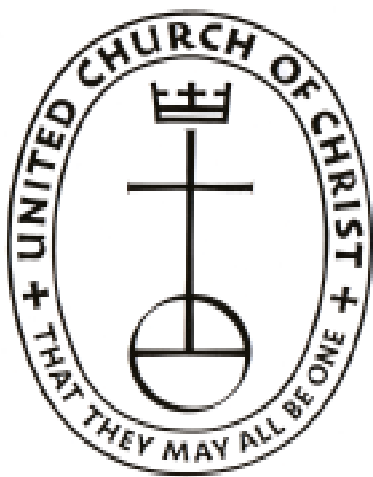




Words of Faith

Volume XXII, No 1

February/March/April 2016

I was having an especially busy and hectic day – lots going on – details to which to attend – people to see – places to go - you know, life as we all know it. I had just spoken by text with two different people on the cell concerning upcoming events in their respective lives (a wedding and a meeting) when I received a phone call (unusual because most folks had been texting me). “Hello” I said. “Who is this?!” demanded the person on the line. Taking a deep breath I replied, “To whom did you want to speak?” “Did you say whom?” said the caller. “Yes, I did,” I answered. “Oh, I definitely have the wrong number!” and hung up. Ha Ha - cracked me up – I laughed until I cried. It was just what the doctor ordered.

Laughter is indeed good medicine. And something happens when we can share a laugh with a friend. There’s a connection that is made that becomes for us a bond, like glue for our souls. But not all humor is shared. It’s rather subjective. In fact everyone has their own ‘funny bone’ and not everything that is humorous is laughable.

TED talks are 10:00 minute (or so) talks of a person (any one really) who would like to share their ideas and creative thoughts. (You can find them on Netflix or YouTube.) I recently watched a woman Sophie Scott, a neuroscientist who said that in her studies they found that people are 13 times more likely to laugh with someone that by ourselves. We can laugh by ourselves, but with someone is more likely and does indeed bring us together. It really is a social action, and it can be contagious. Did you know there is such a thing as Laughing Yoga? (TED talks again) Ida Abdalkhani suggests that laughing, even fake laughter has the same physical and emotional benefits as ‘real’ laughter. I can envision a Laughing Passing of the Peace during Eastertide?!?

Jane McGonegal a Gamer and game developer on TED talk refers to a study by Hospice workers where they interview people who were dying and asked if they had any regrets. Here are the top five regrets:

#5) I regret not letting myself be happy.

#4) I regret that I didn’t stay in touch with a friend.

#3) I wish I had the courage to express my feelings.

#2) I wish I hadn’t worked so hard.

#1) I wish I had lived life true to myself and not to please others.

Now, McGonegal suggests that playing video games provides the benefits from Post Traumatic Growth (without actually having to hit your head) that result in the exact opposite of the 5 end of life regrets (pretty cool actually and great reason for young people to justify playing video

19th ANNIVERSARY OF FAITH UCC

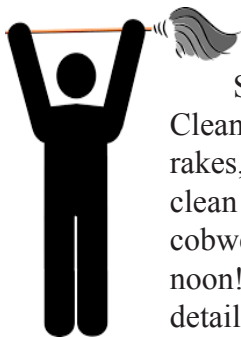
“It’s in the Bag!”

Can you believe we have been together for 19 years! Wow! We must be having fun because time really does fly! Sunday March 6th we will be celebrating our time together. Remember the first weekend of the month is “Double Dipping” Sunday, so we ask you to consider twice what you give on a normal Sunday on the first of the month! (Don’t short change our Joyful Noise Offering to do so – that’s where we save our change all month and give it to bucket brigade for the building!) We are thinking Chocolate Fountain dipping for this special Anniversary!

If this is our 19th Anniversary then in 2017 we will be celebrating 20 years! We are looking to form a special committee to plan several events for this special celebration. We are hoping to celebrate from our anniversary Sunday March 5, 2017 through October 29, 2017 which is the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation! All of your suggestions and ideas are welcome. Please let Rev. Hess if you are interested in serving on the Anniversary Committee.

Spring Cleaning Scheduled

Saturday April 30th we are going to have a Spring Cleaning – all hands on deck! Bring your buckets and rakes, trash bags and dust cloths! We are looking to clean all the nooks and crannies, as well as the brush and cobwebs. We will start at 8:00 am and continue through noon! Please mark your calendars for this very important detail!



