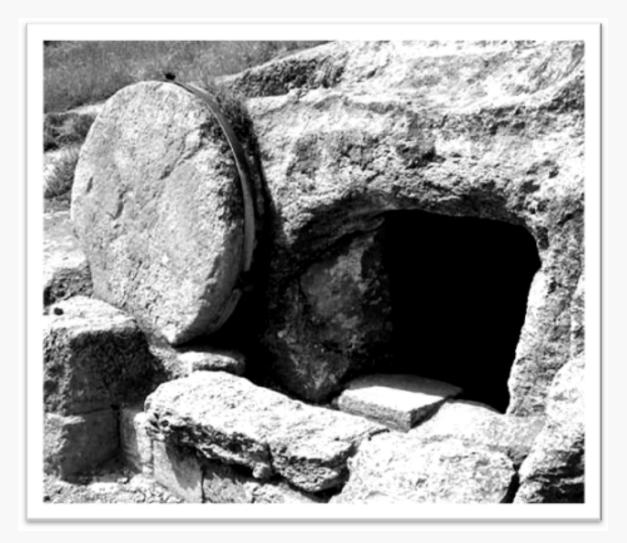
THE SHINING LIGHT



The Voice of the Congregation

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC of Grand Marais

First Congregational United Church of Christ

300 W. 2nd St., PO Box 95, Grand Marais, MN, 55604 <u>GrandMaraisUCC.org</u> (218) 387-2113

> Office Hours: T, W, Th 9 AM - 1 PM Other times by appointment.

> > Pastor: Rev. Enno Limvere pastorgmucc@boreal.org

Office Manager: Neil Pederson office@grandmaraisucc.org

Moderator: Tom Yuhasey Treasurer: Kevin LeVoir Board Members: Stephen Aldrich, Francie Beaster, Jenny Delfs, Bruce Tyler, Carol Winter





Mission Statement

First Congregational United Church of Christ is an open, inclusive church that exists to worship God and practice the gospel of Jesus Christ. We welcome all people of goodwill who seek to share the love of God and honor the diversity of creation in a spirit of tolerance and flexibility. As a <u>Just Peace</u> <u>Church</u>, we invite all who seek the reign of God to join us in reaching out in healing ministry, working for justice, witnessing for peace and striving to overcome all forms of oppression. We recognize two sacraments: Baptism and Communion.

Contributions to the newsletter are encouraged! Please submit writing of no more than 500 words, poetry, or artwork to the office. We reserve the right to edit for space and clarity.



Almighty and glorious God, we come to you in this time of prayer having doubts and fears. Our lives are filled with hurts, pains, and distractions. We try to do it ourselves and feel like failures when we don't succeed. Merciful God, we need you in our lives. Not just in times of prayer and worship, but when we rise in the morning, go about our business, and lay down to sleep. You are truly one who can bring us peace and heal our lives, our bodies, and this world. In Jesus' name we pray, with you and the Holy Spirit reign eternally. Amen.

Worship in March

March 3rd, <u>3rd Sunday in Lent</u> – Jesus has entered Jerusalem in his final week before his death and resurrection. As he continues to teach and preach, different groups try to force him into saying or doing something that will anger the Temple or the Roman authorities. However, Jesus has the crowd with him and navigates through their trickery.

March 10th, <u>4th Sunday in Lent</u> – It is the greatest commandment. Not all are opposed to Jesus, nor is Jesus opposed to all who are in Jerusalem or the teachers, Pharisees, scribes, or priests. Common ground can be found.

March 17th, <u>5th Sunday in Lent</u> – Prophesy! End Times! Keep awake! Let's dig through what Jesus says and what Jesus doesn't say about when the world is 'coming to an end.' Does this have anything to do with us today?



March 24th, <u>6th Sunday in Lent/Palm Sunday</u> – In our Narrative Lectionary, we sort of bypass the triumphal entry into Jerusalem because in happens before our stories we have been reading. Today, we will focus on the gift of the unnamed woman who anoints Jesus for his death.

March 28th, <u>Maundy Thursday</u> – We will gather downstairs in the Fellowship Hall for a meal and service. As we feed our bodies, we will walk through the story and ponder what the Last Supper is about.

