

The Union News

a publication of
Union Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
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January 29, 2009

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Rainbows of Prayer
Begins Monday, February 9th at 6 PM
See article on page 4



Ash Wednesday
Worship Service on
February 25th at 7 PM
See article on page 4

Daily Lectionary

February 2009

*These lectionary readings are from A Daily Lectionary-Scripture readings for Every Day based on the New Common Lectionary. *The readings listed for Sundays are from the UCC Desk Calendar and are not part of the daily lectionary cycle.*

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	<u>Epistle</u>
*Sun	Feb 1	Deut 18:15-20	Mark 1:21-28	1 Cor 8:1-13
Mon	Feb 2	Josh 3:9-17	John 5:30-47	1 Cor 6:12-20
Tues	Feb 3	Josh 4:1-18	John 6:1-15	1 Cor 7:1-7
Wed	Feb 4	Josh 4:19-5:1	John 6:16-27	1 Cor 7:8-11
Thurs	Feb 5	Josh 5:2-15	John 6:28-40	1 Cor 7:12-16
Fri	Feb 6	Josh 6:1-14	John 6:41-51	1 Cor 7:17-24
Sat	Feb 7	Josh 6:15-27	John 6:52-59	1 Cor 7:25-31
*Sun	Feb 8	Isa 40:21-31	Mark 1:29-39	1 Cor 9:16-23
Mon	Feb 9	Josh 7:1-15	John 6:60-71	1 Cor 7:32-40
Tues	Feb 10	Josh 7:16-26	John 7:1-13	1 Cor 8:1-6
Wed	Feb 11	Josh 8:1-21	John 7:14-24	1 Cor 8:7-13
Thurs	Feb 12	Josh 8:30-35	John 7:25-36	1 Cor 9:1-12a
Fri	Feb 13	Josh 9:3-16,22-27	John 7:37-52	1 Cor 9:12b-18
Sat	Feb 14	Josh 10:1-15	John 7:53-8:11	1 Cor 9:19-27
*Sun	Feb 15	2 Kings 5:1-14	Mark 1:40-45	1 Cor 9:24-27
Mon	Feb 16	Josh 23:1-16	John 8:12-20	1 Cor 10:1-13
Tues	Feb 17	Josh 24:1-15	John 8:21-30	1 Cor 10:14-22
Wed	Feb 18	Josh 24:16-23	John 8:31-41a	1 Cor 10:23-11:1
Thurs	Feb 19	Esther 1:1-19	John 8:41b-47	2 Cor 1:1-7
Fri	Feb 20	Esther 2:5-8,15-23	John 8:47-59	2 Cor 1:8-11
Sat	Feb 21	Esther 3:1-4:3	John 9:1-7	2 Cor 1:12-20
*Sun	Feb 22	2 Kings 2:1-12	Mark 9:2-9	2 Cor 4:3-6
Mon	Feb 23	Ezra 7:27-28,8:21-36	Matt 17:1-9	2 Cor 4:7-18
Tues	Feb 24	Ezra 9:1-15	Matt 4:1-11	2 Cor 5:1-10
Wed	Feb 25	Joel 2:1-2,12-17a	Matt 6:1-6,16-21	2 Cor 5:20b-6:10
Thurs	Feb 26	Ezra 10:1-17	Luke 18:9-14	Titus 1:1-16
Fri	Feb 27	Neh 1:1-11	Luke 9:57-62	Titus 2:1-15
Sat	Feb 28	Neh 2:1-20	Luke 4:1-8	Titus 3:1-15

Provided by The Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ ...nurturing local church vitality and the covenant among our churches. Made possible by your contributions to *Our Church's Wider Mission* Basic Support and Fellowship Dues. The January Daily Lectionary was not available as of this printing.

God, help us with ideas, those thoughts which inform the way we live and the things we do. Let us not seize upon ideas, neither shall we hunt them down nor steal them away.

Rather, let us wait faithfully for them to approach, slowly and gently like creatures from the wild. And let them enter willingly into our hearts and come and go freely within the sanctuary of our contemplation, informing our souls as they arrive and being enlivened by the inspiration of our hearts as they leave.

These shall be our truest thoughts. Our willing and effective ideas. Let us treasure their humble originality. Let us follow them gently back into the world with faith that they shall lead us to lives of harmony and integrity. Amen.

—Michael Leunig,
“The Prayer Tree”

New Year, New Vision...