Healing Words of Faith from Our Own Doctor

games) but I would like to suggest that laughing, not taking yourself too seriously and enjoying a shared laugh with your friends and family can also benefit your health and increase your life span.

“Humor is the prelude to faith, and laughter is the beginning of prayer.”
- Reinhold Niebuhr

“Earth laughs in flowers.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

We in the church even have a season for laughing – Eastertide! Have you heard of the risus paschalis? It is translated the “Easter laugh”. In Germany it was customary for the minister to tell jokes during Eastertide. The idea behind it was laughing at satan, who had been discomfited by the Resurrection. Can you picture Jesus throwing his head back in a belly laugh after Peter walked (and sank) on water? Or when he admonished His listeners about seeing the speck of dust in their neighbors eyes and not recognizing the log in their own? Or did Jesus laugh when He taught about rich people getting into heaven being more difficult than a camel traveling through the eye of a needle? Instead we proclaim everything Jesus said with a seriousness and throw out the grain of salt and the smirk on Jesus face. If any of the above regrets are yours already, please take a moment to find joy, humor and yes laughter every day. And if you can share that laugh – all is well with the world! HAPPY EASTER!

PS An elderly man walks into a confessional-

Man: “Father, I’m a 95 yr. old widower, I have many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and yesterday I went out on a date with a 25 yr. old supermodel.”

Priest: “Well, that doesn’t sound like a sin. You should know that as a Catholic, dating is not a sin.”

Man: “Oh, I’m not Catholic, Father. I’m Jewish.”

Priest: “So why are you telling me this?”

Man: “I’m 95 yrs. old! I’m telling everyone!”

PPS To read more on Joy, Humor and Laughter I highly recommend “Between Heaven and Mirth” by James Martin. Or you can just borrow it from me!

Your Joyful Laughing Pastor,

Dr. Hess

Saturday Services

Our Saturday Services are a half hour in length beginning at 4:30 pm. This is a great option for folks who have trouble getting up and around in the mornings OR for families with little ones who do not like to sit very long. During Lent 2/13 thru 4/19 we will have a time of healing at each service. This is only offered at 4:30 service (not 8 & 10 am Sunday) and only during Lent. Spread the word! Invite your friends and neighbors. It’s a great time to “check us out”. “Come to me all who are tired and heavy laden and I will give you rest.” says Jesus.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

There are two opportunities Wednesday February 10th to center yourself on God and Lent this year. From 7:00 am to 9:00 am you can stop by the sanctuary for a Quiet Service. Come and go any time during the two hours 7-9, sit quietly in the pews, light a prayer candle for your enlightenment during Lent and then come forward to receive Ashes on your forehead or palm of your hand. Then at 7:00 pm we will worship the Lord in spirit and truth as we begin to explore as a congregation how to know good. Yes, that’s right, “We are up to know good.” Don’t miss this beautiful purple season of Lent and all it has to offer us this year!



LAY PASTOR’S CORNER

It’s been about ten years or so since I bought my first Life is Good t-shirt while I was with the youth on their summer retreat to New Jersey. It was a time when my life was a little messy and these simple t-shirts were a reminder that while life was far from perfect; “Life is Good.”

I remember that I chose a turquoise color with a daisy on it simply because daisies are my favorite flower. It was a simple reminder to stay focused on what was good and right in my life. At the time, I was unaware of the purpose behind the Life is Good community. I learned that their one simple unifying mission is to spread the power of optimism, not as irrational cheerfulness, or blind optimism but as encouragement to focus on what’s right with the world. We can complain about what is wrong with the world. Life is not perfect. We can focus on obstacles before us. Life is not easy. Or we can focus on solutions and cultivate what’s right. Life is good. My most recent Life is Good t-shirt has a

picture of an anchor on it. The caption on the shirt reads, ***Find your anchor.*** I have been drawn to the anchor as a symbol of hope since I was in high school. The anchor reminds me of this verse from Hebrews 6:19 “This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast...” I also love Eugene Peterson’s translation in The Message, “We who have run for our very lives to God have every reason to grab the promised hope with both hands and never let go. It’s an unbreakable spiritual lifeline...” *An unbreakable spiritual lifeline*, who doesn’t want or need that?

