



Reflections from Pastor Anna

“I know the plans I have for you. (Jeremiah 29:11)”

It is a new year! What comes to mind when I walk into every January, even though every January comes in different shapes and emotions, is **freshness**. That's it.

That is what the new year is offering us: a brand new beginning.

I am certain, though, not always we enter into a new year with this sense of fresh-ness. I think I know why. Looking to the past, most of us have a tendency to linger way too long on all those areas of our lives where we feel we have failed or not given our best. We feel guilty, discouraged, and so don't feel much different even when a new year comes, even though we have yet to trod on this brand new year.

Archbishop Oscar Romeo of El Salvador, wrote shortly before his assassination in 1980, this insight on which is quite appropriate for us to ponder as we close one chapter down and open a new one:

"It helps now and then, to step back and take the long view. The kingdom [of God] is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our life time only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

"We plant the seeds that one day will grow...We lay foundations that will need further development.

"We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning . . . an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

"We may never see the end results," Romero concluded, "but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own. Amen." (re-quoted from *Daily Devotionals*)

The year 2015 will be a good year for us dreaming God's big dream for our own life and our life together as well. Come and worship every Sunday this month and the next. You are invited and challenged to think of your purpose of life, your God-given dream for your life through the sermon. You will have a chance to write down your own mission statement for your life.

It is and will be a great time to be at Friendship.

In great joy, Pastor Anna

P.S.: My family and I were deeply moved and thrilled with your incredible amount of love and generous gift that was delivered to me on Christmas Eve! I don't know how you it did so discreetly and so swiftly, but it brought me tears, tears of gratitude and thanksgiving for God's surprising grace. I have no words enough to express my gratefulness to my God, Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer of our life, when I receive such a gift from the congregation, except singing God's awesomeness as many songs from the Psalms did: God's steadfastness and faithfulness endures forever and ever. I hope the year 2014 was a wonderful year; a leap of faith as we united our hearts and minds and spirits to celebrate the 40th anniversary. I trust the year 2015 will be a wonderful time to be at Friendship as we seek to grow mature in the knowledge of God's love and to be ministers of God's amazing work.



New Sermon Series: Sundays, January 4-February 8, 2015



New Year's resolutions come and go but a God-Sized Mission Statement is a challenge for each of us to have...no matter what our age!

Are your goals too small? Are you living the “just get by” plan? Or is there a greater “God dream” for you that, if lived to the fullest, could permeate and inform every move you make?

Dare to Dream is a startling and inspiring new program by popular author and pastor Mike Slaughter that draws on the Bible and a lifetime of ministry to help us discern God’s dream for us and learn to live it out, prayerfully and enthusiastically. Participants will learn how to develop a life mission statement that helps them fully commit to a God-directed lifestyle.

As a new year comes, we again have an opportunity to check where we are in our journey. You will be invited and challenged through this sermon series, to spend some time to create your own life mission statement. A weekly guideline will be provided in each week’s bulletin. God created in each of us a unique God-dream. If the purpose is from God, it will always honor God, bless other people, and bring you joy.

January 4 – Dreaming the Dream
January 11 – Discovering Your Birthright
January 18 – Your Burning Bush
January 25 -- Lose Your Buts
February 1 – What Is in Your Hand?
February 8 -- Perseverance

Thank you!

Giving Trees

Response to the Giving Trees was overwhelming! Thank you to Julie Verson and Jane Pierce for coordinating these special projects.



Thanks as well to all who contributed in making this a wonderful Christmas for many local families. Your generosity is much appreciated.



From West Suburban Community Pantry:

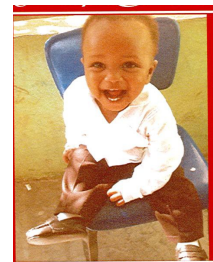


Michael E. McDonnell writes in a thank you to Pastor Anna: "In our fiscal year 2014, we distributed more than 1.6 million pounds of food to residents of DuPage County. With nearly 45,000 individuals, including more than 17,000 children and 3,900 seniors relying on us, it is important to continually raise awareness and foster collaboration within the communities we serve."

He also reported that through the partnership with Northern Illinois Food Bank and Woodridge School District 68, 98 low-income families were supplied with a weekend backpack.

