The Epistle

BE

Wednesday Lenten Services at 1:00 & 7:30 pm

CIOUS

Weekend Services: Saturday @ 5:30 pm Sunday @ 8 & 9:30 am Contemporary Service @ 11:00 am

> St. John Lutheran Church 655 Wayne Avenue Defiance, OH 43512 www.stjohndefiance.com

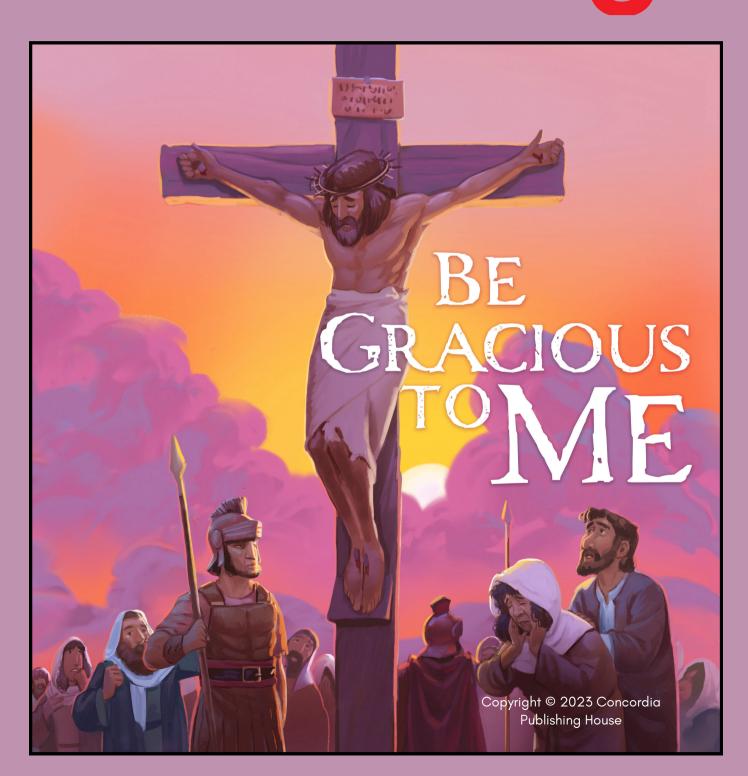
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March 2024

LENTEN SERMON SERIES

St.

| MAR.6 - | "SOON AND NEVER" | PSALM 41:5 |
|------------|----------------------|--------------|
| MAR. 13 - | "EMPTY WORDS" | PSALM 41:6 |
| MAR. 20 - | "VINDICATION" | PSALM 41:7-8 |
| MARCH, 28, | "MY CLOSE FRIEND" | PSALM 41:9 |
| MARCH 29, | "BE GRACIOUS TO ME" | PSALM 41:10 |



PASTOR MEWS' MARCH EPISTLE ARTICLE

RELIGION ARTICLE: "Most Americans are now nonreligous. What will the future look like?" Cleveland Plain Dealer, Cleveland.com, Friday, January 26, 2024

"Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!" Over a billion Christians around the world over the next few weeks will share as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ. His resurrection and the emerging Christian Church after that is inarguably the largest global event in terms of touching, influencing and molding lives. We will celebrate that vigorously here, as our worship schedules are listed on the front page, and we speak those words to one another. While the Christian church is growing, even booming worldwide, in the West (North and South America, Europe) the Church seems to be on a downward slide.

If you noticed, our pews are getting "grayer" by the week. Even "Lutheran Witness," our Synodical newspaper, had a lengthy article reflecting this over a decade ago. With that in mind, the article referred to above indicates that the fastest growing religion in the U.S. is not Christianity or Islam, but "Nones". No, not the Roman Catholic

female servants, but "Nones". Who are "Nones"? Nones are mainly younger, more diverse, left-leaning individuals who hold to a new belief system. That system entails holding to "nothing in particular" when it comes to religion. What does this look like? Refusal to have their children baptized or to buy into any form of religious belief. They rarely attend worship services or hold to any type of religious doctrine and in many cases are hostile to religion. Why? Because religion fosters illogical thinking and intolerance and causes division. We

can discuss those later. Here are interesting findings about "Nones".

