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Volume LVII Number 3

March 2016

"SMALL GROUP" MINISTRY

Have you heard that phrase being thrown around Westminster lately? I've been tossing it out at meetings, in conversations at coffee hour and whenever I get the chance to bring it up.

What does the group look like? It is composed of 5-10 people who meet twice a month. Each leader is provided with a structure for the meeting. It would look something like this: Begin with a ritual, such as lighting a candle, open with a devotional, there is a time to check in to share what is going on in your life, and then a discussion topic would be introduced, each member has the chance to talk about what the topic means, how it impacts and creates questions for them personally. This occurs without interruption. The other members of the group listen deeply. They come together, not to fix or solve problems, but to support and encourage. And each person has the opportunity to share in this way. We hold space for each other. Maybe you share a meal before or after, or have coffee and cookies. Really, it's a place where we can really get to know a few members in the congregation very well.

Small group ministry helps churches strengthen and deepen trust, friendship and connection to the larger

church body. It is also a fabulous way for new members to meet others, and seasoned members to extend their network and meet outside worship in a relaxed way.

So I invite you to consider what small group ministry might mean for you. Notice the questions that arise, what thoughts come up for you about this ministry. Does it speak to you in some way? I would love to hear about them and the other Small Group Ministry Planning Committee would love to hear about them, too.

Please feel free to share your comments and questions with any of us! We anticipate the rollout of Small Groups this Fall.

Blessings!
Jenn Marquis

Small Group Planning Committee
Pastor Andy CastroLang
Linda Crowe
Randy Crowe
Cathy Gunderson
Mark Stucker
Jenn Marquis



SAVE THE DATE!!



What: Benefit Concert and raffle
Who: SAYC | Benton & Gallagher |
Ashé Remixed
When: Sunday | March 6, 2016 | 3 to 5 pm
Where: Westminster's Social Hall

\$10 Adults; \$12 Families; \$8 Students & Seniors

Board & Committee Members

Come to the annual 'leadership training' on March 13, directly after worship.

If you're new, you'll receive orientation. If you're a new chair, this is your chance to meet with your predecessor to learn the ropes, and ask those questions you've been wondering about for your new role.

ABOUT

The Witness monthly newsletter is a Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ publication. It is usually published around the 28th each month (schedule permitting).

To include something in next month's edition, email your article to: publications@westminsterucc.org or drop it by the church office.

Monthly deadline: the Sunday closest to the 20th

Church Staff:

The Rev. Andrea CastroLang
Jan Shannon, Licensed Minister
Pastors

All of God's People
Ministers

Verne Windham
Choir Director

Janet Hubbard
Musician

Nicolette (Nikki) Rode
Activity Room Attendant

Andréa Reese Hekimian
Office Manager
and
Publications Editor

John Larson
Caretaker

SAVE THE DATES for The Fig Tree's



2016 Deepening Our Roots

Benefit Lunch
Friday, March 11

Buffet begins 11:45 a.m. • Program 12-1 p.m.

Benefit Breakfast
Wednesday, March 16

Buffet begins 7:15 a.m. • Program 7:30-8:30 a.m.
BOTH are at *Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University*

*The breakfast and luncheon are complimentary.
Guests will be invited to donate to support The Fig Tree.*

CALL 535-4112 or 535-1813
email mary@thefigtree.org

The Fig Tree, 1323 S. Perry St., Spokane WA 99202

ASK ABOUT HOSTING A TABLE



Pastor's Pen . . .

SABBATICAL IN 2016

I read in Wikipedia that sabbatical means, “a period of paid leave granted for study or travel” to university faculty, usually after 7 years. And an “archaic” understanding of the word says it is “of or appropriate to the Sabbath”.

Both of these uses make sense of my upcoming sabbatical. When we renewed my “call agreement” to pastor Westminster UCC in 2013, it included the contractual obligation of providing me with a sabbatical. Beginning on May 24th, I will remove myself from active ministry at Westminster for “a period of paid leave granted for study or travel” until August 16th. I won't be going out of the country, but there will certainly be some travel opportunities, this summer. I will also take advantage of this time to do some studying of issues of particular interest to me.

But I understand this upcoming sabbatical in the archaic use of the word also: I plan to take Sabbath time, this summer, while I am away from my rich and engaging work with all of you. Sabbath time will be resting my body and my mind; giving me respite from the busyness of ministry and helping me to embrace

and appreciate the richness of God's loving gifts in my life and in this world!

