



Otterbein Outreach

February, 2024

Even though I'm a fan of technology, it seems like there's no escaping it, even if you wanted to. In our modern, digital world, it's easy to work around the clock: our cell phones are always on and everyone expects their text messages and emails to be answered instantaneously. You might even crawl into bed with your phone, checking out your Facebook updates or playing a game to "wind down." It's safe to say that for most of us, our work and our technology can consume our days and our nights.



Citizens of the ancient world saw no such conveniences, of course. They entertained themselves in other ways, usually in groups: true face-to-face fellowship at its finest. Even still, they managed to be distracted from the ways of the Lord.

God wants our attention. God wants to be He who consumes your thoughts every day and every night. It might seem impossible; after all, how many of us are living in monastic settings?

The psalmist writes:

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. —Psalm 1:2

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He who is close to the Lord is the same one who meditates on holy things night and day. How can that translate for us, in our world, with all of our distractions and responsibilities? As we ready ourselves for Christ's death and resurrection, we should turn ourselves to prayer. Lent is a prime time for investigating God's word, spending time in prayer, and meditating on Scripture. Ask God to help you carve out more time to spend in His holy presence, and He will. Even though you may not lead a monk-like lifestyle, the more we spend time talking to God and (even more importantly) *listening* to God, the more our thoughts return to Him and His ways. Through regular prayer and reflection on Scripture, we become more like Him and it becomes possible to spend our days and nights thinking godly things.

This Lenten season, I invite you to join me as we dedicate more time to God through quiet times of prayer, meditation, and reflection.

Pastor Deb



Special dates

- African American History Month
- Transfiguration of Our Lord, *February 11, 2024*
- Ash Wednesday, *February 14, 2024*
- Valentine’s Day, *February 14, 2024*
- Presidents Day, *February 19, 2024*
- Leap Day, *February 29, 2024*



Do you know a child who would like to be in the Confirmation classes. Pastor Deb will be using the book “making disciples”. Classes will be via zoom. Please let Pastor Deb know if you know of a child that would like to do the classes.

Mission Closet Thrift Shop

8:30am to 2:30pm



Sale Dates

February 10 and 24

March 9 and 23

April 20 and 27

(All dates are subjected to change)



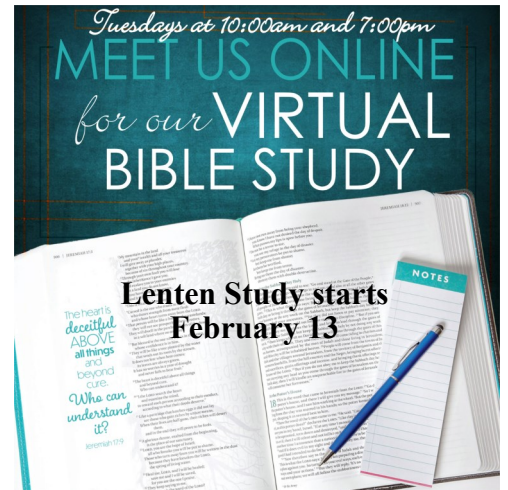
United Women in Faith

Join us on Sunday, February 18 for United Women of Faith Following worship Bring your lunch. All are welcome



Choir Rehearsals

February 29 and March 7 at 6:00pm



Lenten Study starts February 13

If you have not received your 2024 church envelopes please let me know. Also, if we can all turn in our pledge cards (This only helps me with the Statical report for the conference).

Thank you all for or your continual support in our church.

Mona



If you would like to be a member of Otterbein, please let Pastor Deb know



If you are in need of assistance of any kind, please contact one of the church members listed below. Be assured that your church family will support you in every way possible.

