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A note from Pastor Chip



Wilbraham United Church 500 Main St. Wilbraham, MA 01095

Dear Church Family

I'm back! After ten weeks of family leave to welcome and adapt to the arrival of our daughter, Maeve Catherine, I'm back! I want to thank so many of you for the beautiful cards and thoughtful gifts, each of which reminded me of the bonds of faith and community which keep us close even when we are apart. I also want to thank Rev. Paul for stepping in and stepping up as Acting Senior Pastor during these difficult and uncertain times. There was never a doubt that he would be a tremendous leader, shepherd and steward of this congregation that he loves so much.

These ten weeks are the longest I've been away from the pulpit, and from church life, in a decade, and it was a very strange feeling. I came to realize that I often process how I'm feeling about and responding to events in my life, in our community, and in the world by asking myself how I would preach on them, or how I would respond to a parishioner's need in that moment. Engaging with the week's scriptures, attending to the call of the Holy Spirit, and responding to the church community has become part of the rhythm of my life.

As much as my family and I needed that time (and for which all four of us are grateful), it's great to get back in to that rhythm, see where we all are, and imagine where God is calling us to go together. I hope that I will get the chance to see many of you – maybe even all of you! – in the coming weeks. Starting September 23rd, I will be holding outdoor office hours at the church during the lunch hour on Wednesdays and Thursdays until it becomes too cold to bear. I hope you'll consider bringing a bag lunch and sitting with me. If you'd like me to make a visit to you, I have a wonder ful camping chair that I can bring to your driveway or yard. Lastly, if you think there's someone who could use a visit or a phone call, please email me or call the church.

Though it may not look like previous years, we are headed into our 2020-21 program year. And there is still much of God's work to be done here at Wilbraham United Church. I may not be rested, but I am ready, and I am eager, and I am inspired. It is a joy and a blessing to be back.

Blessings,

Chip

Anote from Rev. Paul

First of all, let me say that it has been a pleasure serving as your Acting Pastor for the past ten weeks. I am grateful to those who reached out to let me know who may need assistance. Your generosity with our food drives and school supplies drive have been mind blowing.

Those who have spent any time with me at Wilbraham United Church have come to know that I am all about the practice of Extravagant Welcome. I call it a practice because we all have to work to improve on it until we do it correctly. Sometimes, though we let our prejudices and our comfort with "we like it like it is" get in the way.

The temptation for us is to expect others to come and join us - but join us on our terms, not theirs... We want new people in church, we want people to become Christians and we will offer the hand of friendship and welcome to them. But ultimately, we want them to join us and become one of us and to play by our rules. Isn't that the story of the Christian church throughout history? You are welcome to join: but here are the rules of belief, and the rules of behavior.

The church throughout history has, in some places, become like a club with membership rules and some churches operate like a clique where people are expected to conform in order to belong. But that is the exact opposite of what Jesus is doing in this story.

In Matthew 15: 21-28, Jesus reaches out and meets a Canaanite woman in her culture. He doesn't ask her to "join the club." He doesn't set any requirements for the welcome. He just accepts her as she is, shows compassion and grace, and allows her to continue in her own cultural way of being.

But more than that, it appears that Jesus and the disciples are open to learning from this woman from another culture. They don't just tolerate the difference. They actively engage with it, are prepared to be challenged by it, and to allow themselves to grow through this cross-cultural interaction.

In the next year or so, we are going to have some crucial conversations about what it means to offer true Extravagant Welcome at Wilbraham United Church. This is going to take many of us out of our own comfort zones in order to follow Jesus so that we can actively engage, participate, be challenged and to grow. The Open and Affirming Process allows us to grow. It also allows us to designate ourselves that LGBTQA persons are welcome here at WUC. WE know that already, but we need to let THEM and OTHERS know it!! It is not an overnight process; quite frankly, we've only begun to lay the foundations for it—if you've paid attention this summer, we've been asking you to stretch.

How much are you willing to stretch and learn to be a church that boldly proclaims that all are welcome? Will this make us uncomfortable and then allow us to move forward to do our part to truly establish the Reign of God on earth here at Wilbraham United Church? I cannot answer that for you; please take some time this month to see how it feels in your soul.