*In 1972, 5% of Americans considered themselves nones, now 30% do.

*69% of nones are under 50.

*81% of nones say religion is not that important, and they place a high value on "science".

*17% of nones are atheists who don't believe in a supreme being.

*20% of nones claim to be agnostic; they are uncertain if God exists.

*63% of nones say they are "nothing in particular", when it comes to religious identification.

*In 1994, 90% of Americans considered themselves Christians and now, 60% do.

Sociologists indicate that the "none" movement grew rapidly. Within one generation, a family went from being very faithful in worship because religion was a big deal, but now it's not like that. Nones are not against religion; they just don't care for it. Added to this is that this generation "doesn't like to be told what to do", and that means a greater move toward autonomy (self-rule). Sadly, this movement will continue to grow. In the book, <u>The Making of Ex Christian America</u>, the author, S. Bullivant, points out that the U.S. is becoming much more secularized, just like Western Europe, where fewer than 3% attend worship and those who do are very elderly. What can be done? We can lament this, fight against it, arrange for debates, or work for laws that outlaw this line of thinking (sarcasm!). However, the Risen Christ has promised that the gates of hell will never overcome the Church. Christians need to continue to emphasize loving all, speaking the truth in love, and be reminded that God is in control. A wise person once said, "There will always be a Christian Church; it might not be in your neighborhood." The resurrected Lord, through the Spirit, still calls, gathers and enlightens many with the Gospel. We reflect our resurrected Lord's power and passion in all of our ministry, worship and daily life, for Christ has promised that "I will grow the Church!"

"Christ is risen, He is risen indeed!"

In Christ,

Pastor KFM (Kurt Frederick Mews)

Sermons for March

MARCH 2-3, 3rd SUN LENT MARCH 6, MIDWEEK LENT 3 MARCH 9-10, 4th SUN LENT MARCH 16-17, 5th SUN LENT MARCH 20, MIDWEEK LENT 5 MARCH 23-24, PALM SUNDAY MARCH 23, GOOD FRIDAY MARCH 29, GOOD FRIDAY MARCH 30, EASTER VIGIL MARCH 31, EASTER

"Cluttered and Cleared" "Soon and Never" "Palindromic, Done and Undone" "Arrival Time" "Vindication" "Connected" IY "My Close Friend" "Be Gracious To Me" Traditional Easter Vigil "Because of My Integrity" *John 2:13-22, Psalm 41:5, Psalm 41:6, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 41:7-8, John 20:20-23 Psalm 41:9 Psalm 41:10*

Psalm 41:12-13

Cleared Ways to God Faith Not Legacy Word of Betrayal/Promise New Life / Fulfillment Vindicated In Christ Christ / Passion Week Betrayed / Blessed To Forgive/Be Forgiven Word/Baptism/Communion In Christ, Connected to Life





Pastor Mews' Official Act Baptism of Maeve JulieAnn Lomotan on Feb. 4th, 2024

PASTOR'S SERMONS

If you missed a sermon, you can find it on our YouTube channel, on our webpage (www.stjohndefiance.com) and on our Podcast site.

Google search: st john lutheran church defiance ohio youtube. Then subscribe to St. John channel to get notified when we are broadcasting "live".

LINK TO OUR WEBPAGE

https://www.stjohndefiance.com/sermons-2/

LINK TO OUR PODCAST

https://www.buzzsprout.com/54964

Put your favorite podcast app on your phone and listen to the sermons any time of day. Our service is broadcast a week later on the radio on Sunday at 9:30 a.m. on WONO 1280 AM and on WZOM 105.7 FM at 8:00 a.m.