- Pastor Debra Stevens (C) 610-733-6204 Email: pastor@otterbeinchurch.net
- Lay Leader & Christ Servant Minister: Dianne Maylen 610-983-0113
- SPRC Co-Chairmans: Vernon Readman and Dianne Maylen
- Church Secretary: Mona Knauer 484-880-9001 Church Office: 610-933-8690
- Church Email address: otterbeinumchurch@verizon.net Church Website: otterbeinchurch.net



Easter Flower Order

Please complete the form thoroughly, exactly as you want it listed, one form per order. **Order is due by Sunday, March 10, 2024.**

In Honor / Memory of: _____

(Circle one)

_____ Lilies (4 blooms⁺) \$10.25 each

_____ Hyacinths (3 bloom) \$9.00 each

_____ Daffodils (6" pot) \$8.25 each

_____ Tulips (5&6 blooms) \$8.75 each

_____ Azaleas (8") Pink or Red \$17.00

(Circle one)

Total amount paid \$ _____

Given by: _____

Collegetville/ Trappe Ministerium

Mid-week Lenten Services 2024

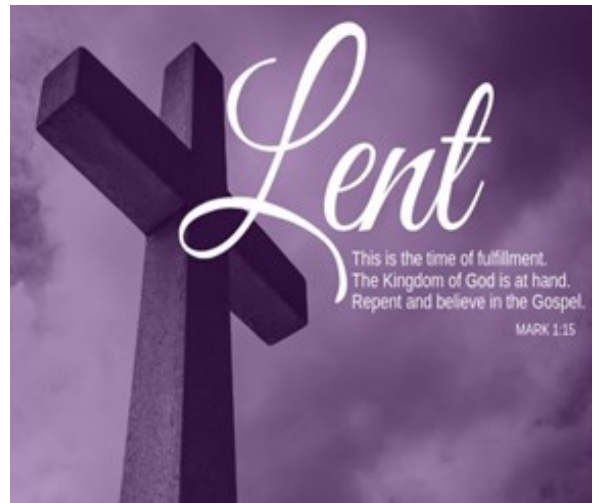
Feb. 21 - St. James' Episcopal Church –
Theme "Come and see the Triumph"

Feb. 28- Evansburg United Methodist Church –
Theme "Come and Serve"

March 6- Trinity UCC –
Theme "Come and Remember"

March 13- Thomas Paine UU –
Theme "Come to the Way of Grief and Pain"

March 20- Augustus Lutheran –
Combined CTM Choir Cantata





Invaluable!

“The kingdom of heaven,” said Jesus, “is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it” (Matthew 13:45-46, NRSV).

In 2021, the Good News Network reported that a crab fisherman in Thailand stumbled upon a valuable Melo pearl while cutting up a snail for lunch. In won-

der, he brought it to his brother to verify the discovery. “My family had been fishing for generations,” said Prasarnphon Phunwan, “but I believe our fate is about to change because of my lunch.” Several months prior, another fisherman had been offered \$351,000 for a similar pearl.

Likewise, God’s priceless love immeasurably alters our eternal fate. If we fully comprehended the value of that love, we’d give up everything to

obtain it. But the greater wonder is that we don’t have to buy it. God gives it to us as a gift! Whether we seemed to encounter Jesus by chance or someone joyfully shared the Gospel with us, our Savior is the merchant who “sold all that he had” — even his life. So priceless is salvation! So valuable are we!

—Heidi Hyland Mann

God-shaped hole

Have you ever neared the completion of a jigsaw puzzle, only to discover that a piece or two is missing? That’s an apt visual for what it’s like to live without God. Blaise Pascal, a 17th-century philosopher, observed: “There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the Creator, made known through

Jesus Christ.”

Centuries earlier, St. Augustine proclaimed “Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee.” And in the Old Testament, the writer of Ecclesiastes expounded on the meaninglessness of earthly striving and material pursuits. Only God’s Spirit can fill our emptiness and satisfy our eternal longings.

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full,” says Jesus in John 10:10 (NIV). He alone provides the solution for emptiness. What comfort to be filled with — and to find our fulfillment in — our Savior!



Learning to forgive

Forgiveness is great in theory, and it’s a wonderful blessing to receive. But granting forgiveness can be another story. As C.S. Lewis said, “Everybody says forgiveness is a lovely idea until they have something to forgive.” Likewise, forgiveness doesn’t simply happen over time, as forgetting often does. Instead, it’s “an act of volition,” said Simon Wiesenthal, “and only the sufferer is qualified to

make the decision.”

