

Prepare Ye The Way of The Lord;

Make Straight in The Desert a Highway for Our God





CONNXIONS MARCH ISSUE

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100 DAYS

Every Sunday, argued John Calvin, is a mini-Easter – a chance for the people of God to gather and hear the good news again and again and again and again. In fact, it was part of the reason that he said he wished every day was Sunday. He found Life in the story of God's rescue plan for the human race, and when you find the life that is really life, you never want to be anywhere else.

That's part of why the church has historically made such a big deal about Easter. Even though Christmas gets all the cultural glory, Christmas only lasts for a couple of weeks. Easter stretches for more than a month in both directions, and here, at its beginning, we start the slow journey of dying and rising that make up such a big part of our annual liturgical rhythms.

The Apostle Paul would seem to agree, since for him Easter is the epicentre of our faith.

"For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified; for if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. (1 Corinthians 2:2 & 15:16-19)

Or, as the Orthodox theologian Jaroslav Pelikan put it, "If Christ is risen, nothing else matters. And if Christ is not risen, nothing else matters."

Christians are people of the resurrection. Some of our earliest accounts of worship describe Jewish believers honouring Sabbath on the first day of the week instead of the last. And so, Christians began to see everything they thought they knew about God through the lens of resurrection. They changed how they worshipped, how they associated, how they thought and how they acted. Easter was an event that altered the very fabric of history, and early Christians knew there was no going back. In fact, the whole New Testament was written in response to the resurrection – so that we, and those like us two thousand years removed from the event, might still be able to consider what it means for our own lives: that the creator of every atom and molecule in the universe lived among people just like us, and then as an act of loving service gave everything he had for his friends.

Easter shows the church what it is supposed to be; a people who worship the God of Life. From Ash Wednesday through Lent and the Great 50 Days of Easter to Pentecost, God's story is a 100-day litany of dying and rising that is supposed to touch every part of our lives.

Thank God we give it the time in the life of the church that it needs.

My prayer for all of us is that we would take this gift of 100 days and work on moving the needle forward in our Life with God. Amen.

Rev. Jared Minister, Family Ministry





CE Spring Fundraiser for Compassion Canada by Braeden Werle

Hello, my name is Braeden. This year I am doing a Take Action project at my school. We are raising awareness about important organizations that do great things in the community. For my project I chose the Compassion Canada organization. The reason I chose this amazing organization is because last summer I went to a Compassion Experience by Compassion Canada.

In the experience building, we were taken through three or four different rooms replicating those from the story of the child in poverty. Afterwards, I was reminded that I was doing the Take Action project this year, so when the time came, I chose the Compassion Canada organization because I had an urge to help these kids who were living in poverty. My family is sponsoring a seven-year-old boy in Haiti named Wilhem through Compassion Canada. It is a great gift to be his sponsors.

This spring at church we will be doing a fundraiser for Compassion Canada with the Christian Education team. We will be buying safe playgrounds for the kids in need. Safe playgrounds are needed because most kids living in third-world countries don't have a playground or if they do, they aren't safe. Children also need playgrounds because it helps them develop all the skills they need, like ethics, physical activity and more. An example of the playgrounds fundraiser is the chick fundraiser from last year. Kids had to do good deeds at home to earn money to buy the chicks. We donated them to families in poverty so they could have income sources. Now we will be buying safe playgrounds for the kids in need.

My family is doing a study on a family in Uganda for a program called Step Into My Shoes from Compassion Canada. We are learning about having just enough and we will also be inviting all families to join us. Stay tuned for more details on the fundraiser and the study!



Engaging our Children in Further Acts of Kindness by Rhonda Wishart, Convenor, CE

You may recall the baby chicks that graced the sanctuary during the children's story in June of 2019. Such excitement! That was the culmination of a month-long fund-raising campaign of our church school children to purchase baby chicks for families in need in developing countries. The children were encouraged to perform acts of kindness for family members and friends. They were rewarded in small amounts for these acts of kindness, which they in turn donated to the fund for the purchase of chicks. The children were delighted to take part, learned a great deal about sharing and enjoyed watching the funds accumulate. We will soon be launching a similar initiative.

Braeden Werle, a member of our Faith Finders church school class, has written a separate article for ConnXions, which provides some background information on his desire to be involved this year. Braeden will actually be helping CE run the project. Thanks Braeden! The children will be raising money to put towards safe playgrounds in developing countries through the organization Compassion Canada.

The fundraiser will commence in the Children's Story time during the service in late March or early April, with more information to follow. We thank members of the congregation in advance for the support and encouragement we know you will provide for our children, as they focus on reaping the reward of providing safer playgrounds for impoverished children.