During this 12-week period of rest and renewal, (and of digging in my vegetable beds!), Pastor Jan will lead a team of volunteers, and the staff, in ongoing support of the Westminster faith community. She will be the 20-hour a week paid staff member to assist you in pastoral need, in worship and prayer (and in media of course!). Pastor Jan will be in class at the beginning of my sabbatical so you can expect additional clergy support then (June 5-12). She will also be going on a brief summer vacation (July 12-19). Pastor Linda Crowe (retired) and Pastor Lew Hinshaw (retired) will provide pastoral care, and lead in worship, when Pastor Jan is unavailable. Our Moderator, Jenn Marquis, and chair of Personnel, Roger Stephens, as well as other key church leaders will be on hand to assist.

I want to thank you, the people of Westminster, for the blessing of sabbatical. I appreciate you, and I appreciate this opportunity.

Pastor Andy ~

The Lounge

“Come as you are, be who you are”...doesn't that sound wonderful? That's the motto for Westminster's evening worship service, The Lounge. At The Lounge, we bring our whole selves, warts and all, and find that we have a common need for spirituality in order to feel fully human.

So, we come together, **every Sunday in the Mayflower room at 5:30 pm**, to praise and worship, to sing, to pray, to learn, and to share Christ's love. In the relaxed setting of The Lounge, we find we are stronger, together.





Environmental Justice Workshop

N-Sid-Sen Camp & Retreat Center

March 9-11, 2016

How can people of faith work for environmental justice for all? How can we create a sustainable, healthy, and inclusive community? This "train the trainer" workshop will explore these questions to empower conversation and actions around environmental justice far beyond the workshop.

When: Dinner Wednesday March 9-noon Friday March 11, 2016

Where: Camp N-Sid-Sen, Lake Couer d'Alene, Idaho

Cost: \$100

Register: www.n-sid-sen.org click on register for camps, select Environmental Justice or call Mark Boyd 208-689-3489

In initial sessions, participants explore themes of a faith-based approach to environmental justice: gratitude, humility, responsibility, justice and community. Each theme includes biblical readings, selections from the video Renewal, insights from respected leaders, and additional study questions. We will be looking at Water Management practices in both urban and rural settings, possibly including a field trip by boat. Remaining time will focus on responses to environmental challenges:

- Working through issues of environmental despair to build communities based on hope;
- Developing strategies and activities for participants' local communities;
- Creating a plan for participants' own workshops in their home communities.

Each participant will be given tools to carry out these activities .

This workshop is co-sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ and UCC Justice and Witness Ministries.

HOLY WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

Palm/Passion Sunday: During our 10:30 am service, we will cover the rough road that leads to Jerusalem with our palms. We will hear the story of the Passion of Jesus Christ in the great hymns of the church.

Maundy Thursday: 7 pm. "Supper around the table" with Communion, storytelling, singing, praying with art. Karen Mobley created 8 scenes of Christ's passion. All are invited to use these pieces for meditative prayer.

Good Friday: 6:00 pm Service on the Cross: reflections and song | 6:30 pm "Can You not Stay Awake with Me One Hour?" Prayer continues with a Vigil of prayer, readings, silence, songs and conversation between 6:30 pm-12:00 midnight. The 8 scenes of Christ's passion will be available for meditative prayer through the day and the night.

Easter Morning: 9:00 am Potluck Celebratory Brunch. 10:30 am Joyous Worship on this Resurrection Day! Baptism. Singing. Bells. Celebrating. Praying. Preaching. Alleluia's all Together with a Cross of Flowers!



Felsőrákos Celebration

On Sunday, April 3, we will celebrate our association with the church in Felsőrákos, Romania. There is only one church in Felsőrákos and it is Unitarian. Its pastor, Jozsef Kotecz, visited our church in 2013. The village has about 900 people living in it and they all speak Hungarian.

Come to church and share in a little of their culture as we dedicate a multi-colored table runner for our communion table and hear our choir sing a Szekely Blessing (in Hungarian and English). Join us downstairs for a sampling of Transylvanian foods hosted by the Friends of Felsőrákos. Take in the display of folk arts brought back by returning travelers. Watch the videos taken by Justin Bell on his visit last September. Join Karen Wilson-Bell in the dances and music from the village and the area.