Because forgiveness has many spiritual, emotional and even physical benefits, the secular world is taking notice. Colleges now offer classes about forgiveness skills and strategies. “You practically never hear sermons on forgiveness that are practical and give clear instructions on how to approach it,” Professor Robert Enright tells the Washington Post.

Graduate student Shyanne Sporrer says a forgiveness class helped her realize the danger of holding grudges. “Forgiving does not mean you are giving up power,” she says. “On the contrary, when you forgive, you are the person who is in control. By forgiving, you can empower yourself to move forward from the anger and resentment to be a better version of yourself.”



Worship Helpers

Greeters

- 4 Mel Hoffman and Vernon Readman
- 11 Beth and Tim Burke
- 18 Vernon Readman and Wesley Bradbury
- 25 Ken Schum and Vernon Readman

Readers for February

- 4 Dianne Fisher
- 11 Mel Hoffman
- 18 Lloyd Knauer
- 25 Mila Lambert

(If you can not read your Sunday, please switch with someone.)

Attendance

	In Church	On Facebook
12/31	14	4
1/7	16	3
1/14	18	2
1/21	16	5
1/28	14	3

Financial Report

December 31st to January 28th	
Current	\$4,435.00
Plate	\$242.00
World Service & Finance	\$50.00
Building Fund	\$140.00
Mission Fund	\$150.00

To Call for Greeters

Months	Responsible for Getting Greeters
January & February	Vernon Readman
March & April	Kay Kunsch
May & June	Vacant-See Mona if you would help get greeters
July & August	Nancy Kukucka
September & October	Lloyd Knauer
November & December	Vacant-See Mona if you would help get greeters



We need volunteers to:

- ◆ read scripture
- ◆ lead worship
- ◆ run the PowerPoint
- ◆ pass microphone during prayer
- ◆ help with the offertory

See Mona, Dianne M. or Pastor Deb if you would like to help in anyway during worship.



Spring training for Christians

The word Lent comes from Middle English and German words for springtime. In light of the start of baseball season, some people call the pre-Easter season “spring training for Christians.” This fresh perspective moves away from the flawed understanding that Lent must be somber, or that giving something up for Lent is punishment for sin or a way to earn God’s favor.

As people of faith, we should never take a season off. But every so often — at least once a year! — we do well to examine where we need to get back in shape spiritually. Perhaps we will indeed opt to give something up: that swearing habit, sleeping in

on Sundays, or the cost of a weekly treat so we can donate the money instead. Or maybe we’ll take on something new for Lent: a Bible study, prayer routine or service project.

Hebrews describes spiritual discipline as challenging in the moment but yielding righteousness later. The writer urges us, “Lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees ... so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed” (12:11-13, ESV). May the spring training of Lent strengthen and heal us all.

A prayer for Lent

Dear Christ, hasten to me. Release me from my sins. Free my arms from the chains of evil, that I may embrace you. Lift the scales of ignorance from my eyes that I may see you. Why

do you delay? What are you waiting for? You are my God and my Lord, you are my refuge and strength, you are my glory and my hope. In you I put my trust. Dear Christ, hasten to me.

—Aelred of Rievaulx (12th century)



The realm of the impossible

The wonderful thing about praying is that you leave a world of not being able to do something and enter God’s realm, where everything is possible. He specializes in the impossible. Nothing is too great for his almighty power. Nothing is too small for his love.

