



THE CHIMES

March 2017

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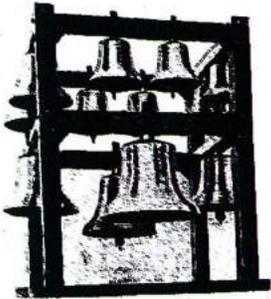
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Our Mission is to Make Disciples of Jesus Christ and to
Serve God by Sharing Compassion Hope and Love

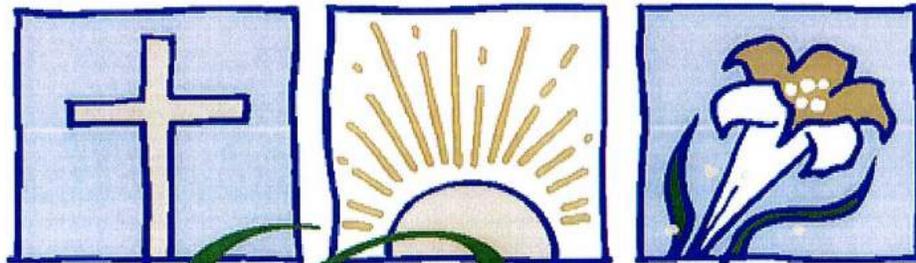
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LENT

In her Lenten devotional, *Wilderness Wanderings*, Marilyn Brown Oden tells the story of her family's first backpacking trip to the Colorado Rockies. She and her husband Bill and their four children set off, laden with backpacks and supplies, a topographical map of the area, and a compass, into the spruce scented forests and colorful meadows of the San Juan wilderness. Late on that first afternoon they reached a lake near the summit of Table Mountain and decided to set up camp. After stringing up a makeshift tent and treeing their supplies, they were dog-tired but feeling good (actually, even smug, she says!) about their trip thus far – that is until they smashed their compass! That changed everything! Here is what she writes about their trip the following day:

"The next morning we set out again, undaunted (but less smug). As the morning wore on we realized we were lost. Stopped with the weight of our packs and unsure of our direction, we longed for the place we'd left behind. We struggled up ravines and stumbled down rockslides, balanced on logs to cross rushing streams, and fought our way through scratchy willows higher than everyone's head but Bill's. No compass. No trail. No landmarks that were shown on the topographical map.

I desperately wanted to see an initialed tree, a rusty can, a bit of litter – any sign that others had passed here before. Nothing. Not so much as a gum wrapper. If only we had a compass!"

I wonder if many of us aren't somewhat like that in our lives and spiritual journeys. We feel good, even smug, about the trip because we have armed ourselves with the necessary equipment: education, money in the bank, good employment, savvy investments, etc., etc. And we have our trusty "topographical maps" (i.e. good home teaching, etc.) and a good compass – a good head, good instincts, and a good sense of right and wrong. And so we feel "good to go." But then... life happens. Like the family on that backpacking trip, something happens to our compass (or at least it doesn't appear to be functioning properly) and our topographical maps seem to be a little outdated! And soon we too are wandering, feeling like we are struggling up ravines and stumbling down rockslides with the weight of the world upon us, and longing for some safe place or circumstance or time we've left behind!

As I was seeking the Lord about what to write to you in this article, it seemed the Lord was saying, tell them 'I love them... and that I will provide!' What a wonderful thing to hear... but what a difficult thing to translate into one's day-to-day life! For instance, when I'm suffering with chronic pain or illness, what does that mean? When I'm losing my loved one, what does that mean? When the responsibilities of life are crushing me, what does that mean? When I am suffering with depression or anxiety, what does that mean? When my present circumstance is not recorded on the "topographical map" and my compass does not seem to be working in this area of the mountain, *what does that mean?* What does that love and provision look like? And is it *really* there?

Now I obviously cannot tell you what God's care and provision will look like in your particular situation. But here is what it looked like for the Oden family as they wandered around with their children, lost in the vast Colorado Rockies:

With gray moods matching the dimming gray light of dusk, we finally saw a place to set up camp that second night – small, but the only space we'd found that was not too steep and where the trees weren't too close together. We worked together, dreading the isolation that pressed in upon us – wondering silently where we were, yearning for the certainty we had left behind.

