



The Branchline

"I am the vine, you are the branches."

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*A note from
Pastor Chip...*

June/July
2020

**Wilbraham United
Church**
500 Main St.
Wilbraham, MA 01095
[www.WilbrahamUnited
Church.org](http://www.WilbrahamUnitedChurch.org)

Dear Church,

The last four months have been strange and unprecedented in my lifetime, in so many ways. Through the difficulty, disruption, and distress, however, we have remained a strong and faithful congregation. We have productively responded to a global pandemic: organizing ourselves to worship online; reaching out to the community through food drives; contributing masks and personal protective equipment to health workers and to all who have need. Wilbraham United Church has remained active, and answered our gospel call to love and serve God and God's people, offering extravagant welcome in new and innovative ways while remaining true to our faith and our traditions.

And now we are in the beginning phases of responding to an older epidemic in our nation: the systemic racism that has poisoned our political body for centuries, and persists in our laws, our values and our hearts. As faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ's gospel message of liberation and love, we are called as part of our discipleship to work for justice and practice peace. The Holy Spirit is present with us, and will abide with us, as we take new steps on this journey and discern – as individuals and as a faith community – how we can best use our gifts and talents, our time and privilege to meet this current moment.

Our response to the coronavirus has proven to me – and I hope to all of you – that Wilbraham United Church can and will listen to the Holy Spirit, and allow her guidance to light our paths into whatever future we are called. As we embark on creating our future together, I have tremendous faith in our devotion and our discernment, our trust in God and one another, and our generosity of spiritual and material gifts. Though there will still be obstacles and discomfort, hurdles and disruption, we will walk into it boldly, filled with grace and confident in our hope.

Beginning on July 1, and for the next ten weeks, I will only be walking with you in spirit, encouraging you in every step you take. Alison is due to have our second child, our first daughter, in a few weeks. Wilbraham United Church has allowed me time over the summer to be with my family as we transition into our new future. I am appreciative of the support that we have received from all of you, and I am grateful that Reverend Paul will be your Acting Senior Pastor in my absence. I am certain that he will continue to bring all of his many gifts to his ministry and continue to make WUC a place known far and wide for its faithfulness, hospitality and vitality.

I will be back in September, ready – if not rested – and eager to walk with you again. It is my earnest hope and fervent prayer that this summer will be a time of renewal and transformation for all of us, that we will take the lessons that we have learned and apply them to whatever comes our way, that we will continue to become a stronger community, ever-rooted in our faith in Jesus Christ and ever-mindful of the costs and joys of following him and building his beloved community in this world.

Blessings to you all, from the bottom of my heart, where you are ever-present with me.

May the love of God surround you,

Pastor Chip

A Note from Rev. Paul

Do not be daunted
by the enormity
of the world's grief.

**DO JUSTLY NOW.
LOVE MERCY NOW.
WALK HUMBLY NOW.**

You are not obligated
to complete the work,
but neither are you
free to abandon it.

As we get ready to enjoy a summer break from school and other activities, we are still confronted with the Pandemic and the issue of Racial Injustice. Some of us may have thought that this would simply go away and we'd be able to move on with our lives. However, both of these issues will be with us and our lives will be cluttered with uncertainty all around us.

We may not know what we are called to do in these summer months. I ask you to keep your ears, hearts and minds open. While you enjoy the beautiful weather and some sort of a break, be attuned to what God may be asking of you. In the midst of the clutter of uncertainty, we may be uncomfortable with what we hear that is asked of us. Do take comfort that you are loved by God and by your church community.

It is my privilege to serve you as Acting Pastor this summer while Chip is on paternity leave. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or gnawing feelings this summer. While we listen to what God is saying to us, know that you are not alone. We are here with you to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly.

Peace and love,

Rev. Paul

May Pledge Income Report



Annual Pledge Income Budget: \$225,000
Pledge receipts through May: \$126,973
We thank you for your gifts.