—Corrie ten Boom



Prayer List

Prayer List

Sarah and baby Johanna
 Claire
 Bob
 The Family of Tom
 Dave
 Chris, Nicole and baby
 Mila (Traveling)
 Joe
 Fred
 Georgy
 Pastor Dan
 Irene and Eric

Serving our Country

TSGT Nicholas R Wilt

In Our Neighborhood

**All Our Government Leaders
 Pastor Debra Stevens and family
 For those in storms, floods, and fires
 Victims of Shooting and bombings
 First Responders
 Peace in the world**

Pray for our Homebound

Beatrice Collemacine
 Pennsburg Manor
 530 Macoby Street
 Room 215B
 Pennsburg, PA 18073

Fran Erskine
 3314 Pine Forest Road
 Cantonment FL 32533

Cynthia Isaacs

Betty Jaworski
 233 Miami Avenue
 Eagleville PA 19403

Maryjane Schum
 Parkhouse
 Royersford, PA 19468



If you would like to add or delete someone from our prayer list, please let Mona Knauer know.



A new perspective

I have a knack for making most tasks bigger than they need to be. Whether it's my go-getting nature or over-compensating "just in case," I often complicate the simplest of activities. When asked to bring a potluck side dish, I bring two. What if someone has an allergy? Or I join two Bible studies because I don't want to offend either facilitator.

Jesus understands people like me. "For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light," he says in Matthew 11:30 (NLT). In *The Soul's*

Slow Ripening, Christine Valters Paintner explores various Bible-based and spiritual practices. While reading it, I began adopting her insights into the rhythm of my own life. But without a filter or prayerful consideration of what God wanted me to discern, I just kept adding — creating an unnecessary burden.

"Your call may not be to change anything in your life other than your perspective," Paintner concludes. That provided newfound

freedom. Of course, our good Savior — whose burden is light — will help us navigate decisions and commitments. The only takeaway may be a much-needed shift in our perspective.

—Janna Firestone

Lent begins

On Ash Wednesday, February 14, Lent begins. During this 40-day period, Christians reevaluate their spiritual lives. It's a time for us to have a spiritual check-up and to strive to live the Christian life more faithfully and more intentionally.

One might go on a spiritual re-

treat, for example, spending time with a prayer warrior, Bible expert or theologian. During Lent, attending the various church services and study opportunities can help people grow spiritually and become more informed about the Christian faith.

Our pilgrimage through Lent should inspire us to serve God

more faithfully in our daily lives.



Ground rules for love

In *Let Me Be a Woman*, missionary Elisabeth Elliot writes about the "ground rules" for "how this thing called love really works — in a marriage, in the world." Her list reflects many of the principles found in 1 Corinthians 13, the Bible's love chapter.

- This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience. It

looks for a way of being constructive.

- Love is not possessive.
- Love is not anxious to impress, nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own ideas.
- Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage.
- Love is not touchy.
- Love does not keep account of

evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad ... when truth prevails.

Love knows no limits to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that stands when all else has fallen.



FEBRUARY
Birthdays

- 5 Dawn Hammilie
- 6 Alexandra Doyle
Nicole Frisco
- 7 Donald Frisco
Bobbie Jo McCullough
- 9 Dominic Huntzinger
- 13 Kimberly Mansur
- 14 Natalie Griffith
- 20 Clayton Blank
Cathleen Warner
- 21 Coltun Wadsworth
- 22 Ochie Spruell

Puzzle!

After solving the equations, write the words on the correct numbered lines below. Complete Ephesians 1:3 (NIV) to discover how God shows his great love for us.

- | | | |
|--|-------|---|
| <p>14 - 7 = ___ Father
 10 + 9 = ___ heavenly
 9 + 9 = ___ the
 12 + 12 = ___ blessing
 2 - 1 = ___ Praise
 7 + 7 = ___ has
 11 + 11 = ___ every
 13 + 13 = ___ Christ
 8 + 8 = ___ us
 10 + 10 = ___ realms
 8 + 9 = ___ in
 5 + 5 = ___ Lord
 10 + 11 = ___ with</p> | | <p>10 + 15 = ___ in
 10 - 5 = ___ God
 6 - 3 = ___ to
 12 - 6 = ___ and
 6 + 6 = ___ Christ
 18 - 9 = ___ our
 22 - 11 = ___ Jesus
 1 + 1 = ___ be
 7 + 6 = ___ who
 2 + 2 = ___ the
 10 + 5 = ___ blessed
 4 + 4 = ___ of
 10 + 13 = ___ spiritual</p> |
|--|-------|---|

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22		
23	24	25	26		

Ephesians 1:3, NIV

If I have missed your birthday last year, please let me know. I am trying to update the birthday list.