A Message from Gigi Polycarpe of Bethlehem Home:

"One of the real joys of the Holiday Season is the opportunity to say thank you and to wish you the best for the New Year. We accomplished many things in 2014, but without your support, it would not have been possible. We have touched the children's lives that are living at the Bethlehem Home, including our little precious angel, Gabriel, who was 4 months old when the mother abandoned him at the home. Now he is 11 months old, happy, healthy, who deserves a good home.



The situation in Haiti should remind us that children are our future and it is our responsibility to offer our support and protect them in which all of us can fully participate to make a difference."

Blessings on your new year, Gigi

Did you Know????

UNITED METHODISTS BELIEVE

WE BELIEVE that God is understood in three distinct forms. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are commonly used to refer to the threefold nature of God. Sometimes we use other terms, such as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

WE BELIEVE in one God, who created the world and all that is in it. We believe that God is sovereign; that is, God is the ruler of the universe. We believe that God is loving. We can experience God's love and grace.

WE BELIEVE that Jesus was human. He lived as a man and died when he was crucified. We believe that Jesus is divine. He is the Son of God. We believe that God raised Jesus from the dead and that the risen Christ lives today. We believe that Jesus is our Savior. In Christ, we receive abundant life and forgiveness of sins. We believe that Jesus is Lord and that we are called to pattern our lives after his.

WE BELIEVE that the Holy Spirit is God with us. We believe that the Holy Spirit comforts us when we are in need and convicts us when we stray from God. We believe that the Holy Spirit awakens us to God's will and empowers us to live obediently.

WE BELIEVE that God created human beings in God's image. We believe that humans can choose to accept or reject a relationship with God. We believe that all humans need to be in relationship with God in order to be fully human.

WE BELIEVE that the church is the body of Christ, an extension of Christ's life and ministry in the world today. We believe that the mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

WE BELIEVE that the church is "the communion of saints," a community made up of all past, present and future disciples of Christ. We believe that the church is called to worship God and to support those who participate in its life as they grow in faith.

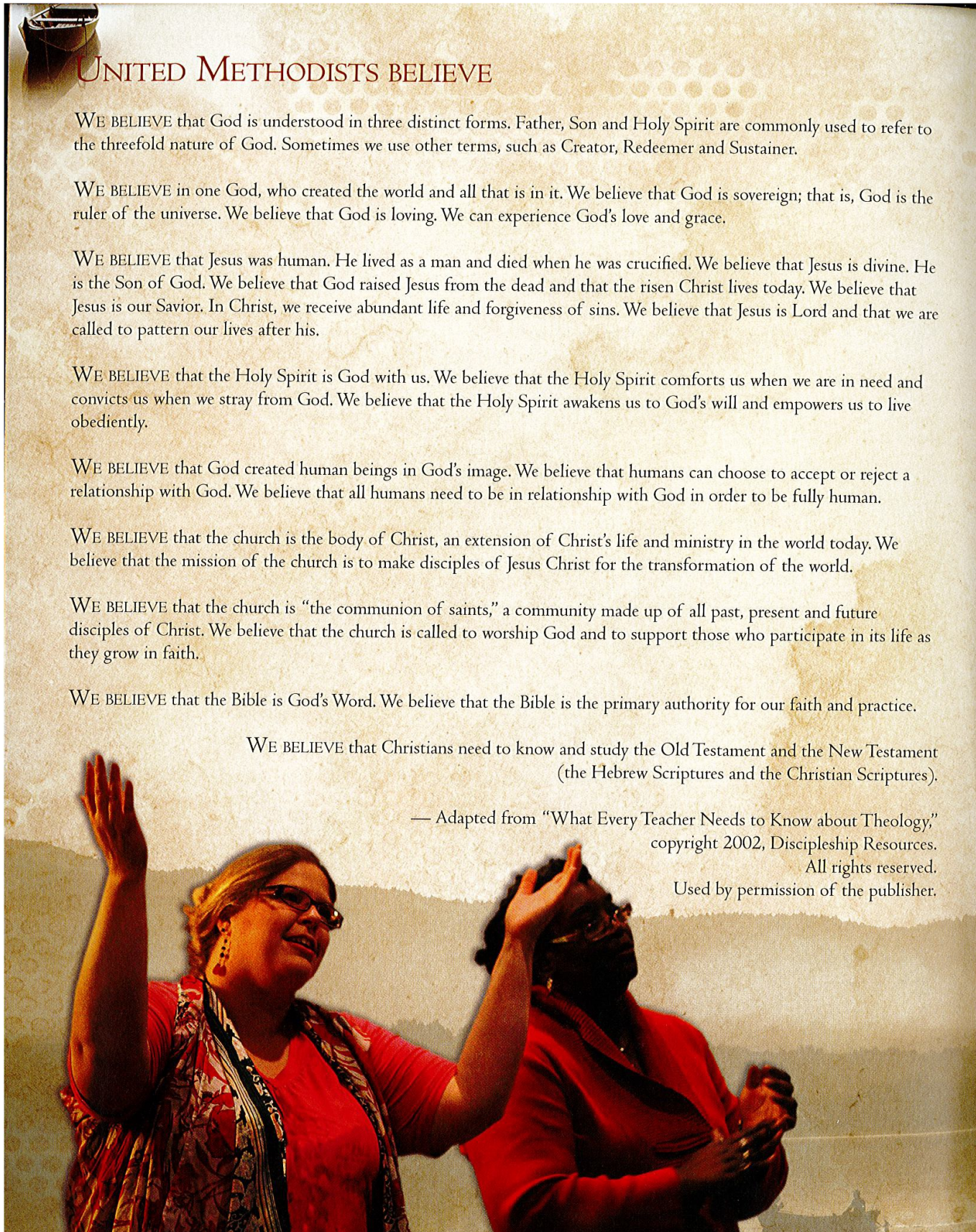
WE BELIEVE that the Bible is God's Word. We believe that the Bible is the primary authority for our faith and practice.