March 31st, <u>Easter Sunday</u> – Jesus is resurrected! Or is he? In the Gospel of Mark, we have the women being told that he is resurrected, but this Gospel ends without them telling anyone. What a cliffhanger to be a part of.



a Message from your Board Member

-by Francie Beaster

JOYS AND CONCERNS

"Shared joy is double joy and shared sorrow is half sorrow" –Swedish Proverb. Is it okay to quote a Swede in Grand Marais?

The other day at our church board meeting during joys and concerns, I shared my concern for my dear brother-in-law, Ron, 89 years old who has congestive heart failure and is under hospice care. This situation has been going on for a month and is a tremendous strain on the family.

My neighbors don't know about this, but out of the blue my phone rings. It is Gabe, 10 years old who lives next door. He says "Franny (he calls me that) can I come over and give you a hug?" He has done this before. Delighted, I said, "Sure, come on over." Our deal is he gives me a hug and I tell him a joke. The joke du jour is: Why did the student eat his homework? Because the teacher said it was a piece of cake. Gabe grins in appreciation, we chat, he pets the cat, I slip him a candy bar and he is on his way having perked me up as only a smiling, loving child can do.

Any more, I don't seek or want elaborate events to bring me joy. Never did, actually. It's the little things, often unexpected moments of delight and beauty, which stitch together the fabric of my life.

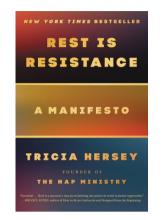
Be surprised. Experience joy even when experiencing sorrow. It will sustain you.

Peace, Francie Beaster

Office Amdinistrator Job Opening

We continue to seek a part-time (hours 8-12 a week) office administrator. This position manages the church office and supports ministry and mission of our church. Main duties are weekly bulletin and electronic news, working with website, communications, and monthly newsletter. Maintaining office files, calendar, and office are also a part of the job. There is flexibility of work hours and some may be done from home. Salary will start at \$23.00/hr.

Lenten Journey: This month on Wednesday evenings



We are gathering down in the Media Room and on Zoom to a comfortable place to explore stories of rest, dreaming, resistance, imagination, and working toward a better world. We will also be using the book "Rest is Resistance: A Manifesto" by Tricia Hersey to explore what is happening in our world today.

February 21 - Rest!

Story of Elijah – Exodus 20:8-11 & 1 Kings 19:1-16

We will look at the meaning of Sabbath in the 10 Commandments and explore the story of the prophet Elijah who needed a time away from all the pressures.

February 28 - Dream!

Story of Joseph – Genesis 37:5-22; 40:1-15; 41:14-32; 45:1-11

We will look at the story of Joseph, who through dreams was led through hardships and triumphs over his lifetime.

<u> March 6 – Resist!</u>

Story of Esther - 4:1-5:8

In the time of the Diaspora, when Judah was scattered throughout the Babylonian empire, there is this story of a plot to kill all the Jews and how Mordecai and his niece Esther were able to resist and save their people.

March 13 - Imagine!

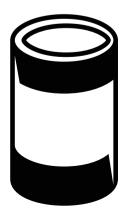
Story of Isaiah - 65:17-25

The Book of Isaiah covers about 200 years of Israel's and Judah's history from the height of their power to the defeat and the Diaspora of the Jewish people away from their country and homes. Isaiah imagines a return and a new start for all.

March 20 - Kingdom Building!

Parables of Jesus - Matthew 13:24-33

Parables are stories that invite us in to explore the different sides and views of life. They are not just simple moral stories, but an entry into a deeper view of faith and the world.



Food Shelf

Mondays 3-5 PM

&

the First Wednesday of the Month 4:30- 6:30 PM

Downstairs

Tai Chi - Thursdays at 10 am

Join us at the church on Thursday mornings, 10:00 am, to practice Tai Chi.



What a strange and wonderful world that we live in. Again and again I see good things happening, good people standing up, and love overcoming all obstacles. The news is overwhelming and hope may be

fleeting. But, nonetheless, there are many more people working for good than the powers and principalities that seek to divide and conquer.

In the Israel/Palestine conflict, more countries, more people, more Jews are standing up to say enough is enough. We are realizing we cannot ignore the situation of the Palestinian people and that having a safe and secure state of Israel means we have to have a stable and free Palestine. There is great suffering, but also great hope for a better solution for all.