Peace and Love,

Paul

Musical Notes from Mark...

How Great Thou Art

When I first started out as a church organist, I was at Liberty United Methodist Church in Springfield. We would have "Hymn Sings" every once in a while, and people were encouraged to shout out their favorite hymn. The first hymn requested, always without fail was "How Great Thou Art." The requests were sometimes simultaneously voiced by multiple people and always with great enthusiasm.

Interestingly enough, the inclusion of this hymn in the 1966 and 1989 The United Methodist Hymnal was hotly contested. Some musicians and pastors at that time were dismayed that use of this hymn was giving respectability to the theme song of the Billy Graham Crusades. Others felt that inclusion would mean that other hymns of that genre would NOT be included. Others thought it would cheapen the Hymnal. Erik Routley, prolific composer of sacred music; said, "The resemblance between this tune and that of the theme song of Hitler's Nazi youth movement is anything from curious to sinister."

The hymn tune was composed by Carl Boberg in 1885 and is based on a Swedish folk tune. The text was translated into German (1907), Russian (1927) and English in 1925 (but only for four of the nine verses) It didn't get any traction with the American church going public and remained unpopular. The Billy Graham Crusades of the 1950s propelled it into the American liturgical lexicon. By one account, the hymn was sung ninety-three times in the New York meetings of 1957 and became the keynote of praise each evening.

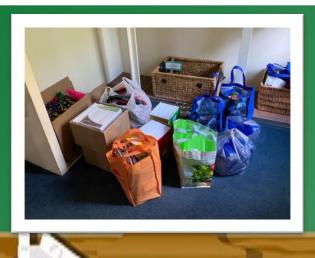
We'll be singing it on September 13.

Mark Jacobson

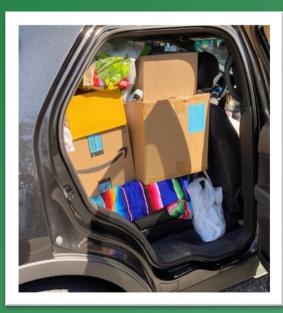
WUC Back to School Drive



The supplies were directly donated to two Springfield Public Schools in the South End.











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.

If you are interested in baking casseroles or in a larger role in Loaves and Fishes, please contact Stuart Johnsen. Please contact Judy Hoffman if you are interested in baking or Nancy Peck to assist with transporting food.



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



Lawn Report

As we all know, this has been a hard season for lawn survival. Our church lawn did suffer burnout, but is showing signs of regeneration. Fertilizer with pre-emergence crabgrass preventer was applied in the spring with good results except around the edges. Most early and mid-season weeds were under control; however, late season ones are a problem.

All shrubs surrounding the church were trimmed twice this season with touch up to be done in the fall. Flowering bulbs which came up in the lawn this spring have been removed. I can report that most of the violets growing in our lawn have also been removed. It was a long hard battle.

Physical Operations had several infected Ash trees removed from the property. The remaining Ash tree is showing some stress. Two tall pines surrounding our parking lot were blown down during the second high wind storm.

Patty and John Colkos weeded all of the plantings in front of the church as well the Memorial Garden. Andrea Stephenson did her annual planting of summertime flowers in front of the brick sign.

What is needed around the exterior of our church?

- 1. No additional plantings-too many now
- 2. Some loam to fill several holes/depressions in our lawn
- 3. Additional helpers next summer
- 4. Donations to help purchase fertilizer/crabgrass preventer and weed control for use next spring (we get a better price now than in the spring). Please consider making a donation (soon, I hope!) to the church, indicating "lawn fund" on the memo line. This fund is totally off budget.

Thank all of you for past comments about the condition of the lawn. Bill Sanderson







Drumming up a joyful noise









WUC Drumming on the Lawn

Join us on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. (weather permitting).

Or park in your car and enjoy the joyful noise!







Thank you to all the supporters of our Loaves and Fishes program. Since Covid 19 the meals are given to clients in to-go packages at South Church in Springfield. A special thank-you to Stuart Johnsen who makes the six large casseroles each month. Thank you also to our faithful cookie and cake bakers, our car loaders, our driver Larry Harris and our coordinators. We could not continue this service without you!