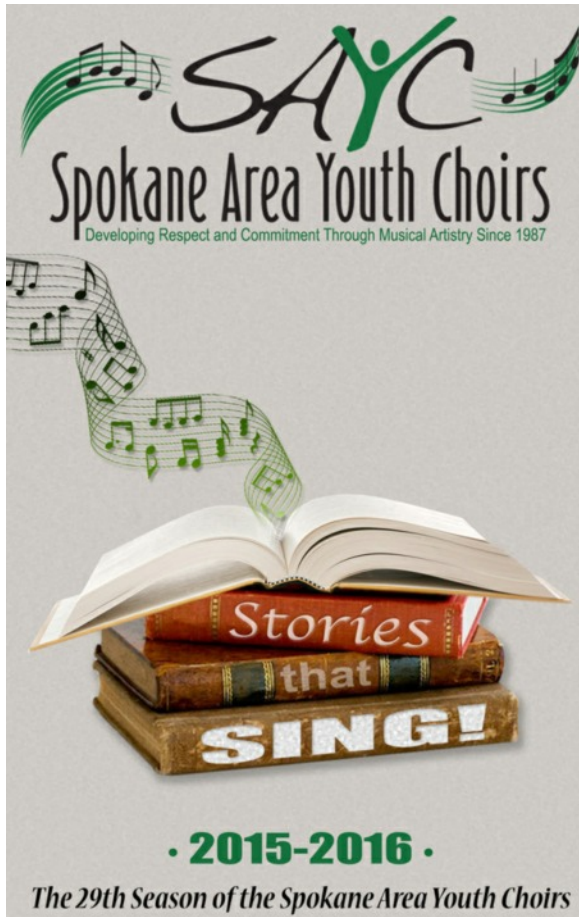
There will be a donation basket for gifts to the village church. Last year's donation from our church paid for the ingredients for a competitive goulash cook-off, and the delicious results fed the entire village.



Karen Wilson-Bell ~



Kim Kotlan-Steinmetz and her son Ethan Steinmetz; Nick and Saviah CastroLang, and Amanda Hunt; with Senator Andy Billig of Spokane on “Have a Heart for Kids” Lobby Day in Olympia



Shared Stories

Spokane Area Youth Choirs

Thursday, March 10

7:00 PM

Westminster UCC

Tickets available at the door
\$8 general admission/\$5 students, youth, and seniors

This concert features live and silent auction items and raffles to benefit the programs of SAYChoirs.



Members of the original Red Clay Ramblers

Mike Craver, keyboards, vocals
Bill Hicks, fiddle, vocals
Jim Watson, mandolin, guitar, bass, vocals
Joe Newberry, award-winning banjo wiz

Recent guests on

A Prairie Home Companion
www.prairiehome.com

"There is great singing, great fiddling, great banjo playing, and great everything else."
—review of 2012 album

Friday, March 4 at 7 pm

Westminster United Church of Christ
411 S. Washington, Spokane
(next to LC High School)

Tickets: \$15 in advance
\$17 at the door

For information and to purchase advance tickets, call Spokane Folklore Society at (509) 598-9111.

www.spokanefolklore.org

COME SEE THESE GIANTS OF OLD-TIME AND BLUEGRASS MUSIC

Welcome, One and All, to the *Westminster Easter Sunday Brunch!*

Be there, with your family to celebrate Christ's resurrection with your church family.



Arrive shortly before 9 am on Sunday, March 27. Sign up for your contribution to the potluck after church during March. Or call Karen Wilson-Bell at 327-7862.

Education Paraprofessional PROGRAM

SFCC offers:

- Online Education Paraprofessional Certificate and A.A.S. degree
- Special Education option
- Early Childhood Education option
- General Education option
- School Library Media Technician option
- Bachelor's degree transfer option
- College credit discounts for relevant experience

For information: Sandy.Ross@sfcc.spokane.edu

Community Colleges of Spokane
Spokane Falls Community College

spokanefalls.edu/edparaprof



JANUARY FINANCIALS

WESTMINSTER CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST January Financial Highlights

	January 2016	Monthly Budget	Monthly Difference	Annual Budget
Total	16,258.68	22,080.01	(5,821.33)	205,510.00
Total	22,130.65	24,509.75	(2,379.10)	263,555.34
Net	(5,871.97)	(2,429.74)	(3,442.23)	(58,045.34)

The loss for January was less than \$6,000. Pledge income received was more than average, but we still need to do better.