In the Russia/Ukraine conflict, things are dire, but this was a war that Russia was supposed to win easily in just a couple months. Every day that Ukraine holds out is another day that Putin's rule comes closer to collapsing and the citizens of Russia grow stronger in their march for democracy. I have heard the conservative movement in our country called "Patriarchal Theocracy." In the political primaries, four in ten Republicans don't want Trump to be President. Setting that aside, the more judges, state governing bodies, and political PACs show their hand against abortion, IVF treatments, and all things related to family and relationships, the more they are alienating the citizens of our country. "Patriarchal Theocracy" (otherwise known as White Supremacy, Christian Nationalism, and Capitalism) is pushing because it knows this is its last grasp at power. It cannot survive another generation without taking absolute power. And we won't let it!

Global Climate Change is marching on. However, every day there is another town, state, country, and discovery that helps to heal our planet. All over the world, there are communities that are taking action.

The outcome of our world is not decided yet. We cannot give up or give in to the darkness. God is good. (All the time). All the time. (God is good). As Mister Rogers said, "When you see bad things happening, look for the people running to help." May we continue to be the people who run to help.

Peace

Postar Enna

<u>Harbor watch, Fridays at</u> <u>8 am</u> <u>at Java Moose</u>



Whether is it still, waving, or bashing the shore; whether the weather is sunny, cloudy, or snowy; whether it is ice cold, covered with ice, or a warm 62; it is still the harbor. Whether you are doing well, ok, or failing, you are still a child, a beloved child of God.

Cook County Middle East Peace Advocates



This group has been meeting for over a month, working on trying to see what we can do and figure out what we have to learn to be more informed. On February 29, we came up with the below draft position statement to clarify our group and help us move forward. We, above all, hope that we can continue this conversation and offer what help we can.

On October 7, 2024, Hamas militants attacked Israel from the Gaza territory. Over 1,400 Israelis were killed, and 240 Israeli citizens and soldiers were captured and taken into Gaza where they have been held hostage. The government of Israel responded with a military attack into Gaza that has brought the death of over 30,000 Palestinian residents of Gaza. These actions have brought long standing issues of peace and justice for Palestine and Israel into public notice again. This includes issues that involve United States foreign policy and aid, both military and financial.

The devastation continues. There is fear and suffering, uncertainty and waiting, in both Palestine and Israel. All sides are caught up in this conflict and calamity, not just the residents there, but people worldwide.

Cook County Middle East Peace Advocates brings together folks in our area who are concerned, folks here who have family there and are impacted because of identity with those in conflict, folks who want to help those who are suffering, folks who want to prevent more deaths, folks who want to help build a Middle East where the residents of Palestine and Israel can all live lives free and secure.

We know there are many sides to these issues. There is a long, complex history of the region and of the people who live there now. We will do our best to hold each other, and all people, with compassion and care as we struggle to name the actions and issues that promote further violence and division. We cannot stand by uninvolved as our fellow humans suffer.



Music Copyrights and African American Spirituals



Our church budgets about \$500 a year to pay copyrights not only to sing the music, but to also record it and have it on YouTube. Based upon our monthly reports, publishers, composers, and musicians get paid a portion of our license fees. What I have begun to notice is that if the music or lyrics are noted to be from "African-American spiritual" there is no copyright fee given to anyone or anything. As our Minnesota Conference explores our antiracism work (Click Here), I sought out guidance if there are things other churches are doing. I discovered that some churches send some of their 'license fee' to churches or non-profit organizations in minority communities. In discussion with our Worship Committee, we discussed this and made the decision to pay-it-onward. We explored options for our state and area and decided on a program called, Walker West:

Walker|West is an out-of-school time music school that teaches instrumental and vocal music to students ages 5 to adult from its music center at 760 Selby Ave. in St. Paul. The non-profit community music school teaches all styles of music, including

classical, but is especially well-known for teaching jazz, gospel and other styles of improvisational music. It is also noted for developing a caring community of music students and educators. The organization provides affordable, quality music by the instruction inspired African American cultural experience to young people and adults. All faculty members are working professional musicians.

Walker|West is thought to be the oldest community music school in the nation founded by African American musicians.