419-782-5766 655 Wayne Ave Defiance, OH



St. John Lutheran Church & Christian Day School

Quarterly Financial Report

| | July - December 2023 | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------|----|----------|----|----------------------|--|
| T | | Actual | | Budget | | (Unfav) to Budget | |
| Income | ¢ | 241 402 | ድ | 240 775 | ¢ | (7,272) | |
| Church Revenue | \$ | 341,403 | \$ | 348,775 | \$ | (7,372) | |
| School Revenue | \$ | 204,336 | \$ | 237,956 | \$ | (33,621) | |
| Tigers' Den Revenue | \$ | 20,401 | \$ | 31,908 | \$ | (11,507) | |
| Total Income | \$ | 566,140 | \$ | 618,639 | \$ | (52,500) | |
| Expenses | | | | | | | |
| Church Expenses | \$ | 181,203 | \$ | 248,611 | \$ | 67,408 | |
| Care of Property | \$ | 98,780 | \$ | 100,050 | \$ | 1,270 | |
| Christian Day School | \$ | 269,540 | \$ | 263,263 | \$ | (6,277) | |
| Tigers' Den | \$ | 18,765 | \$ | 29,408 | \$ | 10,643 | |
| Total Expenses | \$ | 568,288 | \$ | 641,333 | \$ | 73,044 | |
| Net | \$ | (2,149) | \$ | (22,693) | \$ | 20,545 | |

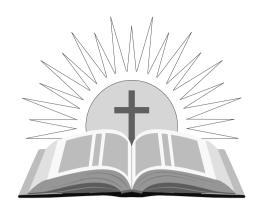


Bible Study Opportunities Led by Pastor Mews The Reason For God Based upon this NY Times best-selling book from Rev. Keller, the gifted and seasoned Christian pastor. This practical author addresses doubts from both skeptics and believers about Christianity. Using literature, real-life conversations and potent reason, this class engagingly shows how belief in God is a sound and rational one. Taught by Pastor Mews, participants will be able to give very credible arguments for pursing the "Reason for God" with those they know and encounter who are skeptics, doubters and even atheists. The class gathers Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We invite all to join our class! All is provided.

ISAIAH

The book and class theme is "To Keep the people in eager anticipation of Christ!" This Bible study is over the book of Isaiah and it gathers from 10:00-11:30 A.M. in the fellowship hall. Feel free to join us, as all is provided and over 25 people are enrolled. Our outreach ministry is to the Path Center of Defiance.

Winter "Life with God 1" (LWG 1) This class is for those desiring to become communicant members of St. John Lutheran Church, those desiring to renew their faith, or those who wish to 'check out' the basic teachings of Christianity and Lutheranism. We encourage every member to attend once every five years. The class meets on Monday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m.



Bible Studies SUNDAY-9:30 a.m. Phil Rohlf – Lunchroom

Sandy Gyurnek — "Help Is Here: Finding Fresh Strength and Purpose in the Power of the Holy Spirit" by Max Lucado, in the Fellowship Room

Faye Luhring—"Overcoming Strife / **Enduring Faith" In the Lunchroom**

Jeff Rohlf — "Goliath Must Fall," by Louie Giglio in Adult Ed A

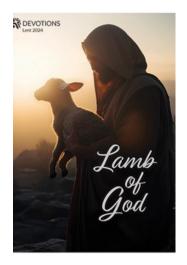
PRIVATE COMMUNION

Pastor continues to offer private Communion for anyone who wishes to have Communion. Please call the church office for an appointment.