WE BELIEVE that Christians need to know and study the Old Testament and the New Testament (the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Scriptures).

— Adapted from "What Every Teacher Needs to Know about Theology,"
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Get Involved at Friendship Church

There's a **place** for you!



There are many ways for you to get involved in the ministry at Friendship Church. All of the activities listed below are ongoing ministries and can be joined at any time. Please consider how you can get involved:

Celebration Offering—First Sundays

On the first Sunday of each month, we have a chance to celebrate the special blessings God has bestowed upon our lives with this special offering.

Food Pantry Collection-Second Sundays

Serving West Suburban Food Pantry, Seventh Day Adventist Pantry, and Wood View School.

Daybreak Shelter Serving-Third Fridays & Saturdays, 5:30pm & 5:00am

Dinner and Breakfast are served each month to Daybreak Shelter in Joliet. Contact Richard Guzman at rrguzman@comcast.net for more information.

Women's Bible Study-Wednesdays, 11:15am

All women are invited to attend as they start a new series entitled, "Trusting God, a Life Without Worry". Books are available in the church office. For more information, contact the group's leader, Sharon Hall at 630.378.4697.

Study Club-Wednesdays 4:00-5:00pm

Partnering with Wood View School, mentors help give students an extra boost with their school work. Contact Kandy DeWitt 630.637.1216 for more information.

Friendship Cafe, Wednesdays, 5:30-7:30pm

Bring yourself and/or your family for supper, or just coffee and dessert! The potlucks are a great time for fellowship! The main course will be provided each week, but a dish to share is always welcome! Donations will also be taken to provide the next main course! If you would like to join us in providing a main course for this ministry, please contact the church office and let us know!

Senior Lunch and Bible Study-Third Thursdays@11:15am

A time for Seniors to gather for Bible Study and a lovingly prepared lunch. Contact the church office if you are interested in attending.

Upcoming Events at Friendship Church

Children's Ministry Meeting Tuesday, January 13, 7:00pm

Join the Ministry team as they gather for their first meeting of the year and plan for future events. Contact Jane Pierce or Ann Louise Kuehn at the church office if you would like to be a part of this ministry team.

Church Council Meeting-Tuesday, January 13, 8:00pm

The Church Council is the place where the leaders of Friendship Church gather to cast a vision, celebrate, and decide the missions of God's plan through Friendship. Come and join us for the first gathering in a new year. Please contact the council chair, Carolyn Weber, at churchoffice@friendshipchurchumc.org, for details.

Core Group One-The One, January 11, 12:20pm

Lead by Richard Guzman, this group will meet at the DeWitt's home. Contact Mike or Kandy DeWitt for more information, 630.637.1216.