A generous scholarship fund keeps music education affordable and accessible. The founders' vision has always been to make music education available to any student who wishes to learn. Their work has touched the lives of thousands of students, many of whom have gone on to study at top music conservatories and perform professionally.

We decided that we will receive a love offering 4 times a year to support this and other programs and ministries. We will be taking this offering on March 10th.

Winter Pride Celebration



Presented by Cook County Pride

March 16th 2-8 PM Community Center Log Cabin

2:00 pm: Doors Open. Smoothie's available, sponsored by Shook Smoothies.
3:00 pm: Drag Queen Story Hour, presented by That Queer Isa, sponsored by Cook County Pride.
4:00 pm: Arts, Crafts and board games sponsored by Cook County YMCA
5:00 pm: Advocacy and Allyship Presentation, sponsored by Outfront MN.
6:00 pm: Dinner served, Vegan and Gluten Free, sponsored by Angry Trout Cafe.





This event is sponsored by the First Congregational United Church of Christ Can't make the event, but still want to support Cook County Pride? Contact Ben Nichols at benjaminnichols13@gmail.com





Friday, June 7 – Saturday, June 8 College of St. Benedict

Registration opens in March





Keynote Speaker

Tabitha Montgomery with Flourish Place-making Collective, an organization committed to the good and needed work of placemaking – of reimagining and

repurposing space in our neighborhoods and how we inhabit them for the flourishing of us all.

Worship and Music

Led by The Many, an uncommon, intentionally diverse collective making music for people to sing together about peace and justice and a world where all belong!





BACKGROUND

On Easter Sunday in 1949, on nation-wide radio, Christians were challenged to donate one million dollars in one hour to help people devastated by the aftermath of World War II. Faithful Christians answered the challenge and the goal was met. That was the beginning of the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering. This year marks the 75th Anniversary of its inception. Our world has changed since 1949, but human needs remain. OGHS continues to carry God's message of love and hope to people in crisis.

Since that first offering, OGHS has expanded its mission to support domestic and international development, fight poverty and its consequences, bring aid and relief to communities torn by war or ravaged by national disaster, advocate and offer resettlement assistance for refugees and displaced persons, and combat injustice in

its many forms. OGHS provides funding and hands-on assistance in collaboration with local and international partners.

Each year, the Offering is gathered by several denominations and Church World Service (CWS) under a single theme developed by the ecumenical OGHS Committee. In addition to posters, brochures, and interactive media, the Committee commissions a "Planning and Resource Guide" that contains a variety of resources and activities for pastors and church leaders to use as they promote and receive the offering. Approved Minutes, 2.20.24 First Congregational UCC, Grand Marais, MN Board of Directors

Present: Tom Yuhasey, Moderator; Stephen Aldrich, Francie Beaster, Kevin LeVoir, Bruce Tyler, Pastor Enno Limvere, ex-officio. Absent: Jen Delfs, Carol Winter

Call to order by T. Yuhasey, 5:02 p.m.

Recorder: B. Tyler

We Gathered with the Mission Statement reading, espressed joys and concerns, pondered a spiritual question, and listened to the communication agreement.

Immediate and Urgent Business

·Acknowledged the prior approval by email of the January Minutes.

•Noted that the Winter Meeting Minutes will be approved by the Summer Congregation Meeting.

Approved the agenda with additions: a line item Committee (H) to discuss creation of a Capital Campaign Exploration Committee. Moved, LeVoir; second, Aldrich. Unanimous.

Approved the Financial Report from Treasurer, K. LeVoir. Moved, Tyler; second, Beaster. Unanimous. Highlights: Giving is, as usual for this time of year, higher than budget due to Thrift Stores profitsharing, Daycare rent, early individual donations, and a bequest. Treasurer stated he is mindful of watching cashflow closely.

Annual Conference Yearbook information, Workman's Comp. self-audit being prepared;

•Newsletter articles due in office by Tuesday, February 27.

·F. Beaster volunteered to write an article for the Newsletter

•March Board meeting: Tuesday, March 19, 5-7 p.m. on Zoom and-or in person (?).