Nancy Peck

Gratitude is the open door to abundance



Thank you to Nancy Peck for her leadership with Piecemakers to make hundreds of masks for our extended community.

Thank you to Johnsen's.
They contribute so much every month cooking for Loaves and Fishes!
They are remembered for all they do!!
Candy Dearborn

Thank you to all of our church friends for the beautiful cards and sweet notes on the passing of my Mom on June 10th. She enjoyed her time at church (particularly the Christmas Pageant!) and all of you.

With our love Poppy and Terry Nelson







This summer, surprisingly enough, has actually been one of the best ones I can remember. I have so much in my life for which to be incredibly grateful, and so I have made a list:

- A husband who is always coming up with big crazy ideas to have fun (like buying a boat and trying to teach me to play golf)
- Two healthy and happy dogs who fill my heart with joy
- A job that I love
- A house that I love
- A recent appreciation for Wilbraham and the surrounding western Massachusetts area; I had a hard time adjusting when we moved 6 years ago but I can now say I would be happy to stay here forever
- Ice cream
- MOST IMPORTANTLY: Pastor Chip, Reverend Paul, Mark Jacobson, Deb Trimble, Aimee Walat, and anyone I have missed that has had a KEY ROLE in keeping the church spirit alive these past few months -

thank you all so much for your dedication and positivity!! Kelcie Walters

What are you thankful for?

Please continue to add your thank you's and we will be working on a Gratitude project near Thanksgiving.



Kathie Birkhaeuser Sept. 9
Penny Harlow Sept. 12
Bob Law Sept. 19
Bill McCollough Sept. 19

BETHE 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. Content Credit: Julia Roberts, So we can all enjoy this life.

Our church may be "closed" but our hearts are open. Many thanks to all of those who continue to reach out and serve others in faith and community.









Socially distanced office hours at Rice's Farm - another way WUC is connecting in faith
And the ice cream is just a bonus!



ACTS Mum Sale

This sale benefits ACTS -Action Centered Tutoring Services which provides free tutoring and mentoring to the children of Springfield. Please use and print the attached form to place your order and mail it to the church along with your payment with Attn: Mum Sale on your envelope.

Orders should be received by Sept. 14th. The mums will be available for pick-up on Saturday, September 19 after 10:00 am in the United Church Parking Lot. Any mums not picked up that day will be left on the steps outside the door to the Narthex.



(Action Centered Tutoring Services)

to benefit ACTS

Annual Mum Sale

Providingfreetutoringandmentoring to the children of Springfield!

and have orders ready for pick-up at Churchby Sept. 14 Please make checks payable to "ACTS"

14" Pot	\$20 each	
12"Pot	\$10 each or 2/\$18 \$15 each or 2/\$25	
10" Pot		
pod8	\$4 each or 3.\$10	

Please Colons: tricolor (only 10" pot), pumple, yellow, bronze and red. note first and second choices

Name:		Phone/e-mail:

Second Color Choice				
Pot How Size Many First Color Choice				
Pot How Size Many				
Pot Size	8	10,,	132	1422

Thankyo u for yo ur order!



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:

Rev. Paul at christianed@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org.

Thank you to all the women who have been contributing to this project. They are 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.

Spotlight on WUC member

Interview by: Aimee Walat

Judy Hoffman

This is a new feature in this month's Branchline! Although we can't be together, we are still connected in our faith. Each month we hope to have a new member spotlighted and learn more about our Church family. This month, I had the honor of interviewing Judy Hoffman. Judy is a longtime member of WUC and graciously accepted my invitation to be our first spotlight.

Judy & her husband Rich are Ohioans who married & spent 5 years in New Jersey before moving to Wilbraham in 1972. They have 2 children, Richard and Kathy, and three young grandchildren in Ohio and Connecticut. Their families were involved in churches and they continue to be actively involved here in Wilbraham. Judy was an elementary school teacher for a few years, then became an active volunteer in community and church activities.

How did you come to join WUC: Rich & I joined in May 1974. My first contact with the church was through Women's Evening Fellowship. We were fairly new to Wilbraham when a new friend invited me to a WEF meeting. It was a great way to meet people and it drew us to the worship service

What do you enjoy doing in your free time: Getting together with family and friends, reading, sending cards and notes to family and friends.