March 7 and May 23 (parents & kids get a night out)

Step into My Shoes March/April (family devotional from Compassion Canada)

> Fire Exit Theatre May 14

(intergenerational theatre night)

Intergenerational Pilgrimage June 21 (easy hike & Communion together with Rev. Jared)

> Annual Church Family Camping August 28 - 30 (intergenerational camping weekend)



Ladies Evening Guild:

Friday Movie Night on March 27, 2020 at 7:00 pm in the Karl English Lounge

The Ladies Evening Guild will be hosting another movie night and would like to welcome you to come and enjoy watching "Charade" with Audrey Hepburn.



St. Andrew's Heritage Seniors by Loran McVittie

The St Andrew's Heritage Seniors gave 83 children's gifts to the Woods Homes. The Woods Homes is a children's Mental Health Centre that provides treatment and support for children, youth and families. Thank you for your support.

"Companioning Philosophy" with Dr. Wolfelt

Dr. Wolfelt's compassionate approach of "companioning" versus "treating" mourners helps people to mourn well so they can live well and love well. His time with us will begin with an evening session for individuals and families who are grieving a loss.

The following morning Dr. Wolfelt will teach a workshop for our caregiving community, it will help anyone who wants to learn more about how to support those who have experienced loss.

Understanding Your Grief: Touchstones for Hope and Healing Tuesday, April 21 from 7 to 9 pm

Mourning Misconceptions:Helping Mourners Replace Harmful Norms with Healing Truths Wednesday, April 22 from 9 to 12 noon.

Both events will be held at First Alliance Deerfoot South Location - 12281 40th Street SE

If you need a ride please contact Judie Coleman, our Pastoral Care Coordinator, at pastoralcare@standrewscalgary.ca or 403-281-4605 or the church office at 403-255-0001.

Registration: McInnis & Holloway Funeral Home at 403-243-8200.

Spiritual Moments My First Experience With The Holy Spirit by Jo-Anne Platt

Shortly after David and I were married in 1991 we both felt the need to find a faith family. At that time my dad and brother were involved in the "Live In" program offered in Saskatoon which is a non-denominational Christian weekend that took place in a local high school.

We arrived on the Friday evening, surrendering our watches and noticed that all the windows were papered over so that during the weekend we really had no idea what time of day it was. Our only reference points were meals!

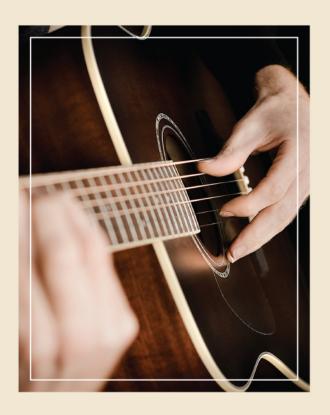
"

I experienced a lovely, peaceful and serene weekend.

I remember waking up the first morning to beautiful guitar music and hymns being performed by our host team. The days were spent in discussion, workshops, crafting and sharing our faith with each other.

I experienced a lovely, peaceful and serene weekend. On the Sunday morning after the service we gathered in the gymnasium to share what the weekend had meant to us. As I was sharing, I started to cry and, in that moment, I felt a calming, peaceful, loving presence that I had never felt before. I knew it was the Holy Spirt which meant that I would never, ever feel alone again.

This experience of a loving Father is available to any person, freely given as a gracious gift from God. May God bless you, too, in your faith journey.



With Gratitude

How wonderful it is to belong to the family

of St. Andrew's! Since my beloved Frank died, I have experienced your generous and loving concern through the lovely cards, the gifts of food, the telephone calls, the visits and your prayers. I send you deep and heartfelt appreciation for all your kindness. You have sustained me and provided me with the courage and strength I need. Thank you to all who attended the service for Frank. It is all a blessing and I send a very warm thank you to each one of you.

With affection from Sheila Kirkland

A People Place by William J. Crocker

If this is not a place where tears are understood. Where do I go to cry?

If this is not a place where my spirit can take wing, Where do I go to fly?

If this is not a place where my questions can be asked, Where do I go to seek?

If this is not a place where my feelings can be heard, Where do I go to speak?

If this is not a place where you'll accept me as I am, Where can I go to be?

If this is not a place where I can try to learn and grow, Where can I be just me?



Annual Congregational Meeting 2020

Colourful balloon centrepieces, a vast array of steaming homemade soups and an enticing candy table made for a very special congregational meeting. With everyone feeling the warmth and solidarity from the preceding worship service, where we lifted up our new Vision to God through prayer and heartfelt testimonials, the positive energy was carried over to the meeting.