Pledge income through May is buoyed by \$71,367 of full-year pledge donations. These early payments delay our taking of budgeted income from invested funds. When we amortize the full-year gifts to evaluate giving, we find that pledge income is about \$9400 less than the budgeted amount.

We are now 22 weeks into the budget year and an additional concern is that we have budgeted expenditures that exceed our budgeted income by \$14,763. There is no sign that we are making any progress on this deficit. We realize that these are difficult times for many, but must ask, “What can you do to help solve the budget deficit?”

We are about to enter the season when church activity (and giving) slows. Additionally, Shopping card sales have slowed, the Thrift Shop is closed, Room Rentals have stopped and outlook for the Holly Fair is uncertain, all of which affect our income. Celebration Sunday, a celebration of the church program year, is in June and we still have much to celebrate. Will you consider a celebratory gift to WUC?

Again, thank you for your gifts.

Your Finance Commission



An Interview with WUC's Wilbur the Chicken



We are here today with Wilber the Chicken who has graciously agreed to an interview with the BranchLine:

BL - So Wilber, it's great to have you here.

WC - It's great to be here. I miss my Junior Choir kids so much, this is a good way to say "hello" and to let them know that I'm thinking about them. This is the time of year when we'd be having our Big Giant Scavenger Hunt and getting ready to sing for Celebration Sunday. I have enjoyed our Tuesday Nights though.

BL- What happens then?

WC - "Wilber's Bedtime Bible Stories" featuring Wilber the Rubber Chicken (that's me) with my assistant Rev. Paul. But now that school is out, we have stopped.

BL - So, we won't be seeing you anymore?

WC- I'm going to tell you a little secret..... come closer..... if you watch the Church Service on Facebook, and if you look very carefully..... you just might see me. This is just between us so don't tell anyone else.

BL - What are your plans for the Summer months?

WC - I'm going to travel. I might even go to Springfield. I like to lay in the sun and work on my tan. Well I really don't tan so much, I get kinda soft and squishy .

BL - So it's all rest and relaxation for you?

WC - Oh NO! I'm very busy with my latest book, "Chicken Soup for the Quarantined." I have a whole series of these books, perhaps you've heard of them.

BL - That's YOU ? I had no idea. You're quite accomplished then.

WC - You write what you know. But my ascent to stardom and celebrity hasn't always been easy. There are always difficulties. But you bounce back from those and you stretch yourself to do new things. That's not hard to do when you're made out of rubber.

Behind the Scenes at WUC



June/July 2020

VISIT US ONLINE wilbrahamunitedchurch.org

Outreach



Are you looking for another way to serve your church, God, and community?

Consider supporting Loaves and Fishes!

Every third Thursday of the month at 11 am volunteers from this worthwhile ministry gather to deliver dinners and desserts to the South Congregational Church in Springfield. Stuart Johnsen makes casseroles while additional volunteers make cakes and transport the food. In usual circumstances, the food is served by members of this mission to those in the community who are underserved and unhoused. Currently due to the Coronavirus pandemic, our volunteers are not serving the food.

Please contact Judy Hoffman if you are interested in baking or Nancy Peck to assist with transporting food.



Judy - Email: imjrhoffman@hotmail.com, Phone: 413-596-8353
Nancy - Phone: 413-596-6952

**In March WUC donated from the Outreach Endowment:
\$1000 to Church World Service for tornado relief in Tenn.**

\$1000 to the Survival Center in Indian Orchard.

\$1000 to Western Mass. Food Bank.

In March only \$120 was donated by WUC

for One Great Hour of Sharing.

Thank You

Stay well. Thanks, Ruth Karlson



for your Kindness

Piecemakers



The Piecemakers, normally a quilt-making group, have morphed into a mask-making at-home group over the past several weeks because of needs arisen by the Covid19 pandemic. They are fortunate to have two additional women who have made and donated masks. They have created nearly 600 masks to date! Early on they gave masks to St. Francis Hospital, Mercy Hospital, Glenmeadow in Longmeadow, the Mental Health Association, Orchard Valley and Church Without Walls in downtown Springfield. More recently they have given masks to Life Care in Wilbraham, Armbrook Village assisted living in Westfield, Ludlow town nurses, Loaves and Fishes workers and clients in Springfield and have now expanded to members and friends of Wilbraham United Church.