2016 Pledge Information as of February 16, 2016:

2016 Total Pledges	2015 Total Pledges	2015 Pledges Received	2016 Annual Pledge Budget	2016 Pledge Budget Shortfall
113,054.56	113,560.70	109,813.00	123,000.00	9,945.44

Pledges keep coming in. We are less than \$10,000 away from the pledge goal for 2016, and only about \$500 less than the total 2015 pledges. Keep up the good work.

Judy Lungren, Volunteer Treasurer

Board & Committee Members

Come to the annual 'leadership training' on March 13, directly after worship.

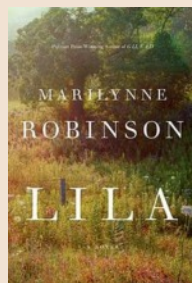
If you're new, you'll receive orientation. If you're a new chair, this is your chance to meet with your predecessor to learn the ropes, and ask those questions you've been wondering about for your new role.



BOOK & SALAD CLUB

The Book and Salad Club continues to meet the 3rd Monday of each month at noon, in the homes of participants. As always, all are welcome. You need not have read the book to participate, however a salad is appreciated. Want more information? You can call Marilynne at 747-0659; or talk with any member of the group.

March 21 "Lila" by Marilynne Robinson, facilitated by Mary Mackay at the home of Marilyn Wilson.



April 18 "Nightingale" by Kristan Hannah, facilitator and location tba.

May 16 book and facilitator tba, at the home of Margaret Ennis.



Orders are being taken for Easter Lilies to enhance our Chancel area for Easter Sunday worship. Lilies may be taken home after the Easter service or given as a gift to one of our homebound or ill members.

Please complete the order form below and return, with your payment for \$11.50 per lily, to the church office. Checks should be made payable to *WCUCC*. Please note "Easter Lily" on your check.

Given by: _____

In celebration or In Memory of (please circle):

I will pick up my plant(s) after worship on Easter morning.

Please deliver this plant to someone who is homebound or ill.

I wish to help deliver plants after the worship service.

Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ lilies at \$11.50 each.



leDONNE
women's choir

March 16, 2016 • 7:00 PM
CONSPIRARE: BREATHING TOGETHER
Westminster Congregational UCC • 411 S. Washington St. 99204

DIRECTORS
Kristina Ploeger & Susan Windham



EWU Choirs in Concert

A Season of "Cerebration"

Friday, December 4, 7:30-9 pm
Central Lutheran Church 512 S. Bernard St. Spokane, WA 99204

"Cerebration" is a noun that means 'thought process.' Join the EWU Concert and Symphonic Choirs as they 'cerebrate,' through choral music, the Holiday Season.

It's conTEXTual

Thursday, March 10, 7:30-9 pm
United Church of Christ 423 N. Sixth St. Cheney 99004

Bring your cell phone and leave it on! It's the only way you can text your thoughts to create an audience think tank as we explore poetry through choral music. Join EWU's Concert, Symphonic, Collegians, and Vocal Jazz Choirs as the groups sing their Winter Choral Concert.

Love and Understanding

Thursday, June 2, 7:30-9 pm
United Church of Christ 423 N. Sixth St. Cheney, WA 99004

EWU's Concert, Symphonic, Collegians, and Vocal Jazz Choirs investigate "Love and Understanding" in a spring concert program.

Kristine Ploeger, Director of Choral Activities
Carolyn Jess, Collaborative Pianist
Kate Sloan, Choral Graduate Assistant
Alexandra Rannow, Vocal Graduate Assistant

Student admission: \$3 (includes a 1993 album, free to EWU students with ID)
Call the EWU for special arrangements: 509.359.2241 or email: ploeger@ewu.edu for more information.

EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
For more information or to make arrangements for special needs accommodation, please call 509.359.2241, three weekdays in advance.