The new format of small table groups for the meeting somehow seemed to enhance the interest in and commitment to going forward into our future together. The gratitude for the myriad of ways people work together at St. Andrew's to carry out our vital ministry was apparent, and full support was extended for the 2020 Financial Plan which includes a plan to call a full time third minister. We are indeed blessed!









Session Update – February 2020

- During the month Session spent time prayerfully discerning the calling of a third full-time minister to St. Andrew's. Although on a Sunday morning it may look like we already have two full-time ministers, Rev. Jared is only 1/3 time (15 hours per week) at St. Andrew's – his remaining time is spent on ministry South of Fish Creek. Session discerned that it is imperative that we move forward to call another minister in the area of Pastoral Care and Christian Education.
- We are very pleased to have Rev. Geoffrey Simmins with us as our Interim Pastoral Care Leader on a four-month contract working 15 hours weekly. His focus will be on the three areas of crisis, hospitalization and bereavement. Welcome Geoffrey!
- Some of our members recently spent a Sunday afternoon sharing in a conversation about our ministry South of Fish Creek. People from the congregation were invited to come with their questions and their interest in this important ministry. It was a fruitful discussion.

Rev. Jared and members of the SFC Discernment Team shared their thoughts and experiences from the past year, and led a discussion about what we might look forward to in the coming year.

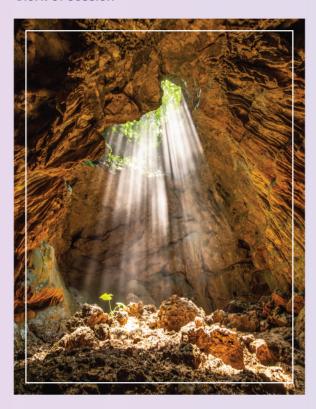
People from the congregation shared their questions and enthusiasms of this ministry.

Everyone is invited to The Creek's first public worship service on Good Friday evening at 7:00 pm. Rev. Jared is working with 'Fire Exit Theatre' to focus the service on The Wisdom of Lament. More information will be shared as details are confirmed.

Two ruling elders from session will meet with two members of the SFC Discernment Team, along with Rev. Jared and Dr. Tim, to discern

- a metaphor to explain the relationship between St. Andrew's and the South of Fish Creek Ministry, as well as expectations from Presbytery.
- We approved support for an Indigenous Sharing Day, in partnership with Grace Presbyterian Church and the Indigenous Friendship Centre on May 30, 2020. Save the date.
- Members of Session are currently working on the revision of our three Ministry Position Descriptions, in accordance with our new Vision for Ministry. This work prepares the way for the formation of a Search Team for our new third minister. The Rev Dianne Ollerenshaw has been named by presbytery as our Interim Moderator to assist us with the search.
- We remember in prayer, our friends from St. Mary's and St. Paul's Coptic Church, as they grieve the loss of their beloved friend and priest, Father Anthony Solimon, who died last week.

Debby Dorcas, Clerk of Session



Sexuality and Faith Explored Series

Have You Ever Felt Unsafe at Church? by Katy Takaoka

It seems like such a strange question, doesn't it? To the vast majority of people, the answer is an obvious. "Of course not – church is safe!"

I recently moved back to Calgary after living in Ontario for almost 15 years. As part of my research in deciding what part of the city to live in, one of my considerations was finding a new church. For many people, it's as simple as figuring out the nearest church to their new address. If you're shy or introverted, you might be a bit nervous the first few Sundays until you get to know some people, but that's about it.

But for members of the LGBT* community, walking into a church comes with added layers of fear and anxiety cloaked around that one simple question: "Will I be safe here?"

I had been a member here at St. Andrew's prior to moving out east, and while I was "out" as a lesbian in many areas of my life, church was not one of them – for the simple reason that I didn't feel safe being open about it here. Not because of anything anyone had specifically said or done, but because I didn't know if I would be welcome anymore.

And I was too afraid to ask.

A lot has changed in my life since leaving Calgary, including the fact that I'm now married to another woman. I knew no matter which church I joined, people would make friendly small talk, and one of the questions would be about my marital status – quickly followed by, "and what does your husband do?"

And that's where the concern about safety comes in to play. How do I answer that question? What will happen if I tell them the truth? Will I be an outcast? Will they use Scripture as a weapon against me? Will I be told to leave and never come back?