New Year, in our western society, generally follows the calendar year of the business world – after Fiscal Year 2008 ends on December 31st, New Fiscal Year 2009 begins at the stroke of midnight, accompanied by partying, concert going, football games, corporate housework, and the big countdown at Times Square.



But that's just one part of the picture. We know that there are other rites of passage, as well, especially in other cultures...like Chinese New Year in January or February; Groundhog Day (popularized by the Pennsylvania Dutch), also in February; and the one we as Christians lift up as our whole reason for being, Easter, the Day of Resurrection, in March or April – the day when Jesus' miraculous feat of rising from the dead gives us the “first day of the rest of our lives” (as that old song goes), a radical new start to not only another year, but to our lives of faith as individuals, as families, and even as a church.

Many congregations' Annual Meetings serve as another sort of “new year” tradition, closing out the old and bringing in the new. Our church is no different. Reflecting back on our own meeting a very short time ago, the question is, how did this meeting actually express our faith, in the real world? Was it simply another “business” exercise, or was it an opportunity to break out of the “same old, same old” patterns and truly embark on a new, life-giving, soul-stirring, congregation-transforming journey?

The original resurrection, for the early Christians, was a very mixed experience. Some thought that Jesus' crucifixion spelled the end of the movement. Many followers went into hiding, out of fear of the Romans. And yet, ultimately, what initially seemed like a horrible mistake, through God's redemptive power, became a New Year and New Age of Christian progress, going from a small number of disciples to an amazing worldwide presence.

The same can hold true today. Even as recently as several Sundays ago, a cafe worship service that focused on folding paper stars didn't work out as planned; not every new thing we try will be a resounding success. But in order to learn, and to grow, we need to continually take risks and stick out our necks in the knowledge that God is indeed with us, among us, and beside us, as we open our hearts, our minds, and our souls to the new visions of potential and possibility that await us all. That's the way that we change an ordinary “new year” into an *extraordinary* one, filled with the same kind of excitement and inspiration that rallied those first Christians. Onwards!!

- Pastors Hannelore and Tom

You are needed!



Please take a moment to sign up for Sunday

Café. (previously known as the “Coffee Hour”)

We *continue* to need more people to help with

this essential part of our fellowship time after worship. All you need to do is bring goodies to share, set up the area for coffee and juice (coffee, cream and the juice are provided), and clean up afterwards. If everyone just signed up once or twice a year, no one would be overburdened with this very important task. How about signing up with a church buddy? The sign up sheet is on the board outside the kitchen.

Shaw's Supermarket Receipts Drive Brings in Over \$300 to Open Table

The recent appeal to church members for collecting Shaw's Supermarket receipts has already begun paying off, in a big way! Jane Lifton of Open Table reports that in the first three months of this program, the Shaw's chain has donated over \$300 back to the Open Table organization. A big, big thanks goes to the members of Union Congregational Church for their part in this successful fundraising drive, because a majority of the receipts collected came from our church members!

The program continues in force in 2009, so keep collecting those receipts throughout the new year. If we did that well in just three months, imagine what's possible over the course of a whole year!

New Prayer Group Begins

“Rainbows of Prayer” group starting up on February 9th - open to all interested in weekly get-together.

Doing anything on Monday nights at 6 PM? Want to learn how to fold paper cranes as a faith discipline, or find out about other avenues of non-verbal prayer?

Starting February 9th, Pastor Hannelore will be leading a new church group, open to all (members and visitors alike), designed to broaden our experiences and expressions of Christian devotion. The group will meet upstairs in the church, Monday evenings at 6 PM. Since this will take place during the dinner hour, participants are invited to bring a light meal or beverage for themselves, to have before the group meets.

The Japanese art of Origami, including folding paper cranes, will be one of the faith practices introduced. This comes out of the Japanese tradition of folding thousands of cranes for the cause of peace and for healing. It is our hope that as the group continues other devotional practices might also be explored.



Ash Wednesday



Ash Wednesday Service Planned for Wednesday, February 25th

The season of Lent is nearly here. To mark the beginning of the 40 days of Lent, Union Congregational Church will hold its traditional Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday evening, February 25th, at 7:00 pm. Mark your calendars now, and watch for further details in the weeks to come.

Winter Storm? How to Get News of Church Closings

Now that we're in the season of unexpected snow emergencies, there's always a chance that Sunday services will need to be cancelled at the last minute, because of treacherous road conditions or concerns about the church's accessibility, especially for older members, or those coming from long distances.