What is your favorite place in the Church: The Sanctuary

What is your favorite hymn: "How Great Thou Art" (a rousing song of acclamation!) and "Spirit of the Living God, Fall Afresh on Me" (really a prayer)

What is your favorite Bible passage: Romans 8:38-39 (Nothing can separate us from the love of God!)

What are your favorite Church memories: small group gatherings (Prayer Study, Bible studies, Women's Evening Fellowship, Yoga)

I so enjoyed speaking with Judy and learning more about her and I thank her for sharing with me and the Branchline readers.



From the kitchen of Donna Carlson

Apple Crisp

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 C of peeled sliced cored apples
- 1 C sifted flour
- · 1 C sugar
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 C softened butter

Preheat oven to 375

Lightly grease 8" baking pan



Directions

- Arrange apple slices in baking dish
- · Sift flour, sugar, cinnamon in a bowl
- Cut in butter using pastry blender (or use two knives) until mixture resembles coarse oatmeal
- Sprinkle over apples
- Bakes until topping is golden 40-45 min.

Enjoy!

From the Kitchen of Delaney Walat

Apple Swirl Bundt Cake

Cake

- 1 1/2 C white sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 C sour cream
- 3/4 c. softened butter
- 21/2 CAP flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2-3 apples

Filling

- 1/4 C white or brown sugar
- 1 tbsp. ground cinnamon

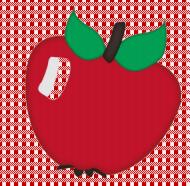
Preheat oven to 400 Lightly grease a 10" Bundt pan

Directions

- Cream sugar and eggs thoroughly.
- Add sour cream, butter, and vanilla.
- Mix in dry ingredients.
- Dice apples and gently fold.
- In a separate container, mix sugar and cinnamon.
- Pour half of the batter into the pan.
 Evenly distribute the cinnamon sugar mixture and cover with the remaining batter.
- Bake at 400 for 8 mins, reduce to 350 and bake for 40 minutes or until done.

Enjoy!





Thanksgiving Video Project

We are going to assemble another all congregation video (similar to the Peace Project video) for Thanksgiving Sunday. Send in a video of yourselves expressing thanks or what you're thankful for, or a picture of yourselves that is appropriately autumnal, or harvest based (picture with a pumpkin, or out in a pile of leaves). We'll weave those together to be shared with all during our Thanksgiving Sunday service.

Videos or pictures will need to be submitted by

November 6th
to be included in the video.

The length of your submission should be under 30 seconds.

(That's a lot of time!)

Some hints for a good quality shoot:

- Film in a location where there is a lot of light on your face(s). Outside is a great place to film on a partially sunny day. The lighting source should be in front of you and behind the camera (the other way around makes for a dark shoot!)
- Film somewhere where it is relatively quiet. Traffic noise makes it hard to bring out a good sound quality on video. Likewise stay away from a windy day!
- Remember who your audience is! Think about what joy you are giving others in our church family by giving them the opportunity to see your faces and hear your voices. We're all missing each other and this is one way we can (sort of) be together. Therefore, don't think of this as a chore. Think of it as that greeting to your neighbor on a Sunday morning before or after church!

hankful

Thanksgiving Video Project

It's a good idea to do a test shot first and then watch it to make sure you've got a good focus and enough sound in your video.

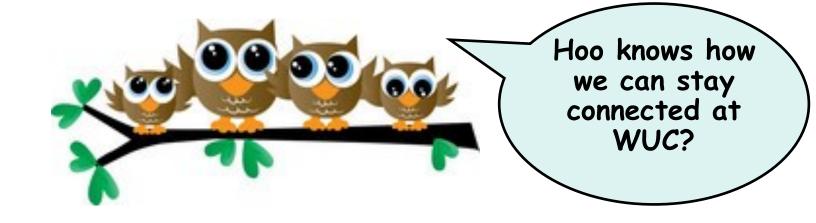
Videos or pictures should be sent to: Deb at thedebtrimble@gmail.com with the subject line Thanksgiving video.

Please make sure your name(s) are included in the body of your email so we know who to include in the credits.

