



February 2024 Newsletter

Join Sunday Worship on Youtube:
http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHfZFOjObXH_br8E-UG_gTA

Welcoming Statement

If you are searching for a place to experience God's wonderful and inclusive love, we invite you to join us at First Reformed United Church of Christ in Lexington, NC.

Following the example of Jesus, we believe that God's love, Christ's church, and the power of the Holy Spirit are for all people. We believe our unity as one body in Christ transcends worldly differences. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

First Reformed United Church of Christ is an Open and Affirming congregation. This means we welcome into the full life and ministry of the church all people, regardless of ability, age, education, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, income, nationality, political affiliation, race, sexual orientation, or any other distinction. At the baptismal font and at the communion table, from the nursery cribs to the church leadership, whether you were raised in a church or have never before attended one, you are welcome here.

We affirm and celebrate the diversity of God's children as a blessing. We welcome you to First Reformed United Church of Christ.

A Message from Rev. Elizabeth Horton

Lent Begins Feb. 14

Wandering Heart: Figuring out faith with Peter

This Lent, we are focusing on the life and faith of one of Jesus' most famous disciples: Peter. In him, we see a person both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer. In Peter, we often see ourselves. Like many of us, Peter has a wandering heart. He keeps searching and yearning and loving, even after missteps or mistakes. His journey is not polished, or linear, or perfect, but he is always tethered to the love of God. Through Peter, we will watch the story of Jesus unfold through the eyes of a very normal human trying to figure it all out—just like us.

When you look closely at Peter's story, you find Jesus at each step along the way—offering him abundance, catching him when he begins to sink, challenging him when he stands in the way, washing his feet, predicting his betrayal, and offering him agapē love.

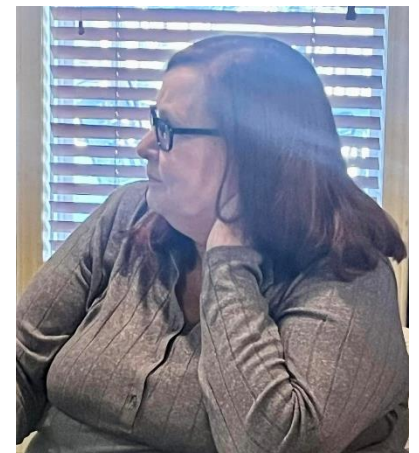
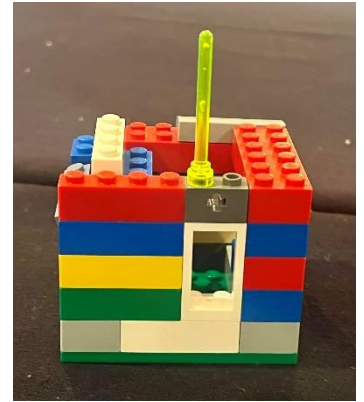
This Lent, you will hear the message that faith is a constant journey of steadfast pursuit, one that ebbs and flows, seeks and wanders. Wandering is exploration, not necessarily distance from God.

As we follow Peter's story, we will sing our way through Lent, focusing on the hymn, "Come Thou Fount," seeking to bind our wandering hearts to God.

Through Peter's story, we will be reminded that God loves imperfect people—in fact, time and again, that's precisely who God claims and calls. This Lent, we're joining Peter in figuring out faith. As we wander, let us tune our hearts to sing God's grace. May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing.

Join me in the Season of Lent,
Elizabeth

Looking Back: January Consistory Retreat



Installation Sunday: Our Leadership in 2024



Trustees: Jerry Smith, Walter Hoffman, Buddy Lohr, Mark Smith, Raeann Allred (absent)

Consistory: Eddie Yates, Jerry Lovell, Betty Barr, Rita Lohr, Doris Sink, Dave Fulton, Susan Odom, John Maze, Smithie Parrish, Clifton Murphy (absent)

Executive Board: John Maze, Clifton Murphy, Rita Lohr, John Gray (Treasurer)



BLOWING ROCK CONFERENCE CENTER WINTER YOUTH RETREAT



Joining the Church – Sunday, Feb. 11, 2024

Joining the Church Sunday

We will celebrate Joining Sunday on Feb. 11, by formally welcoming new members into the church. Over the past few weeks, I've had rich conversations about what it means to join a church as opposed to just continuing to participate.