The church leaders will always try to give as much advance notice as possible, when the weather forecast is certain or conclusive enough to make an early decision, sometimes the night before. Sometimes, however, as with the most recent storm in early January, the majority of the snowfall occurred in the early morning hours (while the night before was relatively clear). In those cases, a decision was postponed until morning, in the event the precipitation wasn't as severe as predicted.

Here's What to Do:

Watch WCVB-TV (Channel 5).

If you want to know whether Sunday service is on or not, the best way to find out is to watch WCVB-TV (Channel 5); their on-screen listings will include our church's info whenever a cancellation is issued. If you haven't seen a cancellation note there by 8:30 am Sunday morning, we can safely say that church will be held. Because of the large number of other closings, though, it may be some time before Maynard UCC comes up in the rotation of announcements....so patience may be required.

Check your email.

Secondly, we will send out a church-wide message by email to those members who have Internet access. Recently, we've noticed that some of our emails get returned because certain anti-spamming programs may automatically decide to screen out the church's snow cancellation message, simply because we're sending out the e-mail to a large group of people. If you haven't received a snow cancellation message by email, you may wish to check your spam settings, and/or be sure to add these addresses to your computer's email directory: pastormaynarducc@verizon.net and pastormaynarducc@yahoo.com

And, if you're not on our e-mail list, please call the church office to give us your most recent, updated email address information.

Phone calls.

We are also currently in the process of fine-tuning our process of making phone calls on snow cancellation days. Right now, our list of callers and callees still needs some work; if we don't have your current phone number, you may wish to call the church office to update our directory. We can also use more volunteers to make the calls, especially when there is a last minute decision.

Signs on the church doors.

As a last resort, for those who do show up at church, having missed the cancellation announcements, we will post signs on the front and side doors letting people know that services are cancelled.

Alternative services to be offered.

Church leaders are also discussing the possibility of offering a postponed or later service, such as on Sunday afternoon or evening, if conditions improve and the roads and/or parking lots are able to be cleared sufficiently. Whenever we decide to offer that option, announcements will be made through the same channels mentioned above.

Church Family Meetings

The Next **Church Family Meeting** is scheduled for **February 1, 2009** after worship. Plan to stay for refreshments, sharing with one another and to hear any updates. The following meeting is scheduled for **March 29, 2009**

Staff

Ministers: The Entire Congregation

Co-Pastors: Rev. Tom Nalesnik
& Rev. Hannelore Nalesnik
email: pastormaynarducc@verizon.net

Minister of Music: Roy Helander

Church Administrator: Ruth Carney
email: maynarducc@verizon.net
ruthcmaynarducc@verizon.net

Sexton: Nyomi Corriveau

Nursery: Laura Doucette

**Sunday Worship Service at 10:00 AM,
(nursery care provided)
Fellowship at 11:00 AM
Church School during Worship
Building is handicapped accessible**

Websites

Union Cong: www.maynarducc.org
Mass Conference: www.macucc.org
United Church of Christ: www.ucc.org

Deadline for the next *Union News* is

**February 15, 2009
for Issue: February 26, 2009**

(This issue will contain the calendar and the
volunteer schedules for March.)

Next Deadline

for newsletter: 3/15/09, Issue: 3/26/09
(This issue will contain the calendar and the
volunteer schedule for April.)

Gluten Free Communion in the News

Some time ago, our congregation decided to try offering an additional choice of rice bread on communion Sundays, as a way of caring for those who might have restricted diets due to Celiac disease and other conditions that prevent them from consuming wheat and gluten products.

In some Internet research we recently did, we uncovered some news stories on the WCVB-TV Channel 5 website about some churchgoers who have been denied communion because of gluten-free needs. One story told of a Natick couple who accused the Catholic church of forcing them to choose between their faith and their young daughter's health (the 5-year-old daughter suffers from Celiac disease), because a substitution of rice-based communion wafers would not be allowed.

The other tells of a woman from Manchester, NH, also suffering from Celiac disease, who was given the same runaround by her church – including the unusual move of requiring her to wait to take communion by medicine dropper after church (at a Florida congregation).

To see the actual stories, go to:

www.thebostonchannel.com/news/3670566/detail.html and
www.thebostonchannel.com/news/438405/detail.html

As we learn of these incidents, members of Union Congregational Church can know that, through offering the choice of rice bread at communion, we are indeed doing the right thing by finding ways to include people, rather than exclude them, in our Sunday services and other congregational activities. Perhaps we can spread the word in the local community of worship practices like these which do truly make us different, in a good way!