SHUT-IN CALLS

We have around 30 people who are designated as shut-ins in our congregation. Pastor, Walt & Lorna Smith, and George Kaiser are keeping in contact with our members. If the shut-in person is comfortable having a home visit, arrangements will be made for this visit.

| 419-782-5766 | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| 655 WAYNE AVE DEFIANCE, OH | WWW.FACE |



ACTS (Adult CrossTraining Studies) Lutheran Hour Lenten Bible Class:

In *Lamb of God*, we see Jesus as both human and divine. He is concerned about people's everyday lives and their eternal welfare. As God's beloved Lamb, He intimately joined our lives in the flesh, compassionately healing, teaching, and loving us as our Good Shepherd. On the cross, He gave His life for our transgressions, and three days later He rose triumphant in victory. Please consider joining us from 6:30 - 7:30 in Adult Ed Room A. We follow the Cross Training schedule as we prepare our hearts to walk with Jesus through Lent and Holy Week. We have found the Lutheran Hour Devotions to be both thought-provoking and uplifting.



CARE NOTES

Take One - Take Heart Give One - Give Hope Working Your Way Through Crisis New Care Notes have been placed in the rack in the Caring Ministry Resource Room in the Work Room. Please take one for you or give to a friend. Notes now available: 5 Stages of Grief Series: Denial 5 Stages of Grief Series: Depression 5 Stages of Grief Series: Anger 5 Stages of Grief Series: Anger 5 Stages of Grief Series: Bargaining 5 Stages of Grief Series: Acceptance Feeling Overwhelmed When One Loss Follows Another What Is Palliative Care - And When Is It Called For? Understanding Thoughts of Suicide and Self-Harm

Angry? Lonely? Anxious? Dealing With Difficult Emotions



Moms in TOUCH

Faye Luhring invites to you join a group of ladies who pray for not only our congregation and its members, but also our community and world affairs. They meet every other Monday at 9:00 a.m. at 274 Wilson St. This month they meet March 11th and 25th from 9 - 10 am. For more information, please call Faye

at 419-782-0153.

BARINGER/WACHTMAN SCHOLARSHIPS

The St. John Lutheran Baringer / Wachtman scholarship is available to students who are considering attending a synodical school (i.e. Concordia, Ann Arbor). The church office has an application/information folder for those pursuing a degree at a Christ-centered campus. Anyone is welcomed to stop in the office for this opportunity to learn more about the programs offered at these colleges.



DEBORAH S. MAXEY SCHOLARSHIP

The Maxey family has created a memorial scholarship to support a high school senior preferably entering the field of education. It is NOT a requirement that the applicant is entering the field of education. The applicant must be accepted into college this fall. To be eligible for the scholarship, the applicant must have attended St. John Lutheran School at least 3 years from kindergarten through eighth grade. Please stop by the church or school office to pick up an application for the scholarship. The application is also available for download on the church website or your high school website. The application deadline for the scholarship is April 6th. College Bound Students Announcement!





MARCH 2024 80 + BIRTHDAYS **Karon Graft** March 6th (82) March 14th (83) Marie Clark **Jim Anderson** March 17th (83) Robert Warncke March 18th (82) Jean Lantow March 21st (80) Marlene Eberle March 23rd (83) March 25th (85) Paula Johnson Phil Rohlf March 25th (82) March 26th (80) **Judith Miller**



40+ Years

Dave & Dottie Goldenetz March 5th (47) **Charlie & Janet Koch** March 6th (65) **John & Mary Goldenetz** March 14th (59) Lynn & Sherrie Geitgey March 17th (51) **Tony & Carrie Homier** March 24th (40) **Joe & Pam Morisy** March 28th (43)



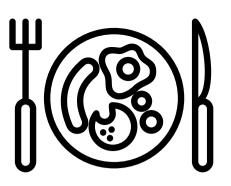
Please let the church office know of any prayer requests. Call 419.782.5766 or email church.office@stjohntigers.com. For the Prayer Chain, please contact Judy or Penny via phone, text, or email if you have a prayer request, an addition, a correction, or any feedback for the Prayer Chain Warriors to include in their prayers. Judy Detter (detterjudy@gmail.com), text Judy: 419.783.7032. Penny Mueller (pennym41@gmail.com) text Penny: 419.304.5768



FOOD PANTRY We served 75 families in January or 217 people. A distribution of 316.5 bags of food worth \$4,747.50 was distributed. We had 10 new families visit our pantry. We changed the Food Pantry hours to 9:00-11:00 a.m., and continue to be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We are being featured at Meijer for the Simply Give Program. This has been the primary source of keeping our Food Pantry operational. During the campaign, the Double Match Day opportunities are Saturday, March 2, and Saturday, March 23, 2024.