Old and New Business

1.Pastor's Report Highlights:

•Friday evening supper and worship attended and appreciated by 17 people on January 29. On hold during Lent due to Weds. Sabbath discussion group; plan to resume once a month for several months to see whether it is worthwhile to continue. •Pastor away on April 12-14 for Our Wholes Lives (OWL) training; asked if Board members would lead Worship. S. Aldrich volunteered to present Message. Other board members agreed to lead worship. Pastor needs confirmation of this by end of month so he does not need to search for a substitute pastor.

2.Mutual Ministry Goals for 2024: Lengthy discussion

\$Continue with fellowship, community building
activities

§Revise Mission (and Vision?) Statement(s); include/seek input from those opposed at last vote. Noted that vote was impacted by two opposing voices. Abstensions count as no votes.

§Develop Outreach Strategies (related to comment at Winter Meeting: "What spiritual needs are not being met in the community?")

§Board members asked to let these percolate and return "realistic" ideas by email before next meeting.

§Pastor suggested that: Three parts to Evangelism: Sharing the Good News; Making the church a welcoming space; Actively seeking new people to come worship and join us. First two currently doable. Last requires knowing what our true mission is, as expressed in an updated Mission Statement.

3.Report on Architect's visit.

§Many congregants attended in-person meetings; no community partners did, though have summarized phone interviews and received surveys from several.

§After brainstorming both Needs & Wants and Guiding Principles, attendees asked to help rank priorities.

§Top priorities: Accessibility (elevator, doors); heating plant, energy efficient windows and doors, insulation. Guiding Principles: Welcome and accessibility for all, environmentally friendly, cost-effectiveness

§First report from ATSR expected in 3-4 weeks. Zoom meeting with B&G and any Board members as they are available.

Treasurer's Report

4.New Custodian, Rory, has begun working. Has chosen cleaning products. Works Tuesday and Saturday.

5.Neil Pederson has tendered resignation effective Mar. 1. Hearty thanks for his work reorganizing the office and improving the look and effectiveness of our communications. Congratulations on his new job as Assistant County Attorney. Ad for job posted in News-Herald. Plans afoot for a farewell event TBD.

6.Formation of Capital Campaign Exploratory Committee: Board voted to create a committee of to explore feasibility. Pastor and Moderator to invite and recruit.

Motion by S. Aldrich, second T. Yuhasey. Unanimous.

Guiding principles: Secure commitments from lead donors, foundation support, government support and rebates (Inflation Reduction Act funds)

Need to know what the cost of "Must do" items will be.

7.Declaration of highest priority to keep heat on, and system running properly, especially for daycare's sake. In event building maintenance volunteer is unable to make it work, Pastor, as statutory Business Manager, encouraged to speedily call professional HVAC people, stressing the emergency nature.

8.Sign ordered by Hunter has arrived. Larger than she imagined, best placement will be north side of daycare entrance deck railing.

9.Failed to ask for volunteers to present the News of God's Work in the Community in worship. Recorder will email a list to board members.

<u>Church life and committee reports</u>: Brief as the time was getting short for adjournment.

1. Building and Grounds report covered above.

2.Worship committee meeting on Weds., 2/21. Will discuss alternative methods of collecting the offering, in response to a member's report of feeling guilty about not putting in an offering as the plate passes.

Adjournment at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Bruce Tyler, Recorder

The January 2024 (latest fully available information) Financial Report shows a total income of \$36,072.30 and expenses of \$13,364.68 (See Detail Below). This means the Church's income was more than its expenses by \$22,707.62.

2,707:02:	
Income for January 2	2024
Pledged Donations	\$ 4,810.86
Non-Pledged Donations	\$ 475.00
Loose Plate Offering	\$ 273.00
Building Use	\$ 3,803.00
Other Cash Donations	\$26,158.46
Architect Fund	\$ -
Youth Fund	\$-
Memorial Donations	\$ 550.00
Interest Income	\$ 1.98
	\$36,072.30
F	2024
Expenses for January	
Pastor	\$ 6,856.81
Staff	\$ 1,132.06
Business	\$ 2,522.20
Worship	\$ 300.00
Education	\$ 56.37
Building and Grounds	\$ 1,546.22
Parsonage	\$ 379.55
	\$-
Loan Principle	\$ 211.22
	\$13,004.43
Difference	\$23,067.87
Non-Budgeted Expenses	
Christmas Fund	\$ 50.00
Youth Fund	\$ 20.25
Coyright Usage Renewal	\$ 290.00
	\$ 360.25
Difference	\$22,707.62
Difference	922,101.02