Co-Pastors to be Installed February 22nd

You are invited to the Installation of the Reverends Hannelore and Tom Nalesnik as settled Pastors of Union Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in Maynard. The Service of Installation will be on February 22, 2009 at 4:00 PM. Come and experience gifts of music, guests from other churches and the blessings of this congregation, big and small, as we celebrate the wonders of God's creation.



From the Staff

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for the lovely poinsettias you gave us at Christmas. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated by all of us.

Grace and Peace,
Hannelore, Tom, Nyomi, Roy and Ruth

Weekly Volunteers

Thanks and appreciation goes out to Nancy B for her weekly ministry folding and assembling the worship bulletins. Deep appreciation and thanks also goes out to Hazel P who willingly subs for Nancy.

A BIG THANK YOU to...

Gordon J, Betty H and Janet B for filling in at Sunday worship when the co-pastors were on vacation in early January! This congregation is truly blessed to have such gifted and able lay leaders to provide this vital ministry.

A Big Thanks for our Gift Givers of the World Display

The second floor glass display case, right outside the doors to the sanctuary, got a new look for the holiday season, thanks to the incredible generosity of some congregation members who kindly loaned their collection of "Santa" and "gift giver" figurines for a special Christmastime exhibit.

Their "Gift Givers of the World" collection featured such well-known figures as Saint Nicholas, Italy's La Befana, Kris Kringle, the Dutch Black Peter, Finland's Ukko, Poland's Swiety Nikotaj (Star Man), and others, who represent the wide variety of "gift giver" individuals from many different cultures around the world. Being able to see them all, in one place, helps us realize what a universal tradition this really is!

As we move into a new season and a new year, this particular display will obviously be coming to an end. But that means there is now an opportunity to bring out a brand new exhibit... and that's where you come in!

Any congregation members who happen to have collections of faith-related keepsakes, art objects, devotional items, historical objects, etc., who would like to share them with the church (as a similar, limited-time, loaned exhibit), are encouraged to let the pastors know. We can make arrangements for setting them up, labeling, and displaying them, in a manner befitting their importance and value. We have the space, if you have the artifacts! (We can even combine smaller collections from one or more church members, to make a "thematic" display.)

Call us with your thoughts, suggestions, and ideas!

Thank you for creative people

A grateful church thanks Lynne H for her work of love getting the Music/Choir Room and new Nursery "open for business." If you haven't taken a look, please do. The former Chapel has been transformed into two wonderful rooms. You can especially see Lynne's artistic ability in the Nursery. It is such a welcoming room for our littlest people.

Thanks for Church Leadership

A heartfelt thank-you to all the church leaders for their faithful service throughout the year...

- **Our Board of Trustees** has seen to keeping the building in good repair, from fixing up the church office after severe water damage to getting the parsonage in good order for your new pastors and their family. They have served this church well, and we send a big thank you out to them.
- **Our Board of Deacons** have been wonderful in helping your new pastors learn some of the treasured worship traditions of this church, and in encouraging some new ways of doing things. They continue to make sure that our shut-ins and any other members who might need an extra word of comfort or encouragement receive cards and prayers. We thank them for the ministry that they have faithfully offered.
- **Our Council** has met and been willing to discuss some challenging issues and concerns. With the economic picture of the country being what it is, they've had to hear some hard news at some meetings, and consider some hard decisions. Most of all, they've had to find the patience to sit through not just one, but two pastors preaching at them. They've remained in good humor throughout it all, and we certainly thank them also for their faithful service to this church.
- **Our treasurer** has worked very hard to take care of our church's finances. She took on the job, and has helped the church immensely. It has been clear that she did all

that she did to see this church served as fairly and as well as it deserves. As the economic picture of the country became grayer and grayer with the passing year, her job became more difficult, no doubt, and we owe her a big thank you for all she has done so conscientiously and faithfully.

You have voted for these leaders because you feel that they have something to offer to this, your church, and you have placed your trust in them to lead this church into a hopeful future. They, themselves, have taken the job on and worked hard to serve this church and to serve God in doing so. Remember them in your prayers and when you see them don't forget to say thank you for all they do.

If you get sick – Please Remember

Would you or a family member or a friend or a medical professional (nurse, etc.), please let Pastor Hannelore and/or Pastor Tom know what is happening? You can call the church office at anytime at 978-897-2522. If no one is in, please leave a message. We will keep any information you give us confidential unless you instruct us it is OK to share it. Thank you!