For every \$10 Simply Give card purchased on these dates, Meijer will provide an additional contribution of \$20, bringing the total to \$30 for a single customer purchase. Simply Give cards are available at the store at the end of the checkout lane or on the south receptionist desk. If you like to donate food products, a list will be published in the weekly bulletin. Thank you for your continued support of the Food Pantry.





<u>LENTEN COMMUNITY</u> <u>MEALS</u> March 6th, hosted by the Elders March 13th, hosted by the Boy Scouts March 20th, hosted by the Endowment Committee



The Clothes Closet, located across the street from the school, continues to provide gently used clothing at an affordable price to our community. The Clothes Closet is open on Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and on Fridays from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. If you have a donation, you may drop it off on Monday or Tuesday from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. or during the days we are open. Bring donations and come on in and do a little shopping.

419-782-5766 655 Wayne Ave Defiance, OH



Scouting News - March 2024

March is an exciting month for the Cub Scout Pack in that this is when the annual Pinewood Derby is held. Given a block of wood to shape and paint/decorate as they desire, along with wheels and axles, Cubs are very creative in what they build. The cars are then raced down a track with winners in each division qualifying for a district event (5 counties in Northwest Ohio). Siblings as well as parents/guardians are welcome to participate as well in their own race division. Most importantly, the event is fun for all!

The Troop will be traveling to the Kalahari Waterpark this month for a day of water-related activities. This activity will not only be fun but will help bond older Scouts with the 4 Arrow of Light Cubs who recently crossed over due to age. Troop members are very thankful for those who attended the pancake breakfast last month as the money donated will allow them to enjoy the day at Kalahari.

Service to others is a very important part of Scouting. Thus, both the Pack and Troop will be participating in the annual Scouting for Food campaign, a national program of the Boy Scouts of America. On March 3, Scouts from St. John will be passing out door hangars in a number of Defiance neighborhoods. Other Defiance Packs and Troops will be doing the same in other areas so that the entire city will be solicited for non-perishable food items. Scouts will then return to the neighborhoods on March 10 to pick up the items and transport them back to local food pantries. All items collected by Pack 75 and Troop 75 will be brought to the St. John Food Pantry.

Youth and adults are always welcome to attend pack and troop events to learn more about the program. Questions at any time can be addressed to Mike Saxton, Chartered Organization Representative, at 419-439-2079.

OUTREACH MINISTRY



Outreach Ministry seeks to share the Gospel of Christ within and outside of our walls to proclaim Jesus and the ministry of our church and school locally, nationally and globally. A second St. John Lutheran Church and School 4'x8' sign is to be installed on State Route 66 South. The first sign is located at the junction at Routes 15 and 18. Outreach Ministry goals for 2024 are being reviewed. Plans are being pursued to have reusable bags with the SJL logo and several gifts inside for guests. The Outreach Ministry Committee meets monthly to plan additional opportunities to be more welcoming to worshippers and more visible in the community. The next meeting will be in the Fellowship Room on March 5 at 6:30. All are welcome to attend. Additional information regarding this ministry is available by contacting Mike Saxton at 419-393-2513 or Pastor Mews at 419-782-5766.

Ladies Aid – March 2024



Hopefully God is navigating your new beginning for this year. Our verse for this month is from Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God". Ladies Aid served the Lenten Meal for Ash Wednesday on February 14th. 67 people were served and the proceeds from donations help support our seminarian, Joshua Gerken. Our next meeting is on March 21st with Roberta Phlipot as chair hostess. Hand soap, dish soap, and laundry soap are the suggested

items for the Food Pantry. We hope to see everyone at the meeting.