Showing up for worship, and participating in various ministries is wonderful, and we definitely encourage it! We know you can worship from anywhere – a mountain, the beach, in your home, or a restaurant.

Visiting churches is a great way to learn about faith, religion, people, even the world. But when you make the decision to join a church, you are choosing a place to call your spiritual home. Where you build relationships and invest yourself in a larger mission and purpose. You are saying, "I'm in." And the church says it back to you.

In our tradition, **Joining the church** means we have people stand up in front during Sunday worship and make promises about their commitment to God and to this congregation. In return, the congregation also makes a commitment to the ones joining. We don't ask you to stand in front of the church to torture you! This is a prayerful and worshipful act of making a covenant together.

Becoming a member does mean you get to "vote on stuff", like adopting the annual budget, calling a Pastor, approving the slate of Deacons and Elders, revisions to the By-laws, Etc. This may sound mundane and practical, but voting on church matters is truly an important and sacred responsibility.

Becoming a member also means much more. We will work out our faith together, even when it's hard. You become a disciple with us. This church will be different because you have joined it. We will grow together. We will both be changed. Through you, God will make a difference!

Below are the Questions asked on Joining Sunday:

Questions for The Candidates:

- Do you desire to affirm your baptism into the faith and family of Jesus Christ here at First ReformedUCC ?
- Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best as you are able?
- Do you promise, to grow in the Christian faith, and to share regularly your time, talents, and resources in the worship and work of First Reformed United Church of Christ?

New Members: We do promise. With you, we will celebrate God's presence, and seek to love and serve others. With you, We will grow in faith together.

Congregational Response: With joy, we welcome you into the common life of this church. We promise you our love and support, as we grow in faith together. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we work and witness together in the name of Jesus Christ.

Come join in Worship as we welcome in the New Members of First Reformed United Church of Christ, Sunday, February 11, 2024.



Rev. Elizabeth Horton

Adult Worship, Study, & Fellowship Opportunities



The theme of our Lenten Bible Study is Wandering Heart: Figuring out faith with Peter.

We will focus on the life and faith of one of Jesus' most famous disciples. In Peter, we see a person who is both steadfast and unsteady, a dear friend and a betrayer, a follower and a wanderer. In Peter we often see ourselves. By following Peter's journey, we watch the story of Jesus unfold through the eyes of a very normal human trying to figure it all out---just like us.

In this Lenten Bible series, we want to affirm that faith is a constant journey of steadfast pursuit, one that ebbs and flows, seeks and wanders. We want to affirm the ways Peter keeps going; he drops his nets, he walks on water, he runs to the empty tomb, he swims to the shore to meet the risen Christ. He keeps search and yearning and loving, even after missteps or mistakes. Ultimately, in Peter's story, we are reminded that God loves imperfect people---in fact, time and again, that's precisely who God claims and calls.

The hymn, "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" carries us throughout the Lenten journey. As we wander, let us tune our hearts to sing God's grace. May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing.

**ASH WEDNESDAY – FEB 14TH
MEAL AND SERVICE**

**MEAL AT 6:00PM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL
SERVICE AT 7:00PM IN CHAPEL**

We will be joined by Second UCC.

Sunday Morning Bible Study

Sundays at 9:30 am – Church Parlor

Join us Sunday morning in the Parlor for tea, coffee, snacks, vibrant bible study and fellowship!

February 18 The First Sunday in Lent

WANDERING HEART: "Jesus Sought me"

Psalm 25:1-10; Luke 5:1-11

Peter and his partners drop their nets and follow Jesus.

February 25 The Second Sunday of Lent

WANDERING HEART:

"Rescue me from danger"

Psalm 22:23-31; Matthew 14:22-33

Peter steps out of the boat to join Jesus who is walking on top of the waves.

March 3 The Third Sunday of Lent

WANDERING HEART: "Praise the mount"

Psalm 19; Matthew 16:13-20

Peter proclaims who Jesus is. He speaks with conviction. Peter claims his faith.

March 10 The Fourth Sunday of Lent

WANDERING HEART: "I'm fixed upon it"

Psalm 107:1-3,17-22; Matthew 16:21-23

As Jesus foretells his death and resurrection, Peter protests.