Church Leadership

Hannelore & Tom N, Co-Pastors

Robert M, Moderator & Chair of Stewardship Committee

Fred L, Treasurer

James M, Financial Secretary

Donna A, Clerk

Diana E, Chair of Deacons & Mission Outreach

Lynne H, Chair of Trustees

Nanda L & Kathy H, Co-Superintendents of Sunday School

Kathi M, Chair of Christian Education

Phil B, Chair of Investments

Diana E & Marge M, Members at Large

Beth P, Chair of Altar & Usher Committees

Marge M, Prayer Chain Coordinator

Prayer Celebrations & Concerns

Parishioners (and loved ones) in our prayers who have health issues:

Edith B.
 Albert (Ole) C.
 Anne G.
 Jane J.
 Jim O.
 Anne R.
 Nancy S.
 David W.
 Thelma W.

Please keep in your prayers:

All those now serving or about to serve in the US Armed Forces.
 All those affected by the conflicts in the Middle East.

Our new President and all government leaders. May we find an equitable peace for all.

Peace and understanding in the world and in our personal lives.

For those who have been affected by hurricanes, storms (rain & snow), cyclones, tidal waves, earthquakes, fires, floods, oppressive heat or cold and tornadoes.

For those who live in conditions so bad that we cannot comprehend.

Our prayers of condolence go out to the family and friends of William Gilmore who died in January.

Our prayers of joy for the baptism of Jacob on January 18, 2009 – proud parents, Judy & John C and big brother, William.



Birthdays

In February

Day	Name
02	Kristin Caley
10	Esperanza Nalesnik
12	Emily Littig
15	Dawn Olsen
16	Heather French
18	Samantha Fales
18	Neil Whitney
19	Hannelore Nalesnik
20	Joshua Drop (Josh)
26	Elizabeth Olsen

Volunteer Schedule

February 1, 2009

Flowers: Diana E

Altar: Beth P

Ushers: Ruth A, Raoul P, Charlie Y & George Y

Nursery: Laura Doucette & volunteers

February 8, 2009

Flowers: Diana E

Altar: Beth P

Ushers: Beth P, Wil H, Suzanne W & Fred W

Nursery: Laura Doucette & volunteers

February 15, 2009

Flowers: Diana E

Altar: Beth P

Ushers: Phil B, Kristin C, Steve M & Robert M

Nursery: Laura Doucette & volunteers

February 22, 2009

Flowers: Diana E

Altar: Beth P

Ushers: Ruth A, Raoul P, Charlie Y & George Y

Nursery: Laura Doucette & volunteers

Thoughts for the Day

Each day is God's gift to you, make it blossom and grow into a thing of beauty – unknown

Where love is, God is. – unknown

Real friends are those who when you've made a fool of yourself, don't feel that you've done a permanent job. – unknown

Most of today's worries are like puddles; tomorrow they will have evaporated. – unknown

Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.
 – Jesus (John 13: 34b NRSV)

Complaint dissipated

A woman called a newspaper office to complain that her Sunday paper hadn't arrived. Trying to calm her, the man at the office pointed out that the paper hadn't arrived because it was Saturday.

After a brief silence, the woman said meekly, "Well, that explains why there was no one in church today."

HEARTS in the morning

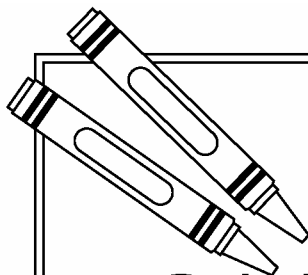
Start your morning with heart. Enjoy this special breakfast with someone you love!

What you need:

- Your favorite pancake recipe and syrup
- Pan or griddle
- Cooking spray
- Liquid measuring cup
- One 5-inch heart-shaped metal cookie cutter
- Wooden clothespin
- Spatula
- Adult help

What you do:

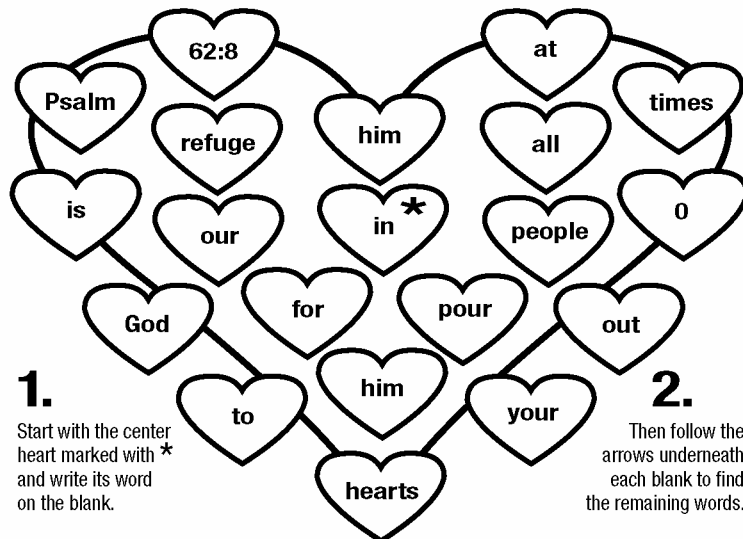
1. With an adult's help, follow your recipe to make your favorite pancakes.
2. Spray cooking spray onto your pan or griddle.
3. Pour pancake batter into a liquid measuring cup. (This helps with pouring individual pancakes.)
4. Place the cookie cutter on the pan or griddle. Then clip the wooden clothespin onto the cookie cutter to act as a handle.
5. Pour batter (about 3-4 Tablespoons) into the cookie cutter.
6. Cook until the top is bubbly and the pancake is dry around the edges.
7. When the heart is ready to flip, use the clothespin to lift and remove the cookie cutter.
8. Turn the pancake with the spatula and cook until golden on both sides. Enjoy with your favorite syrup or fruit.



Just for **KIDS**

OUR HEARTS

This special Bible verse from the NIV describes what God wants us to do with our hearts.



1.

Start with the center heart marked with * and write its word on the blank.

2.

Then follow the arrows underneath each blank to find the remaining words.

“Trust _____ ,
 _____ ; _____
 _____ , _____
 _____ ”

Arrows pointing in various directions (up, down, left, right, diagonal) are placed below the blanks to indicate the path to find the words.

Answer: “Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.” Psalm 62:8

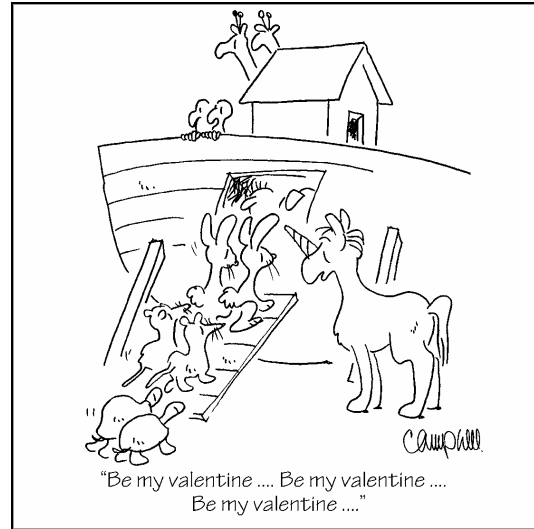
Church Calendar

Sunday Morning

- †Choir Rehearsal – 9:15 AM
- †Worship – 10:00 AM
- †Sunday School – after the children's message during worship
- †Sunday Café/Fellowship – 11:00 AM
- †Youth Group – Last Sunday of each month – 10:00 AM

Regular Meeting Schedule

- †CE – 3rd Tue. of the month, 6:00 PM
- †Choir Rehearsal – Thursdays, 7:00 PM
- †Church Management – (as needed)
- †Council – 3rd Tuesday, 7:00 PM
- †Deacons – 2nd Tuesday, 7:00 PM
- †Caring & Sharing Support Group – not currently scheduled
- †Investments – meet as needed
- †Missions – meet as needed
- †Pastor Parish Relations Committee – (not meeting)
- †Trustees – 1st Wednesday, 7:00 PM



Regular Building Users

- †Alanon/Alateen – Thursdays, 8:00 PM
- †Boy Scouts – Tuesdays, 6:00-9:00 PM
- †Community School – Weekdays, 7:30 AM-5:30 PM
- †Depression Anonymous – Wednesdays, 6:30 PM
- †Open Table – Mondays, 4-7:00 PM,
- †Senior Drop in Center – Tuesdays, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM



Upcoming Dates

- † Church Family Meeting – February 1, 2009, after worship
- † Rainbows of Prayer Group – February 9, 2009
- † Happy Valentine's Day – February 14, 2009
- † No Church School classes – February 15, 2009
- † Newsletter deadline – February 15, 2009
- † Co-Pastors' Installation – February 22, 2009, 4:00 PM
- † Rainbows of Prayer Group – February 23, 2009, 6:00 PM
- † Ash Wednesday Service – February 25, 2009, 7:00 PM

Any changes or updates to the calendar will be announced in worship.