Young Adult Dinner-Sunday, January 11

Young adults are invited to attend this time of fellowship. Contact Jody Hargett for more information, jody.hargett@comcast.net.

Holy Site Visits

The congregation is invited to join the Confirmation Class on three separate Holy Site visits during the winter months. Visiting different places of worship is our effort to develop a sensitivity to what our neighbors believe. Visits are planned to the Islamic Foundation of Villa Park, the Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago, and to Congregation Etz Chaim in Lombard. The first visit is planned for January 18 to the Islamic Foundation of Villa Park. If interested in attending, please contact the church office at churchoffice@friendshipchurchumc.org.

Upcoming Events in our Community

MLK Week 2015-North Central College, Naperville

Chicago Sinfonietta's Annual Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Sunday, January 18, 3:00pm
Wentz Hall, 171 E. Chicago Avenue

Martin Luther King, Jr. Keynote Speaker, Dr. Cornel West

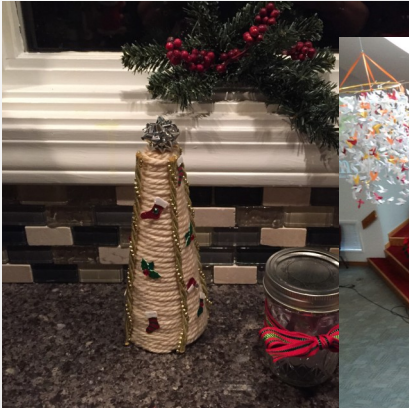
Friday, January 23, 7:00pm
Pfeiffer Hall, 310 E. Benton Avenue

27th Annual Gospel Extravaganza

Saturday, January 24, 7:00pm
Pfeiffer Hall, 310 Benton Avenue

Purchase tickets at NCC Box Office
Visit <http://tickets.noctrl.edu>
Or call 630.637.SHOW

Advent and Christmas



An Advent Festival was held on Sunday, December 7th, as well as many activities during worship to help us prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus. Many thanks to all who participated in "The History and Origin of Christmas Carols" on December 28th. Special thanks to Pat Prins for coordinating and directing.



Children and Family Ministry

Advent Festival

Sunday, December 7th, 30 of us got together to celebrate Advent with songs, a storyteller, crafts for Advent and Christmas, a chili supper and yummy desserts! All ages were present and everyone had a great time! A perfect night to be reminded of the symbols of Advent!



Christmas Play

Many thanks to all of you who participated in putting together the wonderful children's Christmas play on December 21st! It was perfect! With only 4 rehearsals the children and youth along with Director, Christina Grapengeter, made it happen! It was what Christmas is all about!

With Pastor Anna as accompanist, Ann Louise on sound/video and program production, Christina as director, and Wendla Pidgeon and Robin Lichty as assistants, it was all a huge success! Katy Lichty was a **superb** narrator, all the costumes and props, and our adorable children and youth with their smiling faces..... what a wonderful production on short notice! Looking forward to doing it again next year!

Wednesday Night Friendship Café Potluck

Wednesday, January 7th we will resume our Friendship Café Potlucks! Come any time 5:30 -7:30 p.m. each Wednesday evening. The potlucks will be held in the Sunday school rooms. **Everyone is invited to attend!** Those involved in Study Club, Confirmation, Choralier Choir, Handbell Choirs , Chancel Choir, Scouts and any other activity at Friendship Church on Wednesday evenings will be able to eat before or after their activity and maybe go on to another activity without leaving the building! Bring yourself and/or your family for supper, or just coffee and dessert! The potlucks are a great time for fellowship! The main course will be provided each week, and if you want to bring a dish to share bring a salad, side dish or dessert. Donations will also be taken to provide the next main course! If you would like to join us in providing a main course for this ministry, please contact the church office and let us know!

Choralier Choir

Rehearsals resume for the Choralier Choir on Wednesday, February 11th.



UPCOMING EVENTS



Saturday, January 3	8:10pm-10:10pm	Skating @ Rocket Ice Arena
Sunday, January 11	2:00pm-4:00pm	Youth Group
Monday, January 19	Time TBA	Youth Service Project
Sunday, January 25	2:00pm-4:00pm	Youth Group
Saturday, January 31	11:00am-2:00pm	Sub Sandwich Assembly



Prayer Ministry

Prayer requests can be emailed to the church office at churchoffice@friendshipchurchumc.org.