Since nearly everyone in Massachusetts is supposed to be wearing a mask when out in public and not able maintain six feet of distance between people, members are continuing to work on this project. If church members or friends need masks or know of any organization that needs them, please notify:

Pastor Chip at pastor@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org or
Rev. Paul at chritianed@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org.

Thank you to all the women who have been contributing to this project. They are Evie A, Pam B, Candy D, Joyce E, Judy M, Marcia M, Nancy P, Judy P and Suzanne Z. We really appreciate all you have been doing!!!

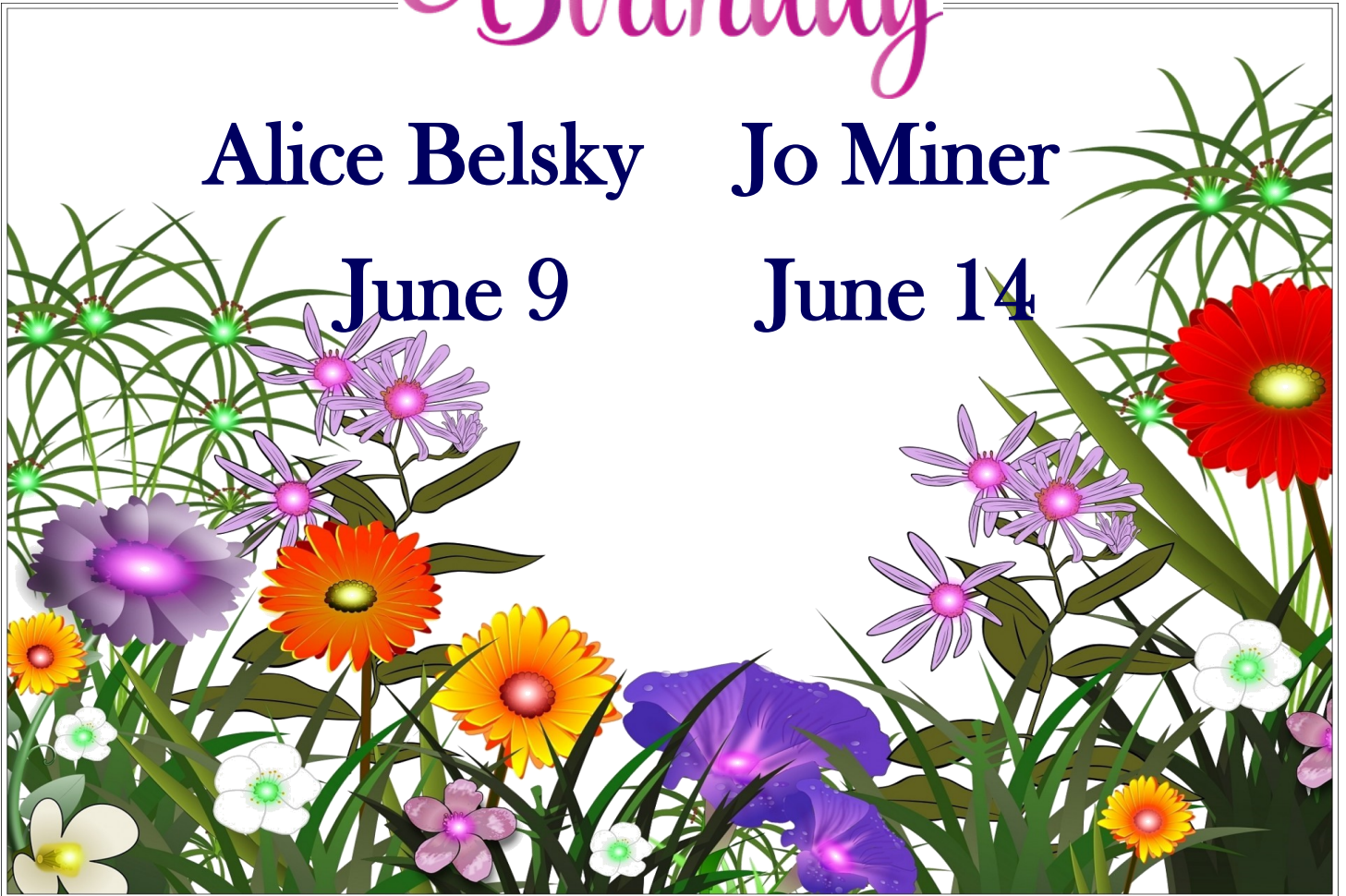
Thank you also to Pastor Chip and Rev. Paul for their support.

