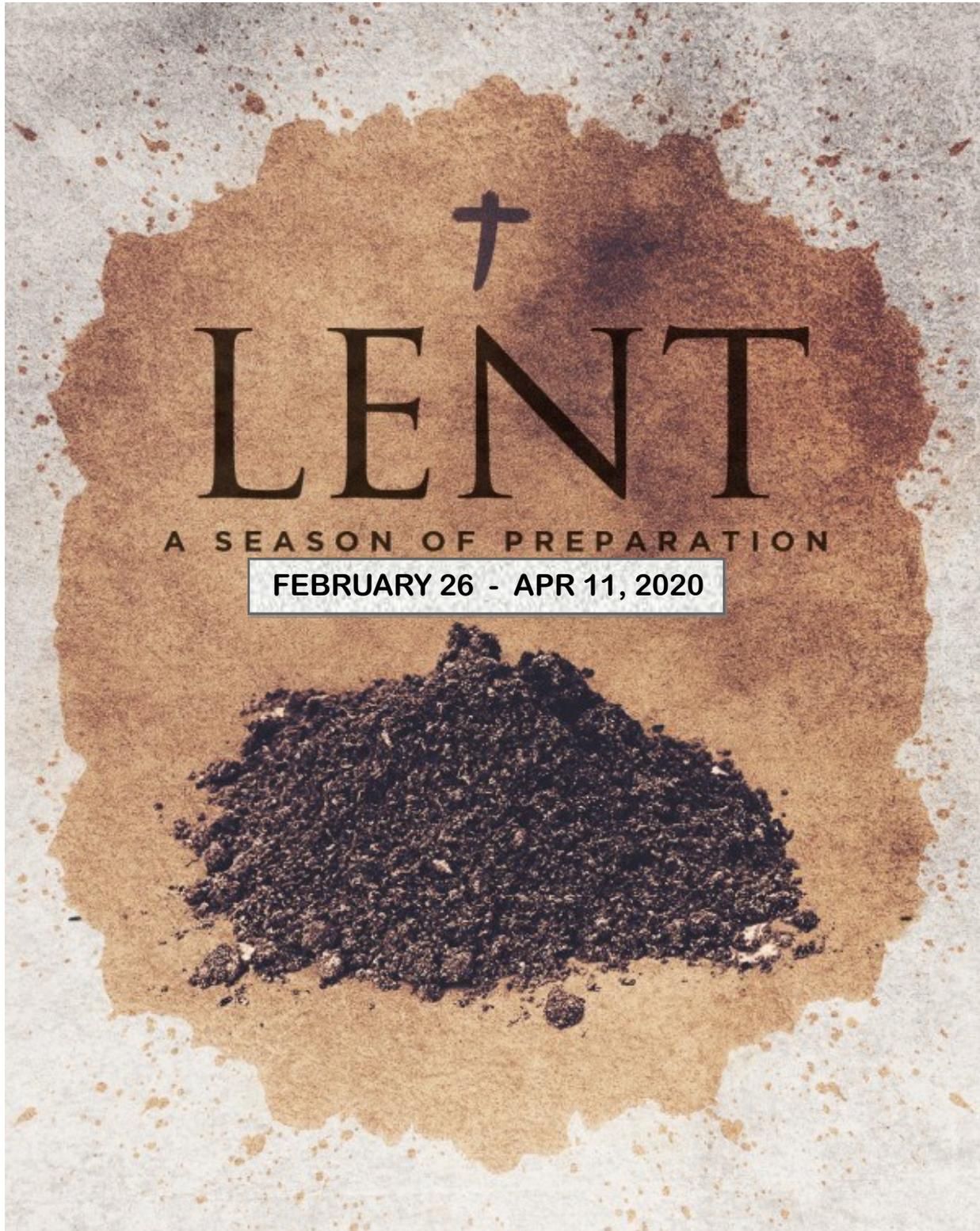
**Session Members (Elders)**

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

**Board of Deacons**

Helen Foerster - Moderator  
Maggie Anglin  
Daniel Bofah  
Kayode Falowo  
Thelma Fleming  
Virginia Hansen  
Desirae Hemans (in training)  
Tania Hemans (in training)