Our son Dirk chose the place to build the fire. Somberly he brushed aside spruce needles and encircled the space with stones. Then he made a small hollow in the rocky soil.

And in that moment I heard his voice reverberate through the wilderness, "A compass!"

Impossible!

"I found a compass!" Dirk lifted his hand, and in it he held an old, encased, army-green *working* compass!

Our Lenten scripture texts call us to turn or return to the God who provides – who provides the compass that will take us through *all* the topography of this life! And to trust that even though we may not be able to see His provision, it is there. As

we confront life's thirsts (like the Samaritan woman at the well – John 4:5-42) God provides. As we find ourselves blinded by... whatever (like the man Jesus healed on the Sabbath – John 9:1-41) God heals. And even as we confront death or death-like circumstances (like Lazarus – John 11:1-45), God brings about resurrection and new life!

It also strikes me, though, that the Oden family would not have found the compass God provided if they had turned back or if they had stopped anywhere else than where God led them! That seems to be the key! You see, God's works come about in *the fullness of time* – for the purposes *He* has intended! (And sometimes those purposes may be way beyond “just me” – God may be working several circumstances together for the good and the faith of many!) And so to experience the divine end *He* has in mind we need to keep stepping... and keep believing – like Abraham, whose faith is heralded throughout the scriptures, who even as an old man, left the place where he lived and set out for the land and the promise God had planned for him. (And for *us* through him!) But not only that, real victory for us comes when, yes, we keep stepping, committed to the path God has chosen, but with the total confidence that what God in His love for us has ordained, He will equip and provide for. Oh, what joy when we begin to live in that confidence!

I think this is the message God would have us internalize as we journey together toward Easter. Turn, return to God! Turn, return to prayer, heart prayer, and continue in prayer! Not just asking for things for ourselves, but asking what *He* wants for and from our lives. Turn, return to sitting before the *Him* and seeking *Him* and *listening* to *HIM*. Turn, return to trusting *Him*! And return to believing that His plan is the right plan, the best plan, the plan that in the fullness of time, leads to life not just for me but for many! We have seen so many wonderful results, certainly enough evidence of God's love and providence to trust that He can and will, in the fullness of time, do the same in our own individual circumstances. So what is left to do but to continue stepping, one foot after the other, to continue working, continue believing, continue trusting? I believe that our peace, our joy, our abundant life, and certainly the life of our faith community, depends on it? Don't you?

Have a Blessed Lenten Season!
Pastor Stephanie

“The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil for you are with me; your rod and your staff – they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.” – Psalm 23

SCRIPTURE TEXTS FOR THE SEASON OF LENT 2017

ASH WEDNESDAY

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Psalms 51:1-17

2 Corinthians 5:20(b)- 6:10

Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Psalms 32

Romans 5:12-19

Matthew 4:1-11

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalms 121

Romans 4:1-5; 13-17

John 3:1-17

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalms 95

Romans 5:1-11

John 4:5-12

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalms 23

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalms 130

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45

About the Season of Lent

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. *Lent* comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means "spring." The season is a preparation for celebrating Easter. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians. The First Sunday describes Jesus' temptation by Satan; and the Sixth Sunday (Palm/Passion Sunday), Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and his subsequent passion and death. Because Sundays are always little Easters, the penitential spirit of Lent should be tempered with joyful expectation of the Resurrection. (from *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, p. 320.)

The season of Lent is a penitential season, however it is not all about penitence, or misdeeds, or guilt. It is a time of introspection, true, but its ultimate purpose lies beyond penitence. In essence, Lent serves as our annual invitation to come closer to God. It provides a time to look at our lives and ourselves, not so we may criticize ourselves more harshly, but so we can identify the obstructions that keep us from God. What keeps us from feeling the presence of the divine in our everyday? How do we hide from God, and why? Lent gives us a chance to look at such obstructions and to move them gently away so that we can come closer to the Love that gives us life, the Love whose triumph we will celebrate on Easter morning. Thus Lent offers a gift of time and a promise of closeness. It gives us time to see our current state of affairs in complete honesty. Furthermore, it gives us time to compare this present snapshot with an image of where we would like to be, a place we feel God wants us to find. (Excerpted from, *A Clearing Season: Reflections for Lent* by Sarah Parsons, p. 8-9.)