St. John Lutheran School News Grades 7 & 8

www.stjohndefiance.com

The 7th and 8th Grade Class has been having a wonderful year growing not only in their academic studies, but also in their faith. They have embraced having a personal relationship with their Savior and growing in that faith. They have committed to spending personal time with Jesus each day through devotions and prayers. The entire class uses Our Daily Bread during their quiet time and they help to keep each other accountable to this commitment. During Advent they created a Jesse Tree with hand-made ornaments. The name is taken from Isaiah 11:1 where Jesus is referred to as a shoot coming up from the stump of Jesse. Each ornament they created was a depiction of either Jesus' ancestors or a key event leading up to Jesus' birth. By the end of Advent, they had a beautiful representation of the lineage of Jesus and what had to occur leading up to Jesus' birth.

They recently lead the school's chapel in February. Their theme was Love and was based on Ephesians 3:18-19a which says, "May you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully". They are fortunate to be learning at our school, where they are taught with a Biblical perspective and foundation. It is through the Biblical lens that everything is taught and seen through. They are learning about what the Bible says on various topics, how to defend their faith, how to share their faith, and be a light for Jesus in our community. Each of them are so grateful to be able to attend our wonderful school and feel very prepared to meet the challenges of High School next year.

Lutheran Schools

2,594 total Lutheran schools share the life-changing message of Jesus' love with more than 180,000 students, their families and the community! St. John Lutheran Church & School is a part of this great ministry of the LCMS.

We celebrated National Lutheran Schools Week January 21-26. Blessings, Mr. John March, Principal















www.stjohndefiance.com www.facebook.com/stjohnlutherandefiance



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TACO NIGHT WITH ALL THE FIXIN'S



St. John Lutheran Christian Day School 655 Wayne Ave., Defiance, OH 43512 419.782.1751 • secretary.sjl@stjohntigers.com John March, principal.sjl@stjohntigers.com www.stjohntigers.com

Connected - John 15:1-5





Have you purchased your tickets to the school's annual fundraiser?

GET YOUR TICKET TODAY!

1. A table will be set-up in the lower hallway the weekend of March 4 & 5. Please bring exact amount for the tickets. The price is \$65 per person or reserve a table for 8 for \$500.

2. Scan the QR code to pay for tickets with credit card. The school will contact you to give you your tickets.

3. Contact the school office at 419.782.1751 or email, secretary.sjl@stjohntigers.com



St. John Lutheran School



Scan for tickets and sponsorship opportunities

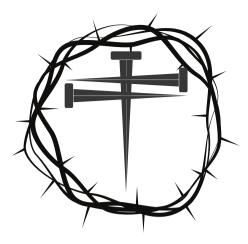
FOOD, FUN WITH FRIENDS!

Featuring Comedian and Trivia Host Dan Deibert!

Additional Fun Games Planned!

Win a "Fantabulous"purse "Bad to the Bone" Koozie Game "Totally Rad" Raffle Chance to win a "Gnarly" Gift Basket "Like" you are going to play Heads & Tails! "Epic" Mystery Envelopes "Wannabe" guess how many candies in the jar

Bring cash to play all the games!!