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



**Ash Wednesday Service**

February 26th: 12:00-2:00pm & 6:30-8:30pm

**Lenten Study**

March 3rd to April 16th: Tuesdays @ 2-4pm & Thursdays @ 6:30-8:30pm

## PERIOD OF FASTING STARTS FEBRUARY 26TH

### 5 Spiritual Benefits of Fasting

The info below is also available on the web at this link:

<https://www.guideposts.org/better-living/health-and-wellness/5-spiritual-benefits-of-fasting>



Refraining from eating and drinking is an act of worship that is good for your soul

By Brooke Obie

Many of us think of fasting as a spiritual duty to God, depriving ourselves of food and drink for a period of time in order to prove our love for Him. While long-suffering is a part of being human and certainly a part of being Christian, fasting should not be included when we think about “suffering for Christ.”

On the contrary, fasting is less about what we’re giving up and much more about what we’re making room for. When we fast, we exchange what we need to survive for what we need to live—more of God. Here are five spiritual benefits to fasting:

**1) A soul cleansing.** How often we forget that our bodies are the temple of the Lord—especially when deciding what to eat! Fasting is a great time to remember the spiritual connection we have to our physical bodies. Without the toxins we put in our bodies, we not only give our bodies a break from the digestive process, but we also allow our spirits to be detoxed. Fasting is a faith-move, an expectation we have that God will fill us with His Holy Spirit, just as He promised. But as Christ told His disciples, “[N]o one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins.” By fasting, we meditate cleanses the soul and makes it new so we can receive the Holy Spirit and become empowered to live for Christ in a new way.

**2) A new desire for God.** When we acknowledge through fasting that we need God to *live*, and to live more abundantly, we can begin to desire God in a new way. When we realize we need God more than we need food, we can start to understand what the Psalmist meant when he wrote, “Like the deer that pants after water, my soul longs for You.” God, the sustainer of all life, wants nothing more than a closer connection with us, and through fasting we can quench that new desire for more of Him in our lives.

**3) A deeper praise.** Because the body does not have to do the work of digestion, it has more energy to focus on other things. In the same vein, since we are not consumed by what we are going to eat next and when, we have more energy to devote to God. While we’re experiencing a new desire for Him through fasting, we should also emit a deeper praise as we think about everything God is to us and all He has done. Once we get caught up in our desire for God and our praise for His mighty acts, we won’t have time to be hungry or count down the hours until our fast is over. We’ll be celebrating the whole time!

***Strengthen Your Faith with Free ebooks on Prayer, Bible Study and More*** <sup>[1]</sup>

**4) A sensitivity to God’s voice.** The New Testament prophetess Anna is praised in the book of Luke for being a devoted servant to God and His temple. Because she regularly fasted and prayed, she was able to hear the voice of God speak clearly to her the day that Baby Jesus was brought into her temple to be dedicated. She knew He was the Christ and told everyone who would listen about His arrival. When we detox the spirit and become consumed with desire and praise for God, we become sensitive to His voice. Like Anna, when God speaks to us in the midst of chaos, we’ll still be able to pick out His voice and know what He wants us to do because we have trained our ear to hear Him through fasting, prayer, study and praise.

**5) A new satisfaction.** When you finish your fast, renewed, full of energy, detoxed, with a new desire, a new praise and a sensitivity to God’s voice, you’ll find that the absence of food was small in comparison to what you gained. When Christ’s disciples noticed that He hadn’t eaten all day and tried to get Him to slow down to eat, Christ said, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about....My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work.”

Physical food never fully satisfies; in a few hours, you’ll need to eat again. But when you are fed from doing the work of the Lord, you will find a new satisfaction like you’ve never experienced.

## Lift up your Prayers for



Carl Foerster	Gail Stokes
Helen Foerster	Izaiyah Stokes
Barbara Hyney	Jamie Sweeney
BJ Klikus	Osquit Vanderstoop
Frank Klikus	

## Call or visit our members & friends



**Another Year**  
By: Theodore W. Higginsworth

*Another birthday,  
another year  
May you have problems that disappear  
May you have health  
And a bit of wealth  
May you share  
With those who care  
May the coming year  
Be one of good cheer.*

**Barbara Hyney**, celebrating her 88th birthday at Whispering Knoll Assisted Living on January 11, 2020 with Ginni Hansen.