March 17 The Fifth Sunday of Lent

WANDERING HEART: "Teach me"

Psalm 119:9-16; Matthew 18:15-22

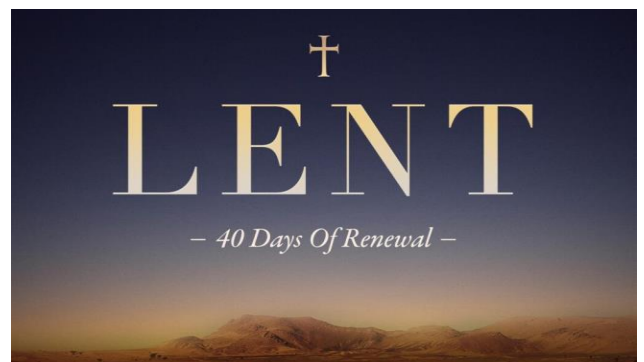
Peter ask Jesus the question, "How many times must I forgive?"

March 24 Palm/Passion Sunday

WANDERING HEART: "Songs of loudest praise"

John 12:12-16

Peter is with the rest of the disciples as they enter Jerusalem



FRUCC Men's Brotherhood

All men of the church are invited!

FRUCC Men's Brotherhood meet the first Tuesday, of each month, at Yarborough's. They enjoy a wonderful meal, review their last meeting, have a devotion and enjoy good fellowship.

**Upcoming meeting will be Tuesday,
February 6 - 6:00 PM at Yarborough's.**

Women's Fellowship

All women of the church are invited!

The Women's Fellowship meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 28** for at Yarbrough's Restaurant. Time will be 11:30 am.

Lent

Yoga for the Wandering Heart A 6-week Lenten Series

How are you planning to focus on spiritual wellness and connection to Jesus during this Lenten season?

For approximately 45 minutes on the Sundays of Lent, you are invited to

**Lay down your perfectionism
Put away your carefully curated to-do list
And Let go.**

**In the beauty of the sanctuary, Let your mind and
body and heart wander....
through Lenten Yoga.**

The word yoga comes from the Sanskrit for union - union between body and spirit or human and the divine. The movements and breathing in yoga contribute to calming the nervous system while at the same time energizing the mind and body.

This will be a time of gentle stretching and breathing exercises designed to quiet the mind and open the heart. I believe it prepares the mind, heart, and soul to be focused and centered and is the perfect companion to the spiritual disciplines.

Yoga will be Led by Jen Fuller Allen, the series will incorporate breathing and stretching, gentle, restorative, and energizing physical movement, using the church pews as a base.

Wear comfortable clothes. for all mobility and flexibility levels. No cost to attend, Half of all donations will go to the YMCA Afterschool Scholarship fund.

LENTEN YOGA

Open to the Community

Gentle stretching,
Restorative movement
in the sanctuary.
No mat needed.
For all abilities.

Sundays @ 4pm
Feb 18, 25,
March 3, 10, 17, 24

Cost: Donations Accepted

Led by Jen Fuller-Allen
CEO, J. Smith Young YMCA



Community Lenten & Lunch Services Starting Wednesday, February 21

Noon -1pm at First UMC sanctuary
Soup and sandwich lunch to follow.

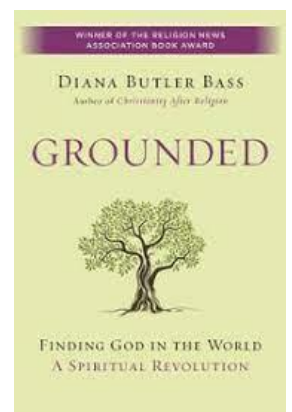
Each Wednesday in Lent, ministers from the Lexington area join together to lead brief Lenten worship services, followed by a simple soup and sandwich meal.

Lenten Book Study with Grace Episcopal – Sundays February 4 – April 15 at 3pm

First Reformed UCC has been invited to join Grace Episcopal for their Lenten Book Study of Diana Butler Bass's book ***Grounded: Finding God in the World – A Spiritual Revolution***.

Link to the author and
description of book:

<https://dianabutlerbass.com/books/grounded-finding-god-in-the-world-a-spiritual-revolution/>



VERNON GASTON (V.G.) PRICE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Vernon Price was a man with accomplishments in many fields of endeavor, yet the things most dear to him were very simple – his family, his faith, his students and his town. For this reason, his family requested that a scholarship be es-tablished in his name and that the recipients of the award encompass the ideals held most dear by V.G.