CHRISTIAN ED CORNER

MARCH 2017

Once again the season of Lent is upon us. What shall we do this year to better appreciate this significant time in our Christian lives? May I suggest these five aspects for your consideration? First is **IMPOSITION** or the placing of a burden upon someone. In Matthew 26:66-75 is Peter's denial of having any relationship with Jesus Christ. Peter expressed extreme sorrow over what he had done and likewise we may need to be reminded that we also need God's forgiveness for those things we have said or done. On Ash Wednesday, we participate in the Imposition of Ashes, an ancient rite in which participants are marked with the sign of the cross using the ashes from the palms from the previous year.

Lent is a time of **EVALUATION**. 1 Peter 2:9-10 reminds us of our identity as God's chosen people who have been called out of the darkness and into His marvelous light. What does that mean to us? Is God calling us to make a change in our lives? As we consider evaluation we can ask ourselves where we are going as we determine what things are most important as children of God.

We are reminded in this season of Lent of Jesus' unselfish act of love for an undeserving humanity. Lent means **SERVICE**. Jesus washed His disciples' feet (John 13:4-6) and gave us an example to follow. We must also show unselfish love for others in service without expecting a reward or recognition.

TESTING is a concept that asks the question "How difficult is it to be a Christian? What will we say when others ask us why we go to church and to Sunday school? Matthew 5:10-11 reminds us that we may be mocked, persecuted or even lied upon because of our relationship with God but in spite of the persecution we will still receive the blessings of God.

As we pray, fast and reflect during Lent 2017 we are drawn to the idea of **AWARENESS**. Jesus predicts His suffering, His rejection by the chief priests and His ultimate death by crucifixion. Mark 8:31-32 tells us about the sorrow and death of Jesus but also makes us aware of the joy of the Resurrection. God's plan for salvation will be fulfilled. How will you experience Lent this year?

Peace,
Dr. J

Year of Prayer March Prayer Practice: Contemplative Prayer

As we enter into the season of Lent, traditionally a time of reflection in the church year, we will be practicing different types of contemplative prayer. Lent is a time when we seek to purify our souls, thinking about how we can become imitators of Christ, picking up our crosses and following him. As Theresa Blythe writes:

Contemplation is the stillness we need to be aware of God's presence. Jesuit theologian Walter Burghart calls it "the long, loving look at the Real." It is long because our relationship with God (like our relationships with people) takes time; we must devote ample time to this Person we love. It is loving because we need to shed our judgments and fears and open ourselves to love just as we are. It is a look because we must face it. Denial is the enemy. And it is the Real because God is not interested in phoniness. We are being invited by God to look at our lives as they are, not as we would like them to be. Therefore, whatever is real to us is what we bring to contemplation and awareness before God. (*50 Ways to Pray: Practices from Many Traditions and Times*, Abingdon Press, 2006, p 29)

There are a lot of different forms of contemplative prayer. We will be trying a number of them throughout the Lenten season. Some of these include:

Centering Prayer: A wordless and imageless contemplation in the presence of God

Deep Listening: Sharing a memory of God's presence with a partner

Prayer of the Heart: Breathing with prayer mantras

Jesus Prayer: Praying on the phrase: Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Praying with Icons: Using an image to help focus your prayer

Taize: Praying through singing a simple, repeated chants

Contemplative prayer encourages us to spend time with God, listening for God's guidance. Contemplation is not an end in itself, but a time to step away from our hectic lives, in order to go back into them centered on God and shaped into more faithful disciples.

Lord, make us who you want us to be.

Susan Haddox, Lay Leader



ALTAR FLOWERS

There are a number of dates available on our Altar Flower Schedule. The Sign-Up Altar Flower Chart for 2017 is in the lounge. If you would like to sponsor Altar Flowers, please sign the chart.