### February

- 5 Tania Hemans
- 7 BJ Klikus
- 27 Kayode Falowo

### March

- 1 Desirae Hemans
- 6 George Hansen
- 14 Helena Pfeifer
- 16 Wanda Breitenbach
- 17 Rev. Dottie Morris
- 21 Tom Robinson
- 24 Alaric Tate

## Give to the 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



## ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

June 2020 will be the 195th Anniversary of United Presbyterian Church.

How would you like to celebrate this milestone anniversary?

Let one of your Session Members know.

1825

2020

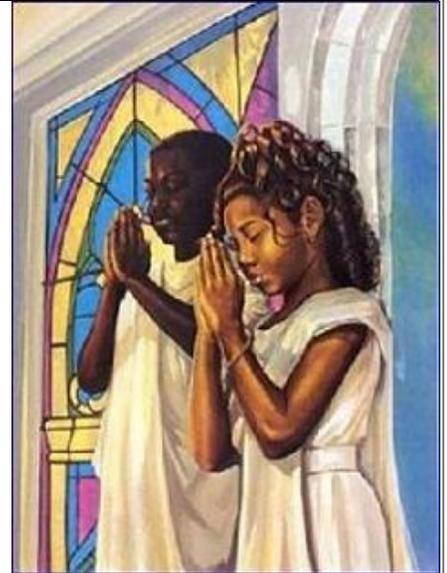


Fittingly, the month of February is American Heart Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness of heart disease, the nation's leading cause of death. While the public health crises of cardiovascular disease affects all segments of the population, it disproportionately impacts the communities we serve.

[American Heart Month - Food Bank](http://foodbanklarimer.org/news/american-heart-month/)  
[foodbanklarimer.org/news/american-heart-month/](http://foodbanklarimer.org/news/american-heart-month/)

### Black History Month

is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of blacks in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event grew out of "Negro History Week," the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom.



### Star Fish Food Pantry

Please provide a non perishable, unexpired item to Star Fish. Your donation will go to help those in need. All items are accepted but the following are especially needed:

Everything, plus—Jelly, Peanut Butter, Pasta Sauce, Bars of bath soap  
Place your items in the box in the narthex.



### 2020 PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT

Your annual Per Capita is \$45.00 and is shared as follows: General Assembly \$8.95, The Synod of the Northeast \$4.10, The Presbytery of Elizabeth \$31.95. 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. \*\***

#### Editors of the UPC Newsletter

Avril Lecky  
James Plummer  
George Hansen  
Pat Perry  
Hugh Lecky  
Pastor Allegra Hoots

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Church Email: [upcplainfield525@gmail.com](mailto:upcplainfield525@gmail.com)  
Newsletter info: [upcnews525@gmail.com](mailto:upcnews525@gmail.com)

Church website: <http://upcplainfield.org>  
Telephone No.: (908) 756-2666

### 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](mailto:upcnews525@gmail.com)

## What Is Ash Wednesday? Why Christians Celebrate It

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. Often called the Day of Ashes, Ash Wednesday starts Lent by focusing the Christian's heart on repentance and prayer.

During worship service the pastor will usually share a sermon that is penitential and reflective in nature. Many services will have long periods of silence and worshipers will often leave the service in silence.

Usually, there is a responsive passage of Scripture, read aloud by the leader and/or congregation. Attendees will experience moments where they are prompted to silently confess sins and pray. After all of this, the congregation will be invited to receive the ashes on their foreheads. Usually, the pastor will dip his/her finger into the ashes, spread them in a cross pattern on the forehead, and say, "From dust you came and from dust you will return."



### Where do the Ashes Come from and What do the Ashes Symbolize?

In many congregations, the ashes are prepared by burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday. On Palm Sunday, churches bless and hand out palm branches, a reference to the Gospels' account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when onlookers lay palm branches on his path.

The ashes of this holiday symbolize two main things: death and repentance. "Ashes are equivalent to dust, and human flesh is composed of dust or clay ([Genesis 2:7](#)), and when a human corpse decomposes, it returns to dust or ash."