Happy Birthday

Alice Belsky Jo Miner

June 9

June 14



BE THE CHURCH  UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Stay Home. Social Distance. Wash Your Hands.
Check on the Elderly. Live Stream Worship.
Give electronically. Support each other.
Love God. Flatten the curve. Pray Daily.
So we can all enjoy this life.

Content Credit: Julia Roberts,
LCSW, Philadelphia, PA

How Can I Help?

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Tired of being locked in your home, maintaining Social Distancing a problem, want to do something for your church? Here are opportunities. You can work independently or with family members in the great outdoors by weeding a portion of the church gardens, trimming some shrubs, transporting yard waste to the recycle center (vehicle sticker required), renewing a few garden areas with new plantings, seal cracks in the front entrance sidewalk, wash windows, regrade spot areas in the lawn.



Really ambitious? The exterior wood panel under the Altar window needs scraping and painting. There are other exterior portions around the church building which could use painting. Interested in any of the above?

Contact Bill Sanderson at linwood36@yahoo.com for further details.



WUC Supporting our Community

WUC continues to support our local community during these difficult times. We have hosted 3 Drive thru Collections so far.

We have had many people donate non perishable food items which were donated to the Community Survival Center, toiletries which were donated locally and cards which will be sent to Baystate Medical Center.

Again, we thank all of you that have volunteered, organized, delivered and donated items.



WUC showing our support for the Minnechaug Graduates during the Senior Parade

VBC Updates

Dear Friends,

As we are well aware, the health crisis presented by COVID-19 has caused many life changes and cancellations. Unfortunately, Vacation Bible Camp this year is going to be one of them. Our VBC program had 154 participants and over 130 volunteers. This meant that at any given moment, we had 240-250 people on the grounds and in the building. We cannot guarantee physical or social distancing during this program.

It is very sad to have to cancel VBC 2020; we hope to see every once back for VBC 2021!! Please be assured of our prayers for your good health and safety.

Peace,
Paul

The Thrift Shop
At Wilbraham United Church

Our Thrift Shop continues to be closed and is not accepting donations until further notice.

We are always thinking of you and are so thankful for all of your support.

We look forward to when we can be together again.

Donna and Nancy



On Wed. June 3rd
WUC came
together in prayer
for racial justice and
peace.

 Our building may be closed
but our church is still active....
**Join us for Sunday Worship
streaming on Facebook Live
at 9:55 AM**

Connections Count!



How can I stay connected?

- **Watch our Sunday morning Worship service at 9:55 a.m. on Facebook Live**
- **Watch our Wednesday Evening prayer service at 7:15 p.m. on Facebook Live**
- **Read the monthly Branchline newsletter to share in all the great happenings at WUC**
- **Visit our website to stay up to date on events, bulletins and our monthly calendar**
- **As always, feel free to call us at 596-2511
Pastor Chip: Ext. 103 Rev. Paul: Ext. 105**

Governing Board Meeting on Zoom



Do you love reading the Branchline?



Would you, a family member or friend like to receive this newsletter by mail? If so, please contact admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org or call Aimee Walat at 413-596-2511 ext. 100.