There are times when we find it difficult to say, “Life is Good,” when so much around us seems hopeless. I believe that if we focus on what is good and what is right in the world, it will grow. *May the God of hope fill you with all peace and joy in believing, so that you may abound in hope, by the power of the Holy Spirit.* Romans 15:13

Peace, Joy and Hope, Lynne

Consistory Happenings 2015

Happy New Year! Here are some happenings from the Consistory:

- Officers: President- Gary Marsch
- Vice President- Marijo Penkala
- Secretary- Mary Ribarchik
- Treasurer- Sara Lukacs-Nagy

During 2015 we had a student pastor Sharon Frye and she did an outstanding job. She became a part of our Faith family and will be greatly missed as she goes forth on the next chapter of her journey. To show our appreciation we gave Sharon a \$1,200 monetary gift. We held an open budget meeting on Sunday November 29 to discuss concerns over the budget. It went well and the budget, along with information from the November meeting, will be presented to congregation again at the January meeting. Since the payoff of Emmanuel’s church building, we needed a way to makeup that income. The Deacons proposed having Saturday suppers once a month. They were take-out, curb-side dinners. We held them the 2nd Saturday of July, August, and September. We made \$3,000 total with the three dinners! We suspended the dinners until spring when we will pick up again with a halupki sale in April.

2016 Consistory Meeting Schedule:

- Sun. Jan 10 @ 11:10 AM
- Thurs. Feb. 11 @ 6:30 PM
- Sun. Mar. 13 @ 11:10 AM
- Thurs. Apr. 14 @ 6:30 PM
- Sun. May 8 @ 11:10 AM
- Thurs. June 9 @ 6:30 PM

- Sun. July 10 @ 11:10 AM
- Thurs. Aug. 11 @ 6:30 PM
- Sun. Sept. 11 @ 11:10 AM
- Thurs. Oct. 13 @ 6:30 PM
- Sun. Nov. 13 @ 11:10 AM
- Thurs. Dec. 8 @ 6:30 PM

Women of Faith News

A Raisin Pie sale will take place on Feb 20th deadline to order is Feb 14th, On March 19th it’s Coconut Custard, deadline is Mar 13th. Pies are \$10. Call Janet Fry 570-455-5135 to order. There will be a Spring Rummage sale most likely in early May. Start gathering your rummage and going your Spring cleaning in anticipation of this event.

SOCIAL HALL RENTAL

Please remember that our church social hall is available for rental by people and organizations both inside and outside of our congregation. Contact Building Superintendent Judy Hartzel at 459-2923 for rental information.

We also had Double Dip Sundays where we encouraged members to give double their offerings on the first Sunday of the month. We had various refreshments each month (ice cream, apples with dipping sauce) and we brought in \$4,000 more in offerings. Keep up the giving! We now have a Square Reader, which allows members to give via debit/credit card. The reader is located in the narthex by the kitchenette window with instructions on how to use. The Elders went through the church rolls and removed members who haven’t given or attended church for quite a while. A Constitution committee was formed to make amendments to our Bylaws and Constitution. Our contract with Kowalski was up for renewal and we decided to go with a different carrier company for our heating/AC unit. We decided to go with Energy Technologies. Energy Technologies fixed a part on our unit back in September. We also switched our garbage disposal from Waste Management to Thomas Disposal because Waste Management’s charges kept going up.

Bingo Gift Certificates

Still a bargain at -\$15.00
See or call Dotty Burrell at 570-788-3910
CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE?
Have you moved recently? Changed your telephone number?
If so, please call the church office at 454-5982 to make the correction.
Our computer records need to be accurate so that we can get the newsletter, envelopes and other correspondence to you.
You can also drop a note in the weekly collection plate, or send updates to:
Faith UCC, 21 Faith Dr., Hazleton, PA 18202.
PLEASE HELP US KEEP OUR RECORDS UP TO DATE.

Youth Happenings

Our Youth are at it again – planning for more Mission Trips this summer! They have two major fund raisers to help them get going. The first is M&M Ministry and Mission.....Passing along sweet treats for you and a sweet treat for our youth. Here’s how:

- 1) The Youth will pass out a tube of mini M&M’s Feb 10th, 13 & 14th, more will be available in church for two weeks.
- 2) Eat the sweet treat of M&M’s and say a prayer for our youth, your missionaries!
- 3) With your pocket change, fill the M&M container.....About \$20 in quarters fit in here but we accept \$20 bills as well!
- 4) Return the container to the church by March 6th please! A special thank you to your sweet tooth!