"When we receive ashes on Ash Wednesday, we are saying that we are sorry for our sins, and that we want to use the season of Lent to correct our faults, purify our hearts, control our desires and grow in holiness so we will be prepared to celebrate Easter with great joy".

With this focus on our own mortality and sinfulness, Christians can enter into the Lent season solemnly, while also looking forward in greater anticipation and joy of the message of Easter and Christ's ultimate victory over sin and death.

<https://www.christianity.com/church/church-life/what-is-ash-wednesday-why-do-christians-celebrate-it.html>

## Session Notes

### Per Capita 2020

The congregation will be educated on the importance and purpose of per capita giving which is a contribution to the common ministry. The per capita payment will be highlighted during Sunday worships. Members are encouraged to pay more than their share if they are able which will help to cover members who do not or are unable to contribute to per capita.

### Maintenance/Renovations

**Repairs in progress:** Men's bathroom near sanctuary, El Centro door, Friendship Hall kitchen dishwasher being brought up to code, Painting of Friendship Hall

### Adult Education

Curriculum: The Present Word: "Honoring God", runs through Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>. No Class: March 1

### Youth Initiatives

New youth initiatives are all on hold. Current programs will continue.

### Signage

All signs except for Nuevas Fronteras' sign have been installed. The directional UPC sign in front of the Church will be relocated. The repair of the Sanctuary directional sign is being reviewed. The signs for Gospel Sound and Nuevas Fronteras still need to be removed.

### Leadership Transition for Pastor Hoots

Commissioning service for Pastor Hoots will be held in April. More info will follow.

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## February 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 7pm A/A
2 11am Worship - Communion Sunday School  7:30pm A/A	3 7:30pm Boy Scouts	4 11:30am Seniors Exercise Class	5 7pm A/A	6 10:00am Seniors Exercise Class	7	8 10:00am Admin Mtg  7pm A/A
9 10am Adult Education 11am Worship - Youth Sunday Pastor's Lunch  7:30pm A/A	10 7:30pm Boy Scouts	11 11:30am Seniors Exercise Class	12 7pm A/A	13 10:00am Seniors Exercise Class	14	15 7pm A/A
16 10am Adult Education 11am Worship  7:30pm A/A	17 Martin Luther King Holiday  7:30pm Boy Scouts	18 11:30am Seniors Exercise Class	19 7pm A/A	20 10:00am Seniors Exercise Class 7:30pm Session Mtg	21	22 7pm A/A
23 10am Adult Education 11am Worship Sunday School  7:30pm A/A	24 7:30pm Boy Scouts	25 11:30am Seniors Exercise Class	26 ASH WEDNESDAY <b>SERVICE:</b> 2:30-4:30 & 6:30-8:30pm <b>Lent Begins</b> FASTING STARTS 7pm A/A	27 10:00am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 6:30-8:30	28	29

The calendar reflects regularly occurring events and subject to change. Check with the Church Office for changes

### Committee Meetings (unless stated otherwise):

Communion & Deacon Sunday — 1st Sunday Monthly

Youth Sunday—2nd Sunday monthly

Dedication Sunday—4th Sunday Monthly

2nd Sunday following Worship: Deacons Meeting

3rd Thursday: 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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1 11am Worship Communion Sunday	2	3 11:30am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 2:00-4:00pm	4 7pm A/A	5 10:00am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 6:30-8:30	6	7 7pm A/A
8 10am Adult Education 11am Worship - Youth Sunday 12:30 Deacons Mtg	9	10 11:30am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 2:00-4:00pm	11 7pm A/A	12 10:00am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 6:30-8:30pm	13	14 7pm A/A Writers Workshop (Dreamhouse Theater)
15 Adult Education 11am Worship 7:30pm A/A	16	17 11:30am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 2:00-4:00pm	18 7pm A/A	19 10:00am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 6:30-8:30pm	20	21 7pm A/A
22 10am Adult Education 11am Worship 7:30pm A/A	23	24 11:30am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 2:00-4:00pm	25 7pm A/A	26 10:00am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 6:30-8:30pm 7:30pm Session Mtg?	27	28 7pm A/A
29 10am Adult Education 11am Worship 7:30pm A/A	30	31 11:30am Seniors Exercise Class  Lenten Study 2:00-4:00pm				

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