We would be happy to send along a copy of the Branchline and share all the great happenings here at Wilbraham United Church!



Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Daily Lectionary Scripture References -June 2020 (Year A)

Mon. June 1 Psalm
104:24-34, 35b
Joel 2:18-29
Romans 8:18-24

Tues., June 2
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Ezekiel 39:7-8, 21-29
Romans 8:26-27

Wed., June 3 Psalm
104:24-34, 35b
Numbers 11:24-30
John 7:37-39

Thurs., June 4
Psalm 8
Job 38:1-11
2 Timothy 1:8-12a

Fri., June 5
Psalm 8
Job 38:12-21
2 Timothy 1:12b-14

Sat., June 6
Psalm 8
Job 38:22-38
John 14:15-17

Sun., June 7
Trinity Sunday
Genesis 1:1-2:4a
Psalm 8
2 Corinthians 13:11-13
Matthew 28:16-20

Mon., June 8
Psalm 29
Job 38:39-39:12
1 Corinthians 12:1-3

Tues., June 9
Psalm 29
Job 39:13-25
1 Corinthians 12:4-13

Wed., June 10
Psalm 29
Job 39:26-40:5
John 14:25-26

Thurs., June 11
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Genesis 21:1-7
Hebrews 3:1-6

Fri., June 12
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Genesis 24:1-9
Acts 7:35-43

Sat., June 13
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Genesis 24:10-52
Mark 7:1-13

Sun., June 14
Second Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 18:1-15 [21:1-7]
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
Romans 5:1-8
Matthew 9:35-10:8 [9-23]

Mon., June 15
Psalm 126
Genesis 23:1-19
1 Thessalonians 3:1-5

Tues., June 16
Psalm 126
Genesis 25:7-11
2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5

Wed., June 17
Psalm 126
Nehemiah 9:1-8
Luke 6:12-19

Thurs., June 18
Psalm 86:1-10
Exodus 12:43-49
Hebrews 2:5-9

Fri., June 19
Psalm 86:1-10
Genesis 35:1-4
Acts 5:17-26

Sat., June 20
Psalm 86:1-10
Ezekiel 29:3-7
Luke 11:53-12:3

Sun., June 21
Third Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 21:8-21
Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17
Romans 6:1b-11
Matthew 10:24-39

Mon., June 22
Psalm 86:11-17
Genesis 16:1-15
Revelation 2:1-7

Tues., June 23
Psalm 86:11-17
Genesis 25:12-18
Revelation 2:8-11

Wed., June 24
Psalm 86:11-17
Jeremiah 42:18-22
Matthew 10:5-23

Thurs., June 25
Psalm 13
Micah 7:18-20
Galatians 5:2-6

Fri., June 26
Psalm 13
2 Chronicles 20:5-12
Galatians 5:7-12

Sat., June 27
Psalm 13
Genesis 26:23-25
Luke 17:1-4

Sun., June 28
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 22:1-14
Psalm 13
Romans 6:12-23
Matthew 10:40-42

Mon., June 29
Psalm 47
Genesis 22:15-18
1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

Tues., June 30
Psalm 47
1 Kings 18:36-39
1 John 4:1-6



Southern New England Conference

United Church of Christ

Living the Love & Justice of Jesus

Daily Lectionary Scripture References -July 2020 (Year A)

Wed. July 1

Psalm 47
Isaiah 51:1-3
Matthew 11:20-24

Thurs., July 2

Psalm 45:10-17
Genesis 25:19-27
Romans 7:1-6

Fri., July 3

Psalm 45:10-17
Genesis 27:1-17
Romans 7:7-20

Sat., July 4

Psalm 45:10-17
Genesis 27:18-29
Luke 10:21-24

Sun., July 5

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67
Psalm 45:10-17 or Song of
Solomon 2:8-13
Romans 7:15-25a
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Mon., July 6