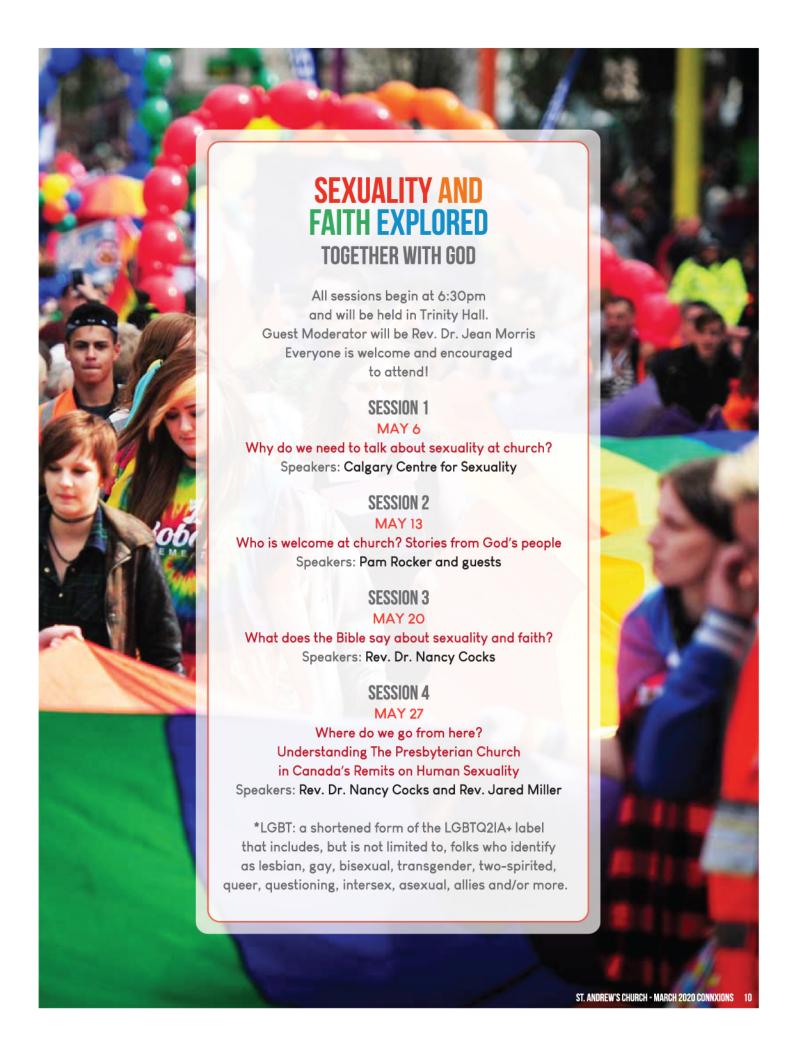
Prayerfully, I chose to come back to St. Andrew's. It had been my home for many years, and I was looking for something familiar in a city I barely recognized. Shortly after attending my first worship service, I had a lovely meeting with Rev. Tim and asked my question: Am I safe here?

My meeting with him, and my experiences here at St. Andrew's since returning, have assured me that, on most levels, I am safe here. But it has also shown me that as a congregation, there is so much more we could be doing to affirm to other LGBT folks that our church is a safe and welcoming place to be.

To that end, St. Andrew's has formed a "human sexuality task force," to help us come together to discern on our General Assembly's Remits concerning whether the Presbyterian Church in Canada will perform same-sex / same-gender marriages and ordain LGBT* ministers and ruling elders.

Over the coming weeks, you'll start to hear more about the work we have been doing, but for now we invite you to Save The Dates for a series of educational sessions we are planning in May. The purpose of these sessions is to explore together, with God, the intersections of sexuality and faith, and how they fit into life here at St. Andrew's — all in a safe, open and respectful environment. We've worked hard to create a dynamic series with speakers and guest experts from both within and beyond the Presbyterian Church. No matter what your views are, we hope to see you there!





Medication HEALTH PROMOTION



Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin in 1928. It would be difficult to overstate the benefits of antibiotics in treating bacterial infections and saving lives. Antibiotics do not work on viruses such as colds, flu or bronchitis. If given when not needed, they can be harmful by causing side effects.

Antibiotic resistance from overuse is one of the most urgent threats to the public's health. If it is necessary to take antibiotics, it is advisable on completion to take a probiotic which will restore normal bacteria in the gut. The most common side effects are gastrointestinal, such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite and abdominal cramping. Some people are intolerant. Allergic reactions include difficulty breathing, tightness in the throat, itching, watery eyes, and swelling around the eyes, mouth or tongue.

Dairy products should not be consumed for at least two to three hours after taking antibiotics because grapefruit and dietary supplements containing minerals like calcium can dampen the effects of antibiotics. Viruses usually go away within one to two weeks. It is advisable to drink plenty of fluids and get lots of rest. To stay healthy and keep others from becoming sick, wash hands frequently, cover coughs, get recommended vaccines, eat a healthy diet and stay home when sick.