Applications are due to the church office by March 31.

Vernon Gaston "V.G." Price Memorial Scholarship

First Reformed UCC, 104 East Center Street, Lexington, NC 27292

Vernon Price was a man with accomplishments in many fields of endeavor yet the things most dear to him were very simple – his family, his faith, his students and his town. For this reason his family has requested that a scholarship be established in his name and that the recipients of the award encompass the ideals held most dear by V.G.

Criteria:

The scholarship is open to any member of First Reformed United Church of Christ, or student from the Lexington City or Davidson County School Systems. **The application and attachments are due MARCH 31st.** The recipient will be chosen by May 1st of his/her senior year in high school. Presentation will be made at the student's Senior Award's Day. The recipient must maintain at least a 2.5 GPA throughout his/her junior and senior years in high school, demonstrate good citizenship, and be an active member of a church.

The selection committee will consist of three members of the Price/Bowie family, the minister and a member of the Board of Trustees from First Reformed United Church of Christ.

Basic Information

Name (in full) _____
Address _____

Phone # () _____
Date of Birth _____
Parent's name and address _____

Education Information

() I have applied () I have been accepted to
the following college or university _____
I am planning to pursue a course of study in _____

Attachments

1. Three recommendations, one must be from a teacher and one from a member of your church.
2. A typed essay on how you represent the ideals of family, scholarship, citizenship, and faith.
3. A listing of your various activities in church, school and community during high school career.

Signature _____

Date _____

Thank You Notes

Dear Trustees & FRUCC,

The surprise I received on Thursday was a blessing. Being rewarded this scholarship has put the wind back into the sails of my education, and for that, I am very grateful.

Second chances do not come often. I struggle writing as of now because there are no words I could use to describe my overwhelming thoughts and feelings of appreciation for this opportunity. But honing these emotions of happiness and joy, I will remember what it feels to have a second chance, so I can work towards helping other students in need of a second chance as well.

Thank you and to the committee once again for this scholarship.

Megan Horton

Dear Trustees & Church Family.

Thank you very much for rewarding me with this generous scholarship. I appreciate all the support from the church and my church family in helping me to achieve my dream of becoming a pilot as well as furthering my education.

Thank You
Jonathan Kipley

*Hinkle, Sink, and
Swing Scholarship*

Happy Valentines Day – Wednesday, Feb. 14th

On Valentine's Day we think of those
Who make our lives worthwhile,
Those gracious, friendly people who
We think of with a smile.

We're fortunate to know them,
That's why we all should say,
To a rare and special person:

Happy Valentine's
Day!



Let's start getting ready...

FRUCC Church Wide Auction – Mark your Calendar
October 12, 2024
Early Planning Stages

We are planning a church wide auction this year as a major fundraiser for FRUCC and we need your help.

We need donated items such as:

Quilts, Art, Pottery, Woodworking, Furniture,
Vacation Rentals, Meal Certificates, Baked Goods,
and more.

(there will be both an inperson & silent auction)

Please contact Betty Barr @ 336-239-5001

to discuss items you have to donate, volunteering to help with this fundraiser, or general questions.



Our Youth

Sunday February 18

**11am Worship and Lunch with Faith Forward
Baptist Church at First Reformed UCC
Fellowship Hall**

We have a unique opportunity with Faith Forward Baptist Church. The Pastor is Rev. Alan Suber. They meet at Rowan Funeral Home in Salisbury, but the 3rd Sunday in February they will have a **Black History Worship Service and Soul Food Dinner after the service** in First Reformed Fellowship Hall.

When I approached Rev. Suber about the possibility of our confirmands and chaperones attending, he was quick to say yes. Rev. Paula will attend with the confirmands. Feel free to join with them. If able, please remind your teen to bring money to put in Faith Forward Baptist's offering plate. Thanks so much and contact Rev. Horton if you have questions

First Reformed service will still take place at 10:30 in sanctuary on that day.



2024 JRVC Summer Camps (\$535.00 per camper)

June 16-21 Classic Middle/High 7-12

Campers will hike to Harper Falls, Bike the Virginia Creeper Trail, kayak the Johns River and More. Directed by Rev. Jason Stump

Jun 23-28 Adventure Middle/High 7-12

Campers will stay on the Main site and participate in adventure activities including off site rafting and caving.