The second fund raiser is a \$100 Bingo scheduled for April 24th. No it doesn’t cost \$100 to play, but all the games will be \$100 prizes (or more). Come out and support our Youth Missionaries!

A 24 hour Fast to Last! On Friday March 11th thru Saturday March 12th the youth are having a 24 hour Hunger Fast. We eat lunch (in school) on Friday, then no supper and gather at the church Friday night at 7:00 pm. We stay overnight and break our fast (breakfast) together at noon on Saturday. Please feel free to participate with our youth in this ancient spiritual practice of fasting.

The PNEC is again having a conference wide retreat April 1 thru 3. The theme this year is Holy Humor. Last year we participated with 78 youth from all over the conference. The cost is \$125 per person. Good times will roll. Registration material will be coming soon.

Bingo Update

Bingo desperately needs YOUR help!!! Every Friday night we need at least three cakes, a specialty food item (crock pot size), and five people to work in the kitchen. Please if there is a night that you could work or make something please call Judy at 570-459-2923 or 570-956-1981. Remember Bingo is a crucial fundraiser for “Our” church, and to keep it going we need the support of our church family.

FLOWERS-BULLETINS-CANDLES

You are invited to remember or honor loved ones anytime this year by sponsoring f l o w e r s , bulletins or candles. The chart is posted on the wall outside the choir room. Pick a Sunday that is significant to you and your loved ones: anniversaries, birthdays, death days, graduations or any other special days. Please sign up for your special Sundays and then follow the instructions posted. Bulletins are \$10 per Sunday, candles \$15, table bouquet \$27.00, and altar flowers are \$37.50. Your sponsor message will be listed in the bulletin on the appropriate Sunday.



Pardeesville Breakfasts and Freeland Choir

You may have noticed that our church building is being used by many non-profit groups – what a great ministry we have here at Faith – Serving Our Community! The Girl Scouts, the TOPS, the AA, Volunteers of Loving Care, Cranberry Quilters, and the United Way. Pardeesville Christian Association (think former RC church in Pardeesville) has a breakfast open to the community usually the third Sunday of the month from 8:30 to 12 noon. For \$8 you can get a hot breakfast with fruit and sweets. The best part is they give all the money away to non-profit groups in Hazleton area (including Faith UCC). The upcoming dates include 2/21, 3/20, 4/17. Please invite your friends and come out to support this worthy cause.

Another group that uses our facility to practice is the Freeland Community Choir made up of people from Conygham, Freeland, Drums, Sugarloaf, Beaver Meadows and Hazleton. These folks, under the direction of Jacque Wetzel perform a Cantata at Christmas and again at Easter. If you missed the Christmas Cantata performed at Faith on January 10th you really missed out! This Easter they will again be presenting the Easter Canatata at Faith on Sunday April ??? at 3:00 pm. Please come out to support these wonderful and very talented singers.

Save the Date!
Faithfest 2016 is Sat. June 18th!



LADIES NIGHT OUT

If you have not yet had the opportunity to experience a “Ladies Night Out” you are truly missing one of the best kept secrets of Faith! We go out to eat together on the 4th Wednesday night at 6:00. We have fun, fellowship and Rev. Hess usually makes us talk to each other about ‘stuff’. It’s great! We have scheduled January 24th – “Souper Bowl” bring your favorite soup recipe, Tuesday (because of Lent) February 23rd – “Sin-sational” and May 25th - “Rainy Day Song” (let Rev. Hess know your favorite Rainy Day song by 5/15th so she create CD’s for us!) all of which will be @ 6:00 for The Pines (8 West Broad Street). Sign up in the Narthex at church.

Then on Monday March 14th at 6:30 for our Ladies Night Out we are going to Smith Floral (on Susquehanna blvd) to Make Center Pieces. This cost is \$35 per person payable that night but please sign up in the Narthex so we can make reservations. This costs includes pizza, beer, soda and snacks as well as the materials for the centerpieces.

More fun to be had April 22nd thru 24th for our Women's Retreat to inner Harbor Baltimore. The theme is "Mudhouse Sabbath" and the cost will be approximately \$150 for two nights Days Inn Inner Harbor plus meals. We usually leave around 4:00 pm on Friday and return by 12 noon on Sunday. Lots of laughter and good fellowship!