To let the office know if you want the office to order the flowers please put an asterisk (*) next to your name. Please let the office know at least a week ahead of your Sunday what you want printed in the bulletin for the Altar Flowers. Thank you.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The 7:00 P.M. March 7th United Methodist Women Unit meeting will be in the Dussel Room. The program is "The Thrive Project Proper Ways to Put Babies to Bed Speaker: Emily Edwards, Alliance Health Department. The M & M Circle will serve as Hostesses and Greeters.

Items collected for the Alliance Area Domestic Violence Shelter will be put together after program.

Circles

March 20, 12:30 PM	Dorcas Circle:	Lakeview Terrace, Copeland Oaks
March 20, 7:00 PM	M&M Circle:	At the Church
March 21, 7:00 PM	May Smyth Circle:	Pat Stone, 3459 Greenbriar Ave.
March 21, 7:00 PM	Susie Buckel Circle:	At the Church

United Methodist Women will be selling soup on Sunday, March 12, 2015. We will be selling Potato Soup. Order forms will be available Sunday, March 5th. Cost per quart is \$6.00. Pickup soup on March 12th.

THE UMW Spring Basement Sale is scheduled for May 12 & 13, 2017 with set-up Thursday, May 11th.

UMW Prayer Buddies: As part of the *Year of Prayer Initiative*, United Methodist Women will be praying for Christ Church's leadership and staff members throughout 2017. It has been said that praying for a church is like filling a balloon with helium, the more it is filled, the more it will soar. We're excited to see our church soar, benefiting from the encouragement and intercessory prayer from this group of dedicated women.



CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

Church Women United will meet Friday, March 3th at the Second Baptist Church. There will be a Coffee Hour and Fellowship beginning at 11:00 A.M. The program will begin at noon with HUMAN RIGHTS CELEBRATION" – "Rekindling New Fires of Love." Second Evening Program at 6:30 pm for young women.

The Church Women United's April 7th meeting will be *here at Christ United Methodist Church* – be sure to mark your calendar! Program is Kathy Baker "A Few Choice Words".

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH FOOD PANTRY

We recognize a need in our community by collecting funds, food, personal and household items to help the Salvation Army in its outreach. The Christian Outreach Committee reminds you that there is always a shopping cart in the Lounge for donations, and that the third Sunday of each month is designated as Food Pantry Sunday. **March 19th** will be the next date collected donations of non-perishable food items, paper and cleaning products, and cash donations will be counted for delivery to the Salvation Army. Your response for this much needed community program is appreciated. Thank You!



CHIMES DEADLINE: The deadline for the April 2015 issue of *The Chimes* is Wednesday, March 15th. Articles may be placed in the Secretary's slot outside the church office or emailed to secretary@cumcalliance.org

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING - MARCH 26, 2017

Your generous gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing enable UMCOR to:

- Respond to disasters – and to remain on the scene long after others have left.
- Support community development efforts that enrich the lives of God's children around the world.

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" - 2 Corinthians 5:17, NRSV

An offering envelope will be available in Sunday March 26th's bulletin for your convenience.



CONGREGATIONAL CARE COMMITTEE

The Congregational Care Committee will meet on Wednesday, March 15, 2016 at 1:30 p.m. Among items to discuss includes the annual delivery of Delphin Violets and cards. Kathy Stroia is coordinating these gifts to our shut-ins and visitation members. There will be opportunities for our congregation to assist with these deliveries by signing up on a list that will be in the lounge in March.

The flowers will be delivered by DeHoff Florist to our church on Friday, April 7, 2017. The flowers and cards will be in the lounge on Palm Sunday, April 9, 2017. Deliveries may be made at your convenience throughout Holy Week.

We have approximately thirty individuals who have worshiped and served this church over the years are no longer able to do so but appreciate so much a visit and gift from our church during this time of year.

We hope you will be able to be one of those special visitors!

Extravagant Generosity

The Finance and Stewardship committees have a lot to be thankful for this year. We would like to take a moment to share the good news of 2016 with the people who made it all possible-----YOU.

All of the programs of the church were funded completely this year! That made possible all of our local programming like music camp, the summer carnival, bell and vocal choirs, visitation to homebound members and many, many more. In addition we were able to pay all of our apportionments.

Again, thank you for your extravagant generosity in response to the needs of your church. You are what keeps Christ Church vital.