Catawba College Youth Theology Institute Discover Camp

July 7-12. High School: (Catawba's campus)

July 24-27, Middle School: (John's River Valley Camp)

<https://www.catawba.edu/discovery>



FRUCC Community Outreach Ministries

FRUCC Clothing Ministry

Please consider volunteering for the Clothing Ministry! Right now, we have six faithful volunteers from First Reformed, First Baptist in town and one Pilgrim United Church.

The Clothing Ministry has been extremely busy during January. We were able to meet the needs of our clients thanks to the generosity of our congregation with the help of First Baptist, who donated several coats to distribute. Thank you to our volunteers, both old and new. We are grateful for your time and care with this ministry.

Contact Jerry Lovell @ 336-590-5074
Bob Saylor @ 704-239-7342
Patti Lovell @ 336-309-9302

Charles England Elementary School Ministry

Through the years we have witnessed the ever-present need for assistance, particularly food items and school supplies, for the children of Charles England Elem. School. You have all graciously donated clothing, food and school supplies throughout the year. Your donations contribute to the 50 backpacks that are sent home each Friday with students who find food sparse over the weekends. And, the school supplies donations at the beginning of each school year help students get a good start to a new school year. We appreciate your past and future support. For your convenience, a box is in the back of the sanctuary each week for tangible donations. **Cash donations** are also accepted. Many thanks for your support! **Ben Hale @ 704-772-6908**

The **Community Garden Ministry** will be gearing up for spring planting in a few months and they can always use **volunteers** most any time of the year. The garden always needs weeding, produce planted and then harvested. If you enjoy gardening, this is a great mission to become involved in. Watch the newsletters for Community Garden Workdays. Come have fellowship with others that also enjoy giving love to a garden. **Contact Edgar Miller @ 336-688-2651**

The Saturday Lunch Ministry

The Saturday Lunch Ministry is off to a good start this year! We have several volunteers and are grateful for their dedication to the program. **We are still in need of COOKS.** It takes a lot to cook and prepare food to be served on Saturdays. If you love to cook and have some extra time **contact John Maze @ 704-524-6462.** John can give you insight to the details the cooking for Saturdays.

We received more food items from our grant and are currently getting the yellow room in the EDU building set up to store the food items.

We are in need of:

- **Canned sliced potatoes:** we will be taking donations for canned sliced potatoes for the next 2 months. This is an item that is difficult to keep in stock and is a staple to many of our dishes as we are moving away from fried foods such as French fries to ensure healthier meals.

THANK YOU to everyone at FRUCC for your support of the Saturday Lunch Ministry!

John Maze



Food shipment from our Grant.



Sunday Morning Ushers Needed: Please sign-up to be an Usher a few Sundays throughout the year. Volunteering as an Usher is an important part of the Sunday Service and is a ministry of the church. The ministry of an usher is pure joy and a privilege in service to the church and congregation. If you have any questions about volunteering, please **contact Eddie Yates: 336-225-1231** [Click here to Sign-up as an Usher](#)



We are excited to have access to the services below and very grateful for all those who have worked to make this possible. Many thanks to coordinators Cathy Browder (NAMI) and Belinda Yates (PFLAG)



PFLAG
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

PFLAG is a national support, education and advocacy organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and genderqueer or non-conforming (LGBTQ) people, their families, friends and allies.

Join meetings on the third Thursday of each month at FRUCC in the fellowship hall - 6:30pm



nami
National Alliance on Mental Illness

**North
Carolina**

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, provides support and education services to those affected by mental illness and the people who love and support them. If you have any questions about NAMI or would like to participate in any activity, reach out to