Faith UCC Consistory 2016

Class of 2016			
Marty Karchner E	384-3628/401-0714	mckarch@frontier.com	Communication Committee
Marijo Penkala E	455-2743/436-0359	jpenk1@verizon.net	Fundraising
Mary Ribarchik D	570-582-3216	flyersgirl26@yahoo.com	
Harold Warg E	570-956-2133		Property Committee
Class of 2017			
Dawn Hydock E	570-956-3735		Staff & Personnel
Sara Lukacs-Nagy D	454-3999/579-8726	slnagy@yahoo.com	Deacon's Fund
Dean Schlauch D	459-1276		Worship Committee
Gary Marsch E	570-956-8950	gmmarsch@gmail.com	
Class of 2018			
Larry Corra D	578-2789	coachlarry@verizon.net	Christian Edu/Youth
Sue Hennigan D	215-378-3419	mrsh1@mac.com	Lucky Number/200 Club
Nancy Waters D	441-7881	nwaters19090@yahoo.com	Bingo Committee
Rev. Nasrani E	454-1982		Women of Faith
Jane Hess	570-401-2239	jdhes@frontiernet.net	Pastoral Care Team
			Outreach Committee
			Elders

BOOK SALE MARCH 12TH

Mark your calendars and grab your books, the Faith UCC Book Sale is set for Saturday March 12th 9-3. It's all hands on deck for Friday, March 11th after Bingo (9:15ish) to set up and then 3:00 on Saturday to set up Hall again. Kitchen help is needed and also BOOKS! Please go through your book collections and bring your donation of books into the quilt room between now and then! Tell your friends and neighbors! Remember we do not take text books, nor encyclopedias. All CD's, records, Video's and cassettes are welcome! See you at the Sale – "So little time – So many books!" Don't forget there will be refreshments on the day of the sale!

Halupki Sale for April 9th

We are scheduling an Halupki Sale for Saturday April 9th which will run like our Saturday Suppers in that we will have Take-Out Only, and Curb Side only. Place your order by April 3rd with payment 4 for \$5 or a bakers dozen (13) for \$15 (or \$1.25 per halupki). Then on Saturday, April 9th between 4:00 and 6:00 pm drive to the right thru the parking lot, under the port-a-co, and up to the curb by Fellowship Hall (drivers side next to curb). Hand in your ticket order and we will bring the Halupki's out to your car. Simple and Delicious!



Easter Flower/Blanket Order Form

Your Name _____	Item	# Ordered
In Memory of _____	Blankets - \$5.00	_____
In Honor of _____	Tulips - \$15.00	_____
Total Due _____	Azaleas - \$25.00	_____
	Hyacinth - \$15.00	_____
	Mums - \$13.50	_____
	Daffodils - \$12.00	_____
Orders due March 13th with payment	Lilies - \$12.00	_____

Easter Flower/Blanket Order Form

Your Name _____	Item	# Ordered
In Memory of _____	Blankets - \$5.00	_____
In Honor of _____	Tulips - \$15.00	_____
Total Due _____	Azaleas - \$25.00	_____
	Hyacinth - \$15.00	_____
	Mums - \$13.50	_____
	Daffodils - \$12.00	_____
Orders due March 13th with payment	Lilies - \$12.00	_____

Easter Flower/Blanket Order Form

Your Name _____	Item	# Ordered
In Memory of _____	Blankets - \$5.00	_____
In Honor of _____	Tulips - \$15.00	_____
	Azaleas - \$25.00	_____
	Hyacinth - \$15.00	_____
Total Due _____	Mums - \$13.50	_____
	Daffodils - \$12.00	_____
Orders due March 13th with payment	Lilies - \$12.00	_____

Please send to: Faith UCC, 21 Faith Drive, Hazleton, PA 18202

Faith United Church of Christ
21 Faith Drive
Hazleton, PA 18202
Return Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
HAZLETON, PA 18202
PERMIT NO. 277

February/March/April 2016

Mark your calendars!
The deadline for our May/June/July 2016
Newsletter is April 10th Please be prompt!

Wish to submit an article for the newsletter?