Song of Solomon 2:8-13
Genesis 27:30-46
Romans 1:18-25

Tues., July 7

Song of
Solomon 2:8-13
Genesis 29:1-14
Romans 3:1-8

Wed., July 8

Song of Solomon 2:8-13
Genesis 29:31-35
John 13:1-17

Thurs., July 9

Psalm 119:105-112
Exodus 3:1-6
Romans 2:12-16

Fri., July 10

Psalm 119:105-112
Deuteronomy 32:1-10
Romans 15:14-21

Sat., July 11

Psalm 119:105-112
Isaiah 2:1-4
John 12:44-50

Sun., July 12

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 25:19-34
Psalm 119:105-112
Romans 8:1-11
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Mon., July 13

Psalm 142
Micah 1:1-5
1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

Tues., July 14

Psalm 142
Jeremiah 49:7-11
Ephesians 4:17-5:2

Wed., July 15

Psalm 142
Obadiah 15-21
Matthew 13:10-17

Thurs., July 16

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24
Isaiah 44:1-5
Hebrews 2:1-9

Fri., July 17

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24
Ezekiel 39:21-29
Hebrews 6:13-20

Sat., July 18

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24
Exodus 14:9-25
Matthew 7:15-20

Sun., July 19

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 28:10-19a
Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24
Romans 8:12-25
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Mon., July 20

Psalm 139:13-18
Genesis 32:3-21
Revelation 14:12-20

Tues., July 21

Psalm 139:13-18
Genesis 33:1-17
Galatians 4:21-5:1

Wed., July 22

Psalm 139:13-18
Genesis 35:16-29
Matthew 12:15-21

Thurs., July 23

Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
Genesis 29:1-8
1 Corinthians 4:14-20

Fri., July 24

Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
Genesis 29:9-14
Acts 7:44-53

Sat., July 25

Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
Genesis 29:31-30:24
Matthew 12:38-42

Sun., July 26

Genesis 29:15-28
Psalm 105:1-11, 45b or Psalm 128
Romans 8:26-39
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Mon., July 27

Psalm 65:8-13
Genesis 30:25-36
James 3:13-18

Tues., July 28

Psalm 65:8-13
Genesis 30:37-43
Ephesians 6:10-18

Wed., July 29

Psalm 65:8-13
Genesis 46:2-47:12
Mark 4:30-34

Thurs., July 30

Psalm 17:1-7, 15
Isaiah 14:1-2
Philippians 4:10-15

Fri., July 31

Psalm 17:1-7, 15
Isaiah 41:8-10
Romans 9:6-13

June 2020

Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
31		1		2		3		4		5		6	
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live				7:15 pm – Bedtime Bible Stories – FB Live		7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live		7 pm – Bible Study - Zoom		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	
7		8		9		10		11		12		13	
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live	7 pm – Phys Ops			7:15 pm – Bedtime Bible Stories – FB Live		7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live		7 pm – Gov Board - Zoom		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	
14		15		16		17		18		19		20	
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live	7 pm – Finance Commission					7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live		11 am – Loaves and Fishes		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	
								7 pm – Bible Study – Zoom					
21		22				24		25		26		27	
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live						7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live		7 pm – Bible Study – Zoom		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	
1 pm – Church Without Walls													
28		29				1		2		3		4	
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live						7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live				9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	

July 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live			7 pm – Technology Committee 7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live			7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live	7 pm – Gov Board - Zoom	9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live			7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live	11 am – Loaves and Fishes	9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live 1 pm – Church Without Walls	7 pm – Finance Commission		7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
9:55 am - Worship – FB Live			7:15 pm – Evening Prayer Service – FB Live		9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed	9:30 am - Thrift Shop – Closed

A vibrant illustration of a landscape. In the background, a bright rainbow arches across a clear blue sky. Several colorful butterflies (yellow, orange, and blue) are flying around. The foreground features a lush green hillside with a variety of wildflowers in shades of white, blue, and yellow. A single green tree stands on the right side of the hill. The entire scene is framed by a white, wavy border that curves across the bottom of the image.

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