FAMILY PROMISE OF SPOKANE

Presents:

Little WOMEN
THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2016
DOORS OPEN AT 6:30 PM
SPOKANE CIVIC THEATRE
AUCTION*, RAFFLE, FOOD AND DRINK

TICKETS **\$35** PER PERSON

RSVP: 509-747-5487 OR BUY TICKETS ONLINE AT WWW.FAMILYPROMISEOFSPokane.ORG

THERE WILL BE ALSO BE SPECIAL MAN CAVE ROOM WITH SPORTS, MAN DRINKS AND MAN STUFF AUCTION ITEMS

THANKS TO: VIREN & ASSOCIATES, WITHERSPOON & KELLY AND KIMBALL CABINETS FOR UNDERWRITING OUR EVENT

Family Promise is having a fundraiser!

Take in a show and support one of our long-time community partners.

Cathy & Corri have tickets!

Souper Bowl results: \$226.95

"Thank you to your congregation and Youth for their great effort on the Souper Bowl of Caring. Awesome!"

*Susan Heitstuman,
Family Promise of Spokane*



THIS & THAT . . .

Worship service each Sunday at 10:30 am. Join us early for our Education & Spiritual Growth hour, at 9:30.

Board and Committee members' orientation directly after worship on 3-13

Palm Sunday on 3-20 | **Maundy Thursday service** on 3-24 | **Good Friday Service** on 3-25 | **Easter Sunday service** on 3-27.

Spokane Folklore Society presents Craver, Hicks, Watson & Newberry in concert on 3-4 at 7 pm.

Notice: 3-1 The Lounge planning team at 6 pm. 3-2 Sustainability at 7 pm. 3-3 Yoga is cancelled. 3-10 **SAYC in concert** - Yoga is cancelled; The Lounge practice is cancelled; AA group meets in the social hall. 3-20 WestCAT rescheduled to meet at 12:15 pm.

Welcome, One and All, to the ***Westminster Easter Sunday Brunch!***

Be there, with your family to celebrate Christ's resurrection with your church family.

Arrive shortly before 9 am on Sunday, March 27. Sign up for your contribution to the potluck after church during March. Or call Karen Wilson-Bell at 327-7862.



ATTENTION PARENTS!

Youth Group
Sundays 1:00 – 3:00 pm

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 3/4 Dori Allison
Joe Cannon
- 3/6 Martha Hibbard
- 3/8 Corrin Collin
Autumn 'Gus' Denton (1 y.o.)
- 3/13 Margaret Ennis
- 3/14 Gordon Gates
- 3/20 Paul Lin
Jennifer Marquis
- 3/22 Lori Aukstikalnis
Paul Kropp
- 3/23 Walt Thurber
- 3/25 Troy Hildenbrand
Alex Denton
- 3/26 Carlos Alden
Lorraine Freeman



March 21 - 25

If you're available to bless these dear ones, please sign-up in the Narthex for one of these days!



Presence

February Attendance morning / The Lounge			
2-7	2-14	2-21	2-28
70 / 11	74 / 19	78 / 13	102 / 17

If you are seeking pastoral care, you may call on Pastor Andy at 624-1366 x311. Pastor Andy keeps office hours Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, from 9:30 to 11:30 am.



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

March 6

Liturgist: Linda Stephens
 Deacons: Hazel, Mary, Annamarie, Alisher
 Hospitality: Friends of Westminster

March 13

Liturgist: Ed Joy
 Deacons: Alisher Meredith, Teresa Kruger
 Hospitality: WestCAT

March 20

Liturgist: Ondrej DeZarn
 Deacons: Mary Seaton, Doris Holdaway
 Hospitality: SON

March 27

Liturgist: Pam Beckstead
 Deacons: Jenn Marquis, Jim McPherson
 Hospitality: Hospitality

April 03

Liturgist: n/a
 Deacons: Hazel, Mary, Steve, Annamarie
 Hospitality: Friends of Felsőrákos

OUR COVENANT

I covenant with you, members and friends of Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ:

- *To create and hold an open, trusting Christian Community where we can each discover our unique relationship with God:*
- *To accept you as we seek ways to resolve our differences, and to rejoice as a community of faith and trust:*
- *To seek opportunities for expression of faith by sharing talents and resources with our church, community and world; To celebrate with you the power of God's call & God's Love.*

Westminster Congregational United Church of Christ embraces a spirit of hospitality founded in the gospels of Jesus Christ & a willingness to live out that welcome in meaningful ways.