In Other Finance News

We also would like to acknowledge another example of extravagant generosity. We are so thankful for the ten years of volunteer service Dick Diser has contributed to the financial well-being of Christ Church as treasurer.

After retiring, Dick used his skills as an accountant to focus on the Church's financial picture. We are thankful for his leadership in the weekly prioritizing of expenses, budget reviews and creative fundraising efforts. Also, our finance reports have a very user-friendly look with the revisions Dick has made. We all are grateful for his leadership.

At the same time, we are glad to welcome Ruth Williams as our new treasurer and look forward to working with her.



Pancake Breakfast

SAVE THE DATE: The Boy Scouts will be holding a pancake breakfast on March 25th. Watch bulletin for details.

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH COMMITTEE

It's been moved! The March meeting is scheduled for March 6th at 7:00p. This is a week earlier than normal.

Victor Lee, Chair
Christian Outreach Committee

Thank
you

Dear Church Family:

Thank you so much for the gift cards, thoughts and prayers during my recent surgery. All were appreciated and I'm slowly on my way towards recovery. Craig Post

Dear Christ United Methodist:

Thank you for the blessing bags. They are greatly appreciated by the needy in our community. Thank you for your continued prayers and support. The Salvation Army

Dear Friends:

We would like to thank you for your cash donation for \$25. Your thoughtfulness is truly appreciated. We help with utility payments, rent, food and other types of need. Thank you again. Without people like you, we would not be able to do the work we do. Your gift truly makes a difference! The Salvation Army

Breakfast

for the soul

*The Explorers Sunday School class has been brainstorming about what kind of outreach we could do within the downtown Alliance Community, as well as how we could bring more children into the Sunday School program of our church. What we have come up with is the idea of providing a free, hot, community breakfast to children and their families on Sunday morning beginning on March 5 with Lent. During and after breakfast, the children could participate in Sunday School activities and the adult family members can fellowship with members of our Explorers class and have a very brief devotional and be able to share prayer requests. We would like to invite all members to come and join us for breakfast and to visit with our guests prior to your Sunday School class. **Hope to see you all on March 5th at 8:45am in fellowship hall!***



WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS FOR MARCH

USHERS - Team #3

Linda Montgomery, Captain
Chuck Cline Treva Cline
Don Kingan Will Kinser
Chris Martin Greg Ruff

LITURGISTS

5 Pat Helsel
12 Ellen Sol
19 Victor Lee
26 Josh Shields

COMMUNION STEWARDS

March Patti Hirst
April Ellen Sol & Betty-Jo Sutherin
May Susan Haddox

SANCTUARY GREETERS

5
12 Watch bulletin
19
26

WELCOME CENTER GREETERS

5 Carol and Frank Woolf
12 Cynthia Carlin & Charlie Manypenny
19 Betty Thorpe and Jan Essick
26 Betty Sheetz

NORTH & WEST DOORS GREETERS

5 Bill and Nancy Prueter
12 Carolyn Miller and Zach & Sarah Smith
19 Karen and Mark Locke
26 Ellen and Bill Sol

TELLERS

5 Jan Essick and Nancy Prueter
12 Bill Prueter and Jill Greiner
19 Jim Greiner and Larry Pyers
26 Pat Helsel and Marilyn Ruff

MARCH VISITATION MEMBERS

5 Midge Mohr, 10608 Navarre Rd, Navarre 44662
12 Marilyn Horning, 10691 Nellabrook Ave, Alliance
19 Jane Moncrief, 629 Overlook Dr, Alliance 44601
26 Bob/Lou Clayton, 1613 Cleveland, Clare Bridge
Apt 23, Wooster 44691

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

4 Brian Skidmore
9 John Webster
10 Brad Bolog
12 Nickie Orwick
14 L. Chris Martin
18 Craig Post
21 Michelle Fedor
22 Scott Thomas
22 Courtney Webster
27 Dave Austin
27 Lew Shields
27 Steve Reisch
28 Robert Locke
29 Amanda Montgomery

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

20 Dan and Sheila Gard
28 Robert and Mary Beth Hunter
29 Boyd and Jean Webster
 61 Years
30 Janet and John Fisher



COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES~~2017

New this year! The area United Methodist Churches are joining together to have Sunday evening Lenten Services at 6:30 pm. Here is the schedule:

DATE	CHURCH	PREACHER
March 5	Bolton UMC 14760 Gaskill St.	Rev. Cora Lee Cox
March 12	Christ UMC	Pastor Neil Orchard
March 19	Salem UMC 14113 Salem Church NE	Rev. David Andrews
March 26	Lexington UMC 16035 GreenbowerSt. NE	Rev. Stephanie Lee
April 2	Union Avenue UMC 1843 S. Union Ave.	Rev. Bob Miller
April 9	Beechwood UMC 3450 Beechwood Ave.	Rev. Scott Hayward

The Alliance of Churches Lenten Lunches are at noon on the Mondays of Lent and are held at the First Baptist Church at 1659 West State Street. The lunch program consists of a meal of soup, cheese, crackers, pickles and cookies provided by church volunteers and a message from area pastors. Donations are requested to cover the cost of supplies for soup. **All are welcome**



SUMMER MUSIC CAMP

SUMMER MUSIC CAMP 2017 IS COMING! The week of July 17-21 is the week for musical fun at our church. Based on last years' experience, we will one adult per 2 children for the lower age groups. You are needed to make this happen. Please let Carolyn, Dr. J, or the church office know if you are able to help. Many Thanks

MARCH 2017



***Sunday** Worship & Program Opportunities
 9:00 A.M. Sunday School for all ages
 10:15 A.M. Worship Service
 11:15 A.M. Cherub and Wesley Choirs
 5:00 P.M. Youth Choirs
 6:00 P.M. UMYF Snack Supper
 6:30 P.M. **United Methodist Youth Fellowship**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 ASH WEDNESDAY 4p Church Staff mtg. 5:30p Halleluia Bells 6:30p Chancel Bells 7p Ash Wed. Service 8p Chancel Bells	2	3 <i>Church Women United</i> 11am Coffee Hour & Fellowship, program Noon at Second Baptist Church	4
5 1st Sunday in Lent 8:45a Breakfast *See Sunday Schedule 6:30p Lenten Service	6 7p Boy Scouts 7p Christian Outreach	7 12p <i>Prayer Time/Chapel</i> 5:30p Comm. Dinner 7p UMW Unit Mtg	8 4p Music Staff mtg. 5:30p Halleluia Bells 6:30p Chancel Bells 7:30p Chancel Choir	9 6:30p <i>Threads of Love, Prayer Shawl</i>	10	14
12 2nd Sunday in Lent One Great Hour Sharing 8:45a Breakfast 5p CRC Visitations *See Sunday Schedule 6:30p Lenten Service <i>Daylight Savings Time</i>	13 ECOT 9a-1p 6:30 p Christian Ed 7p Boy Scouts	14 → <i>St. Patrick's Day</i> 12p <i>Prayer Time/Chapel</i> 5:30p Comm. Dinner 6:30p Finance 7p Admin Council	15 ECOT 9a-1p 1:30p Cong. Care Mtg 4p Music Staff mtg. 5:30p Halleluia Bells 6:30p Chancel Choir 7:30p Chancel Choir CHIMES DEADLINE	16 →	17 ECOT 9a-1p 	18
19 3th Sunday in Lent 8:45a Breakfast 6:30p Lenten Service *See Sunday Schedule	20 ECOT 9a-1p 12:30p Dorcas Circle 7p Scouts 7p M&M Circle	21 → 12p <i>Prayer Time/Chapel</i> 5:30p Comm. Dinner 7p Susie Buckel Circle 7p May Smyth Circle	22 ECOT 9a-1p 4p Music Staff mtg. 5:30p Halleluia Bells 6:30p Chancel Bells 7:30p Chancel Choir	23 →	24 ECOT 9a-1p	25
26 4th Sunday in Lent 8:45a Breakfast 5p CRC Visitations 6:30p Lenten Service *See Sunday Schedule	27 ECOT 9a-1p 7p Executive UMW Mtg	28 → 12p <i>Prayer Time/Chapel</i> 5:30p Comm. Dinner 6:30p Trustees 7p Worship				