Thanks
Mona

Answer: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephesians 1:3, NIV



Bible Quiz

Use one word (perhaps in different forms) for all the blanks to complete this Scripture passage: “Dear friends, let us ____ one another, for ____ comes from God. Everyone who ____ has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not ____ does not know God, because God is ____.”

- A. believe
- B. help
- C. love
- D. forgive



Answer on page 9

Christian Symbol

CROSS OF ASHES — On Ash Wednesday, as Lent begins, worshipers’ foreheads are often marked with ashes in the sign of the cross. The ashes traditionally come from burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday. In the Old Testament, ashes were a sign of mourning and repentance. Today, some worshipers wipe off the ashes before leaving church, to symbolize being cleansed from sin by Jesus’ death; others wear the ashes the rest of the day, carrying the cross of Christ into the world. Reciting Genesis 3:19 often accompanies the placement of ashes: “You are dust, and to dust you shall return.”



Valentine’s Day jokes for animal lovers

What did one sheep say to the other?
I love ewe!

And how did the other sheep respond?
You’re not so baaa-d yourself.

Why do skunks love Valentine’s Day?
They are very scent-imental creatures.

What did the enamored deer say?
I’m very fawn-ed of you!

What question did the penguin ask on February 14?
Waddle I do without you?

What do you call two birds in love?
Tweethearts!

What did one bee say to the other?
I love bee-ing with you, honey!

Open invitation

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast,
Let every soul be Jesus’ guest;
Ye need not be one left behind,
For God hath bidden all humankind.

Sent by my Lord, on you I call;
The invitation is to all:
Come, all the world; come, sinner, thou!
All things in Christ are ready now.

Come, all ye souls by sin oppressed,
Ye restless wanderers after rest,
Ye poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind,
In Christ a hearty welcome find.

—Charles Wesley (18th century)



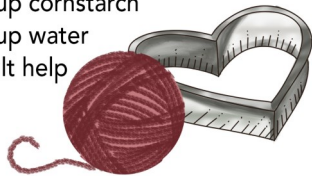
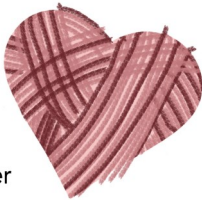
PUZZLE PAGE

HEART strings

Make this heartfelt craft as a decoration or gift.

What you need:

- Yarn
- Scissors
- Parchment paper
- Baking sheet
- Heart-shaped cookie cutters
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- ½ cup water
- Adult help



What you do:


1. Cut yarn into 12-inch pieces.
2. Place cookie cutters atop a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
3. Combine cornstarch and water in a saucepan. Heat mixture over medium heat, stirring until thick and smooth. Remove from heat and cool to form a "glue."
4. Dip each piece of yarn into the mixture to coat completely. Squeeze off any excess.
5. Place yarn in the cookie cutters, allowing pieces to cross and loop within the heart. Add more until the cookie cutter is filled and the yarn looks like a heart.
6. Remove cookie cutters and bake the sheet for two hours at 150°F, or until hearts are dry and hard.



CONNECTED BY LOVE

God's Word is filled with messages about love, which connects us to God and to one another.

Directions: Draw a line from the beginning of each Bible verse (on the left side) through the heart to the rest of the verse (on the right side). Use the Scripture references for help.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>a. We</p> <p>b. Above all,</p> <p>c. My command is this:</p> <p>d. And over all these virtues put on</p> <p>e. Greater</p> <p>f. See what great</p> <p>g. There is no fear in</p> |  | <p>1. each other as I have loved you. John 15:12</p> <p>2. has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. John 15:13</p> <p>3. But perfect love drives out fear. 1 John 4:18</p> <p>4. each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4:8</p> <p>5. the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! 1 John 3:1</p> <p>6. because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19</p> <p>7. which binds them all together in perfect unity. Colossians 3:14</p> |
|--|---|---|

Answers: a 6, b 4, c 1, d 7, e 2, f 5, g 3

Answer: C (See 1 John 4:7-8, NIV.)



JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

Starting on Ash Wednesday, the church traditionally observes Lent, a 40-day period of repentance and reflection. As we prepare for Easter, families can focus on Jesus' life and ministry, culminating in his death and resurrection.

Use this Lenten Bible Reading Plan, along with a kid-friendly Bible version, for family devotions. With older kids, you can expand the readings to the surrounding paragraph or chapter. Discuss how each reference to Christ ties into God's plan of salvation.



A 40-day Lenten Bible Reading Plan grid with various illustrations. The grid consists of 40 numbered cards, each with a day number and a Bible reference. The cards are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape with some overlapping. Illustrations include:

- Day 1:** A black snake.
- Day 4:** A green plant with brown soil.
- Day 9:** A colorful butterfly.
- Day 11:** A green plant with brown soil.
- Day 16:** A woman with long brown hair, wearing a white robe and a red sash, standing with arms crossed.
- Day 18:** A green plant with brown soil.
- Day 23:** A green plant with brown soil.
- Day 25:** A crown of thorns.
- Day 27:** A green plant with brown soil.
- Day 28:** A green plant with brown soil.
- Day 30:** A stone with a yellow light emanating from a hole.
- Day 34:** A crown of thorns.
- Day 36:** A wooden cross.
- Day 38:** A green plant with brown soil.
- Day 40:** A stone with a yellow light emanating from a hole.

Each card contains the following information:

- DAY 1:** Genesis 3:15
- DAY 2:** Isaiah 7:14
- DAY 3:** Matthew 1:20-21
- DAY 4:** Luke 2:11
- DAY 5:** Luke 2:52
- DAY 6:** Mark 1:9-11
- DAY 7:** Matthew 4:10
- DAY 8:** Matthew 4:18-20
- DAY 9:** Luke 6:27-31
- DAY 10:** Matthew 11:28-30
- DAY 11:** Luke 4:40-41
- DAY 12:** Luke 8:24-25
- DAY 13:** Matthew 12:8
- DAY 14:** Mark 6:41-42
- DAY 15:** Luke 9:20-22
- DAY 16:** John 3:16-17
- DAY 17:** John 6:35
- DAY 18:** John 8:12
- DAY 19:** John 10:14-15
- DAY 20:** Mark 10:13-16
- DAY 21:** Mark 9:2-3
- DAY 22:** Matthew 20:17-19
- DAY 23:** Luke 19:9-10
- DAY 24:** Matthew 14:25-27
- DAY 25:** Luke 10:36-37
- DAY 26:** John 11:25-27, 43
- DAY 27:** John 12:3
- DAY 28:** Matthew 21:8-9
- DAY 29:** Mark 11:15-16
- DAY 30:** John 17:17-19
- DAY 31:** Luke 22:3-6
- DAY 32:** Mark 14:22-24
- DAY 33:** John 13:3-5
- DAY 34:** Matthew 26:39
- DAY 35:** Luke 22:63-65
- DAY 36:** Mark 15:22-26
- DAY 37:** Matthew 27:50-54
- DAY 38:** John 19:40-42
- DAY 39:** Luke 24:1-8
- DAY 40:** Matthew 28:19-20



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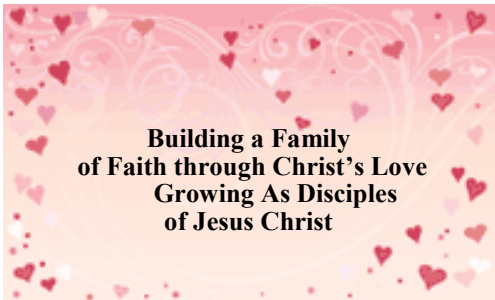
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Pastor Debra Stevens

Cell: 610-733-6204

E-mail: pastor@otterbeinchurch.net



11:00am Worship
First Sunday of each month is Communion