We will also have a filming opportunity available sometime soon at the church for those who are not comfortable doing filming on their own (probably during the next drive thru). Otherwise, if you aren't leaving your home and would like someone to come film you there, we can do that as well.

Reach out to the church office, or our pastors to arrange an appointment!





- 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
- Socially distanced hours with Pastor Chip and Rev. Paul. See emails for details
- . Participate in our monthly supply drives
- Socially distanced drumming circle on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. on the church lawn
- Read the monthly Branchline newsletter to share in all the great happenings at WUC
- Visit our website to stay up to date on events, hours, bulletins and our monthly calendar
- As always, feel free to call us at 596-2511
 Pastor Chip Ext. 103 Rev. Paul: Ext. 105



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



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!



Drumming is the best... I always bring my own drumsticks!



Coming up in October's Branchline...

- New WUC member Spotlight (could be you!)
- . Pictures of our amazing congregation
- Riveting news articles
- . Adorable clip art
- . And more Wilber sightings!

Daily Lectionary Scripture References -Sept. 2020 (Year A)

Tues. Sept. 1

Psalm 83:1-4, 13-18 Exodus 5:1-6:13 Revelation 3:7-13

Wed., Sept. 2

Psalm 83:1-4, 13-18 Exodus 7:14-25 Matthew 12:22-32

Thurs., Sept. 3

Psalm 149 Exodus 9:1-7 2 Corinthians 12:11-21

Fri., Sept. 4

Psalm 149 Exodus 10:21-29 Romans 10:15b-21

Sat., Sept. 5

Psalm 149 Exodus 11:1-10 Matthew 23:29-36

Sun., Sept. 6

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost Exodus 12:1-14 Psalm 149 Romans 13:8-14 Matthew 18:15-20

Mon., Sept. 7

Psalm 121 Exodus 12:14-28 1 Peter 2:11-17

Tues., Sept. 8

Psalm 121 Exodus 12:29-42 Romans 13:1-7

Wed., Sept. 9

Psalm 121 Exodus 13:1-10 Matthew 21:18-22

Thurs., Sept. 10

Psalm 114 Exodus 13:17-22 1 John 3:11-16

Fri., Sept. 11

Psalm 114 Exodus 14:1-18 Acts 7:9-16

Sat., Sept. 12

Psalm 114 Exodus 15:19-21 Matthew 6:7-15

Sun., Sept. 13

Exodus 14:19-31 Psalm 114 *or* Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21 Romans 14:1-12 Matthew 18:21-35

Mon., Sept. 14

Psalm 77 Joshua 3:1-17 Hebrews 11:23-29

Tues., Sept. 15

Psalm 77 Nehemiah 9:9-15 Romans 14:13-15:2

Wed., Sept. 16

Psalm 77 2 Kings 2:1-18 Mark 11:20-25

Thurs., Sept. 17

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45 Exodus 15:22-27 2 Corinthians 13:1-4

Fri., Sept. 18

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45 Exodus 16:1-21 2 Corinthians 13:5-10

Sat., Sept. 19

Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45 Exodus 16:22-30 Matthew 19:23-30

Sun., Sept. 20

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost Exodus 16:2-15 Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45 Philippians 1:21-30 Matthew 20:1-16

Mon., Sept. 21

Psalm 119:97-104 Exodus 16:31-35 Romans 16:1-16

Tues., Sept. 22

Psalm 119:97-104 Numbers 11:1-9 Romans 16:17-20

Wed., Sept. 23

Psalm 119:97-104 Numbers 11:18-23, 31-32 Matthew 18:1-5

Thurs., Sept. 24

Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 Isaiah 48:17-21 James 4:11-16

Fri., Sept. 25

Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 Numbers 20:1-13 Acts 13:32-41

Sat., Sept. 26

Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 Numbers 27:12-14 Mark 11:27-33

Sun., Sept. 27

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost Exodus 17:1-7 Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 Philippians 2:1-13 Matthew 21:23-32

Mon., Sept. 28

Psalm 42 Exodus 18:1-12 Philippians 1:3-14

Tues., Sept. 29

Psalm 42 Exodus 18:13-27 Philippians 1:15-21

Wed., Sept. 30

Psalm 42 Exodus 19:9b-25 Matthew 9:2-8

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September 2020

Wilbraham United Church

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



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