To be part of Friendship's prayer ministry, contact Kathryn Bulman, coordinator: kbulman830@comcast.net

Celebration offerings

The tradition of the Celebration Offering came to us from our African Fellowship.

On the first Sunday of each month as we celebrate God's abundant gifts on our lives, a special offering is taken in addition to the general offering. It's a chance to celebrate the blessings God has bestowed upon our lives. Look for the special offering envelope in the bulletin. There is a place to mark if you would like to share your story with the congregation during a Sunday worship.

In the month of December 2014, we have received 13 envelopes, totaling \$209.00. Your sharing of joy and celebration has been generous and indeed more generous this year than in previous years. Thank you. The thanksgiving for the month of December includes for spending time with family after a hectic school term; 65th birthday and retirement in January; the many caring and loving people; God's grace in our lives; the joy and peace of the Advent season; always giving thanks to Jesus; life.

Blessings, Anna



Friendship Community

DAYBREAK

Serving at **Daybreak** is a long standing tradition at Friendship. On the third Friday (and following Saturday morning) we donate food, cook and serve two meals. Watch inserts in 2nd Sunday bulletins for details on how to donate and get involved in serving at the shelter.

Dinner on Friday, January 16 @ 5:00 pm

Breakfast Saturday, January 17 @ 5:00 am

Richard Guzman, Coordinator

SENIOR BIBLE STUDY & LUNCHEON

Is open to all senior adults. It meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 11:15am. The study is led by Pastor Anna and is followed by a delicious luncheon. If you would like to attend, contact the church office at 630-972-1011.

Study & Lunch: Thursday, January 15 @ 11:15 am

AA & GA

Friendship is a place of help and hope for those struggling with addictions. Meetings are open to all.

AA Meetings: Saturday @ 9am & Sunday @ 5pm

GA Meetings: Friday @ 7:30 pm

ANXIETY/PANIC ATTACK SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month from 7—9pm. Open to all.

STUDY CLUB

Wednesdays 4-5pm

Mentoring students from WoodView School.

**DONATIONS FOR LOCAL
FOOD PANTRIES:
7th Day Adventist Pantry &
West Suburban Community Pantry**
2nd Sunday of every month

FIRST FRIENDS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL MONDAY-FRIDAY

9:00-11:30AM

Contact Chris Bosacki, Director,
for more information.

chrisbosacki@firstfriendspreschool.info

January 2015 ~ Friendship Church

Worship on Sundays ~ 9:00 & 10:45 am

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2 Office Closed	3 9am AA
4 9 & 10:45am Worship 5p AA	5 Preschool Resumes 5:30pm Girl Scouts	6 10am BPC Ministry	7 11:15am Women's Bible Study 4pm Study Club 4:45pm Confirmation 6:30p Boy Scouts 7:30p Chancel Choir	8 7pm Anxiety Support	7:30pm GA 9 10am BPC Ministry	8pm Youth Skating Party 10 9am AA
11 9 & 10:45 am Worship & Sunday School 2pm Youth Group 5pm Gujarati Worship 5pm AA	12 5:30pm Girl Scouts	13 10am BPC Ministry 7pm Children's Ministry 8pm Church Council	14 11:15am Women's Bible Study 4pm Study Club 4:45pm Confirmation 6:30pm Scouts 7:30pm Chancel Choir	15 11:15am Senior Lunch and Bible Study	16 BPC Ministry 6pm Daisy Scouts 7:30p GA	17 9am AA 9am Market Day
18 9& 10:45am Worship & Sunday School 12:30pm Visit to Islamic Foundation of Villa Park 5pm AA	19 No School 6:30pm Girl Scouts	20 10am BPC Ministry 7pm Staff Parish	21 11:15am Women's Bible Study 4pm Study Club 4:45pm Confirmation 6:30pm Scouts 7:30pm Chancel Choir	22 7pm Anxiety Support	23 10am BPC Ministry 7:30pm GA	24 9am AA
25 9& 10:45am Worship and Sunday School 2pm Youth Group 5pm Gujarati Worship	26	27 10am BPC Ministry 7pm Scout Committee	28 11:15am Women's Bible Study 4pm Study Club 4:45pm Confirmation 6:30pm Scouts 7:30pm Chancel Choir	29	30 10am BPC Ministry	31 9am AA 11am Youth Group Sub Assembly