The full report is available in the Church office. -Kevin LeVoir

MARCH 2024 First Congregational United Church of Christ

FS-Fireside Room SH-Social Hall MR-Media Room SA-Sanctuary N-Narthex/Lobby LL-Lower Level PO- Pastor's Office Z - Zoom

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
25	26	27	28	29	01 7:00 AM - AA (FS) 8:00 AM - Harbor Watch 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 7:30 PM - AA (FS)	02 10:00 AM -2:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)
03 9:30 AM - Pick up Choir 10:30 AM - Worship Fellowship following	04 2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 3:00 - 5:00 PM - Food Shelf (LL) 7:00 PM - Al-anon (FS) Pastor Enno's Day Off	05 9:30 AM - Spirituality Group 2:00 PM - Narrative 2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)	06 10:00 AM CC Ministerial 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 4:30-6:30 PM - Food 4:30-6:30 PM - Food 6:00 PM - Confirmation (PO) 7:00 PM - Lenten Gathering (MR&ZO)	07 10:00 AM - Tai Chi (SH) 11:00 PM - Building and 12:00 PM - Women's AA (FS) 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)	08 7:00 AM - AA (FS) 8:00 AM - Harbor Watch 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano 1:50 PM - AA (FS) 7:30 PM - AA (FS)	09 10:00 AM -2:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)
10 9:30 AM - Pick up Choir 10:30 AM - Worship Fellowship Following 2:00 PM - Worship at Care Center 6:00 PM - CC Pride Meeting	11 2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 3:00 - 5:00 PM - Food Shelf (LL) 7:00 PM - Al-anon (FS) Pastor Enno's Day Off	12 2:00 PM - Narrative Study 2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)	13 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 5:30 PM - Pizza and 5:00 PM - Pizza and 5:00 PM - Lenten 7:00 PM - Lenten Gathering (MR&ZO)	14 10:00 AM - Tai Chi (SH) 12:00 PM - Women's AA (FS) 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)	15 7:00 AM - AA (FS) 8:00 AM - Harbor Watch 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 7:30 PM - AA (FS)	16 10:00 AM -2:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 10:30 AM - Surely Discipleship Group 2:00 PM - Cook County Pride Community Celebration at Log Cabin
17 9:30 AM - Pick up Choir 10:30 AM - Worship Fellowship Following ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18 2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 3:00 - 5:00 PM - Food Shelf (LL) 7:00 PM - Al-anon (FS) Pastor Enno's Day Off	19 12:00 PM - Clergy Cluster 2:00 PM - Narrative Study 2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 5:00 PM - Board of 5:00 PM - Board of Directors Meeting (Z)	20 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 5:00 PM - Worship 6:00 PM - Confirmation (PO) 6:00 PM - Sing-a-long 6:00 PM - Lenten 7:00 PM - Lenten 6:athering (MR&ZO)	21 10:00 AM - Tai Chi (SH) 12:00 PM - Women's AA (FS) 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)	22 7:00 AM - AA (FS) 8:00 AM - Harbor Watch 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 7:30 PM - AA (FS)	23 10:00 AM -2:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)
24 9:30 AM - Pick up Choir 10:30 AM - Worship 31 9:30 AM - Pick up Choir 10:30 AM - Worship 10:30 AM - Worship	25 2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 3:00 - 5:00 PM - Food Shelf (LL) 7:00 PM - Al-anon (FS) Pastor Enno's Day Off	26 2:00 PM - Narrative Study 2:00 - 6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)	27 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 6:00 PM - Confirmation (PO) 6:00 PM - Sing-a-long	28 10:00 AM - Tai Chi (SH)) 12:00 PM - Women's AA (FS) 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 6:00 PM - Maundy Thursday Supper (LL)	29 7:00 AM - AA (FS) 8:00 AM - Harbor Watch 2:00-6:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA) 7:30 PM - AA (FS) GOOD FRIDAY	30 10:00 AM -2:00 PM - Piano Lessons (SA)