As an Open and Affirming Church, our longstanding culture of welcome extends to all people regardless of sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, gender, physical ability, socioeconomic status or faith background.



WESTMINSTER'S MEDIA OPT-OUT POLICY

In this digital age, the church takes many pictures of baptisms, choir performances and concerts, worship services, mission trips, special presentations, Sunday School, fellowship activities and community outreach projects. We use these pictures to record, to promote, and to celebrate our church ministries. Pictures are used on bulletin boards, in slide shows and PowerPoint presentations, in publications, and on our church website.

However, some persons may choose not to have their

photos, or photos of their children, used and we respect their wishes. Therefore, we are providing a Media Opt-Out form for individuals or families who prefer NOT to have photo-graphs of themselves used by the church. This form can be accessed from our website at: westminsterucc.org/media-opt-out-policy/

If you have no objection to church use of your photograph, you DO NOT need to sign or return this form.

Networking partners!

Faith Action Network. A Partnership for the Common Good.
fanwa.org or email fan@fanwa.org

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



http://www.ucc.org/keeping_you_posted



<http://www.ucc.org/>



http://www.ucc.org/join_the_network

<http://www.pnucnews.org>

Pacific Northwest CONFERENCE NEWS



Earthministry.org



Family Promise of Spokane
904 E Hartson Ave | Spokane, WA 99202
(509) 747-5487

familypromise.org

Executive Director: Steve Allen

Electronic giving methods available, now.

Choose one-time or recurring, to your pledge or choice of fund.

Give by Text to 509-631-9584 from your smart phone (include \$ sign, ie: \$10. A one-time card registration will be requested). If you prefer **online** giving, a donate link is available on our website: westminsterucc.org.

Thank you very much for your support.



March 2016

3-1	Tuesday	6:00 pm	The Lounge planning	3-16	Wednesday	7:00 pm	Andy working offsite. . . SAYC in concert
3-3	Thursday	5:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Yoga *cancelled* AA meeting The Lounge Practice	3-17	Thursday	5:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Andy working offsite. . . Yoga AA meeting The Lounge Practice
3-4	Friday	7:00 pm	Craver, Hicks, Watson & Newberry in concert	3-19	Saturday	8:30 - 11:00 am	social hall occupied
3-5	Saturday	11:00 am	social hall occupied	3-20	Palm Sunday	10:30 am 12:15 pm 1:00 pm 5:00 pm 5:30 pm	Newsletter submissions due Worship WestCAT Youth Group AA meeting The Lounge
3-6	Sunday	10:30 am 1:00 pm 3:00 pm 5:00 pm 5:30 pm	Worship - communion Youth Group <i>Jam for Bread</i> AA meeting - parlor The Lounge	3-21	Monday	12:00 pm 6:15 pm	Meals on Wheels . . . Book & Salad Bell Choir practice
3-7	Monday	6:15 pm	Bell Choir practice	3-22	Tuesday	7:00 pm	Meals on Wheels . . . Council
3-8	Tuesday	5:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	social hall occupied Deacons Ed & Spiritual Growth	3-23	Wednesday		Meals on Wheels . . .
3-9	Wednesday	11:30 am 4:30 pm 6:30 pm	Joanna Chapter sanctuary occupied SON committee	3-24	Maundy Thursday	5:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm 7:30 pm	Meals on Wheels . . . Yoga AA meeting Maundy Thursday service The Lounge Practice
3-10	Thursday	5:30 pm 7:00 pm 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Yoga cancelled SAYC in concert AA meeting - social hall The Lounge Practice cancelled	3-25	Good Friday	6:00 pm	Meals on Wheels . . . Good Friday Service
3-13	Sunday	11:30 am 1:00 pm 5:00 pm 5:30 pm	Leadership orientation Youth Group AA meeting The Lounge	3-27	Easter Sunday	9:00 am 10:30 am 1:00 pm 5:00 pm 5:30 pm	Easter Brunch Worship Youth Group AA meeting The Lounge
3-14	Monday	5:30 pm 6:15 pm	parlor occupied Bell Choir practice	3-28	Monday	6:15 pm 7:30 pm	Bell Choir practice Michal Chapter
3-15	Tuesday	5:30 pm 2:00 pm 6:30 pm	Poetry Music & Arts? Trustees	3-31	Thursday	5:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:30 pm	Yoga AA meeting The Lounge Practice