Please send submissions to :
Karen Herb
PO Box 373
Beaver Meadows, PA 18216-0373
Email: herb2857@aol.com
Phone: (570) 710-1752

You may drop off articles at the church office. Church office hours
are: Wednesday from 2-4 PM, Thursday from 4-6 PM Faith UCC
e-mail address: faithucc haz@verizon.net Building Superintendent:
Judy Hartzel – 459-2923 Circle of Prayer – To add names, call Carol
Koch at 788-1038

Worship Services:
Saturday 4:30 PM
Sunday 8:00 and 10:00 AM
Sunday School: 9:00 AM
Church Office Phone: 454-5982
Kitchen Phone: 454-8427
Rev. Hess Cell Phone: 401-2239
Address: 21 Faith Drive
Hazleton, PA 18202

Worship Opportunities thru Lent & Easter

Worship has become for us the ‘heart’ of our life together here at Faith! I hope each of you has had the chance to worship with us during Advent and Christmas (weren’t the decorations just lovely! – thank Lee!). Now we are well into Epiphany and we hope you have been able to “Come Home” to worship Baby Jesus just as the Magi did of old. Wed, Feb 10 AMth we begin the Season of Lent with Ashes! During Lent we will be “Up to Know Good!” This series will involve the 5 Greek words for sin and the book “The God We Can Know” by Rob Fuquay. Every Saturday service in Lent (4:30 PM) will include a Healing Service (anointing with oil and prayers of healing). We will participate with our Lutheran and Episcopal friends mid-week services Weds at 7:00 during Lent as well – schedule to be announced. Holy week begins 3/20 with Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday Service 3/24 will be Last Supper and Taize Service of candles and prayer. Good Friday will include a Quiet Service 12-3:00 and a 7:00 pm Tenebrae service. Holy Saturday which includes Fire pit outside, water, and communion will be 3/26 at 4:30 PM. Easter Egg Surprises await us Sunday morning at 8:00 and 10 AM:00 Mar 27th (yes, Easter is early and I think the snows will be late??) April Easter Services will hold more Easter Egg Surprises including our Sunday School Youth leading us in worship on April 17th. Please mark your calendars and invite your friends!

Feb 6	4:30 PM	Vespers/Communion	Mar 19	4:30 PM	Vespers/Healing
Feb 7	8 & 10 AM	Epiphany V Luke 9:28-36 Homecoming with Astounding Glory	Mar 20	8 & 10 AM	Palm Sunday Luke 19:28-40 Journey to the Cross
Feb 10	Wed 7:00 PM	Ash Wed Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 We Are Up to Know Good!	Mar 24	7:00 PM	Maundy Thursday John 13:1-17, 31b-35 Washing, Communion and Prayers
Feb 13	4:30 PM	Vespers/Healing	Mar 25	12-3 PM	Quiet Service Prayer Vigil
Feb 14	8 & 10 AM	Lent I Luke 4:1-13 We Are Up to Know Good in the Wilderness	Mar 25	7:00 PM	Good Friday Tenebrae John 18:1-19:42
Feb 20	4:30 PM	Vespers/Healing	Mar 26	4:30 PM	Holy Saturday Easter
Feb 21	8 & 10 AM	Lent II Luke 9:37-43b We Are Up to Know Good with Healings	Mar 27	8 & 10 AM	Easter John 20:1-18 Easter Is Putting All of Our Eggs in One Basket
Feb 27	4:30 PM	Vespers/Healing	April 2	4:30 PM	Vespers/Communion
Feb 28	8 & 10 AM	Lent III Isaiah 55:1-9 We Are Up to Know Good with Isaiah – 1 st Person	April 3	8 & 10 AM	Easter II John 20:19-31 Easter Eggs of Peace/Communion
Mar 5	4:30 PM	Vespers/Healing	April 9	4:30 PM	Vespers/Communion
Mar 6	8 & 10 AM	Lent IV 19 th Anniversary Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 We Are Up to Know Good thru Parables	April 10	8 & 10 AM	Easter III John 21:1-10 AM Easter Eggs of Hope/Communion
Mar 12	4:30 PM	Vespers/Healing	April 16	4:30 PM	Vespers/Communion
Mar 13	8 & 10 AM	Lent V John 12:1-18 We Are Up to Know Good with Sinners	April 17	8 & 10 AM	Easter IV Acts 9:30-43 Easter Eggs with Kids Surprises/Communion
			April 23	4:30 PM	Vespers/Communion
			April 24	8 & 10 AM	Easter V Revelation 21:1-18 Easter Eggs of Heaven/Communion