March

2024

March 29 Good Friday

Lenten Meals are on Wednesdays (from 5-7 pm in the cafeteria)

| | | | | March 31 Easter | r | | 419 BLAST Event | March 13 6:30 pm |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| MONDA | Y | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | 1 FRIDA | Y | 2 SATURDAY | 3 SUNDAY |
| | | | | | Clothes Closet | 10:00 am | Worship Service w/ Communion @ 5:30 pm | Worship Service with Communion 8:00 / 9:30 / & 11:00 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Studies @ 9:30am |
| 4 | | 5 | 6 Lenten Services 1:00 & 7:30 pm | 7 | 8 | | 9 | 10 |
| Finance Worship Leaders Boy Scouts Life with God Tele Care Calling | 5:30 am 11:00 am 6:30 pm 6:30 pm 6:30 pm | Food Pantry9:30 amTuesday Bible St.10:00 amTuesday Book Club2:00 pmSpace Asst.6:30 pmOutreach Ministry6:30 pmDartball Gym6:30 pm | Reason God Bible Study 2pm Lenten Meal 5-7 pm Senior Choir 6:30 pm Cross Training 6:30 pm Adult Bible Study 6:30 pm | Food Pantry 9:3 Isaiah Bible St. 10:0 | 00 am Clothes Closet 30 am Salary Study N 00 am 00 pm | | Worship Service @ 5:30 pm | Worship Service 8:00 / 9:30 / & 11:00 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Studies @ 9:30am |
| 11 | | 12 | 13 Lenten Services | 14 | 15 | | 16 | 17 |
| Moms In Touch Finance L. Aid Noodle setu Boy Scouts Life with God | 9:00 am 9:30 am p Noon 6:30 pm 6:30 pm | Ladies Aid Noodles8:00 amFood Pantry9:30 amTuesday Bible St.10:00 amKnit & Study1:00 pmYouth Board Mt6:30 pm419 Ministry Mtg.7:00 pm | Ladies Aid Noodles 8:00 am Reason God Bible Study 2pm Lenten Meal 5-7 pm Hand Bells 5:45 pm Cross Train/ BLAST 6:30 pm Adult Bible Study 6:30 pm Senior Choir 6:30 pm Lent Services 1:00 & 7:30pm | Food Pantry 9:3 Isaiah Bible St. 10:0 | 00 am Clothes Closet 30 am Salary Study N 00 am 30 pm | | Worship Service w/ Communion @ 5:30 pm Annual Fund Event /Trivia Night 6-9 pm | Worship Service with Communion 8:00 / 9:30 / & 11:00 am Sunday School & Adult Bible Studies @ 9:30am |
| 18 | | 19 | 20 Lenten Services | 21 | 22 | | 23 | 24 Worship Services |
| Finance Worship Leaders Boy Scouts Life with God | 5:30 am 11:00 am 6:30 pm 6:30 pm | Food Pantry9:30 amTuesday Bible St.10:00 amTuesday Book Club2:00pmTrutstees Meeting6:30 pm | Reason God Bible Study 2pm Lenten Meal 5-7 pm Hand Bells 5:45 pm Cross Tr./Adult B.S. 6:30 pm Senior Choir 6:30 pm Lent Services 1:00 & 7:30pm | Food Pantry 9:3 | 00 am Clothes Closet 30 am 00 am | 10:00 am | Worship Service @ 5:30 pm | 8:00 / 9:30 / & 11 Sunday School & Adult Bible Studies @ 9:30am Budget Meeting 3:30 pm |
| 25 No School | | 26 (Spring Break) | 27 (March 25-29 th) | 28 No School | 29 No Sch | lool | March 30 | March 31 |
| Moms In Touch Finance Boy Scouts Life with God | 9:00 am 9:30 am 6:30 pm 6:30 pm | Food Pantry9:30 amTuesday Bible St.10:00 amKnit & Study1:00 pmParish Planning7:00 pm | Reason God Bible Study 2pm Lenten Meal 5-7 pm Cross Tr./Adult B.S. 6:30 pm Senior Choir 6:30 pm | Food Pantry 9:3 Isaiah Bible St. 10:0 | 30 am Good Friday 00 am Service 00 pm Tenebrae Se | et 10:00 am Tenebrae 1:00 pm rvice 7:30 pm | Easter Vigil Service w/ Communion @ 5:30 pm | Easter Worship Services with Communion 8:00 / 9:30 / & 11:00 am SS/B. Study @ 9:30 |