Cathy at 704-502-9095 or
email NAMIDavidsoncounty1@gmail.com

NAMI Family Support Group Meeting Each Month

The 1st and 3rd Mondays
The 2nd & 4th Tuesdays

Memorials and Honorariums

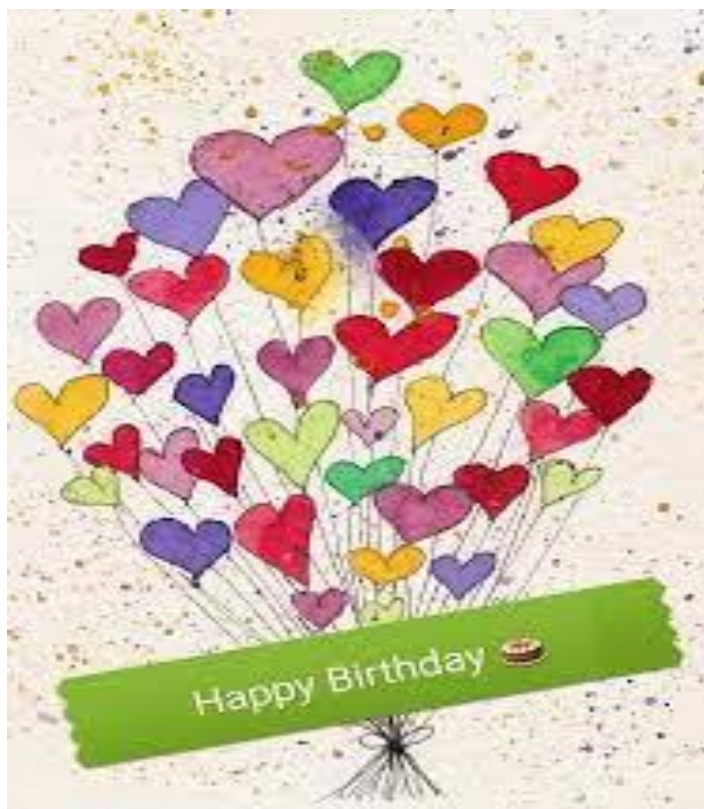
In Memory of Vogen Everhart
Geraldine Hill





February Birthdays

- 1 Bonita Hooper & Cameron Sink
- 7 Haylee Hutcheson
- 9 Ethan Lovell
- 12 Ann Hoffman
- 15 Abbie Callicutt
- 17 Lee Bouchard & Amy Bouchard
- 18 Kalyssa Hutchens
- 19 Susan Morris
- 20 Frank Callicutt & Janette Neal
- 24 Megan Horton
- 26 Clifford Lopp



February Anniversaries

Feb. 1

Ted & Nina Smith

Feb. 9

Mike & Lynn Brown

Feb. 10

Mike & Bonita Hooper

Feb. 20

Larry & Betty Link

Feb. 28

Jerry & Aurelia Smith



Pastor: Rev. Elizabeth Horton

elizabeth@frucc.org 336-972-8895

Minister of Congregational Care

Rev. June Grubb 336-248-5668

Music Director

Ellen Peterson ellen@frucc.org

Pianist/Oranist

Bruce Trippette bruce@frucc.org

Church Administrator

Jackie Mock jackie@frucc.org

Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday

9:00am-1pm Walkin's Welcome

1-2pm Lunch

2 – 5pm ***Please call ahead or make an appointment***

Phone: 336-248-2617

104 East Center St., Lexington, NC 27292

Join us for worship Sunday's at 10:30am

February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 4-6pm Clothing Ministry workday	2	3 Saturday Lunch Ministry 
4 Communion 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship	5 OFFICE CLOSED 5pm Clothing Ministry open 5pm Open Hands Meal	6 6pm Men's Brotherhood At Yarboroughs	7 12:30pm Wednesday Study with Second UCC Parlor	8 4-6pm Clothing Ministry workday	9 9am – Board of Worship clean-up day	10 Saturday Lunch Ministry 
11 Joining Sunday 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Consistory Meet after Worship	12 5pm Clothing Ministry open 5pm Open Hands Meal	13	14 ASH WEDNESDAY Meal & Service 6PM 12:30pm Wed. Study with Second UCC Parlor	15 4-6pm Clothing Ministry workday	16	17 Saturday Lunch Ministry 
18 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Insta-Choir Lenten Yoga Sanctuary 4pm	19 5pm Clothing Ministry open 5pm Open Hands Meal	20 Evangelism Meeting 6:30pm Parlor	21 12:30pm Wednesday Study with Second UCC Parlor 1pm Community Lenten & Luch Swervice First UMC	22 4-6pm Clothing Ministry workday	23	24 Saturday Lunch Ministry 
25 Congregational Meeting 9:30am Adult Bible Study 10:30am Worship Lenten Yoga Sanctuary 4pm	26 5pm Clothing Ministry open 5pm Open Hands Meal	27	28 11:30am Womens Fellowship At Yarboroughs 12:30pm Wednesday Study with Second UCC Parlor	29 4-6pm Clothing Ministry workday		