May we be reminded to be thankful for good health when we have it, and to pray for healing in body, mind and spirit for those who are suffering.



In Memoriam

Our condolences to Fran Koenders on the death of her dear companion, Bill Whittaker, on December 5th, 2019.

> Rev. Dr. Frank Breisch December 14, 2019

Hugh MacDougall December 24, 2019

Glad Bury December 31, 2019

Allison Grant January 4, 2020

Mary Astle January 8, 2020

Eva Sanders January 12, 2020

Mary MacDougall February 7, 2020

Margaret Brown



Thank you from Annika Koch

Annika Koch wishes to express her sincere thanks to the many members of the congregation who called, sent cards, offered prayers, and provided meals following her fall early in January. This is a very caring church family!



Take 150 by Stephanie Werle

The next instalment of Take 150 will take place on Saturday, March 7, from 5:30 to 8:00 pm in Trinity Hall.

This is a great chance for parents to enjoy a night out (think shopping, reading a book or even date night!) while the kids (kindergarten to grade six only) get a night in together at the church with dinner, games, friends and activities. It is always a lot of fun and we encourage your child to invite a friend too!

Please register in advance at Take150.ca.

Registration closes on Tuesday, March 3. Please note we cannot accept late registrations and drop-ins, so sign up early to reserve your spot! Feel free to contact us at:

familyministry@standrewscalgary.ca for more information.

Arlene Young

Caneel Young, granddaughter of Don & Arlene Young, was recently chosen to receive the 2019 Sportsmanship Excellence Award from the Alberta Equestrian Federation. Caneel has been horseback riding since age eight, and also started show jumping about age ten. She is now seventeen and has a great passion for this sport.



Thank you from Barbara English

My heartfelt thanks to the people of St. Andrew's for the prayers, constant expressions of caring, and practical support during my weeks of illness. It was all incredibly helpful and had the extra blessing of keeping my connection to the church family alive and vibrant. Your ministry was (and is) very much appreciated.



Thank you from The Facilities Group by Don Koch Facilities Management Leader

The Facilities group wishes to recognize and thank the following individuals who braved the cold weather to help set up the angels, nativity scene, and lighting on the front lawn on November 30th and/or to take them down again on January 11th: J.C. Babs, Brad Chalmers, John Hazlett, Bill Judd, Don Koch, Alfred MacRae, Jessica MacRae, Craig Murray, Flemming Nielsen, Mark Rowe. The Christmas symbols of many Calgarians passing by our church.





Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Simmins Interim Pastoral Care Leader

I have been invited to walk with you for a time in the role of Interim Pastoral Care Leader at St. Andrew's. Being part of a faith community opens our eyes and minds to practice loving and caring for one another, using Jesus as our model and our guide. I am pleased to have been invited to support Dr. Tim and Rev. Jared and the rest of the ministry team here at St. Andrew's, as well as all the staff and volunteers who love and care for members of the St. Andrew's congregation in many different ways. My role is to support people during times of transition in their lives, particularly times of grief and loss, helping them seek healing, hope, and new possibilities.

As an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada, I have served congregations here in Calgary and area for the past nineteen years. I also treasure a 25-year career teaching at the University of Calgary.

I have just returned to Calgary following six months serving a Presbyterian–Methodist congregation in New Zealand.

I am married to Joan, a native Calgarian who works as a petroleum engineer. We have two adult sons, David and Michael. I love being outdoors: I am a long-distance walker and an ocean sailor; I find deep peace in our mountains and foothills.

If you would enjoy a visit or a chat, or if you know someone else who might, please get in touch.

Phone: 403-255-0001

Email: gsimmins@standrewscalgary.ca



The Rev. Jan Hazlett's Retirement Celebration Saturday, April 25 at 5:30 pm in Trinity Hall

We will celebrate Rev. Jan's time with St. Andrew's and her retirement from ministry with a Potluck Buffet. We are asking for you to bring a dish to share with eight to ten people. A sign-up sheet will be available in the foyer starting on Sunday, March 15 where you can indicate your preference.

If you have any pictures of Rev. Jan that you would like to share, please leave them in the church office. If you want them returned, please put your name and contact information on the back. We will scan them and return them to you. If you have digital photos, please send them to Stephen Henrichsen at:

stephen_henrichsen@shaw.ca by March 22.

An opportunity will be provided for members of the congregation to contribute to a retirement 'purse' for Rev. Jan. Envelopes for this purpose will be available in the pews starting on March 15, through to April 19. They can be placed in the offering plate or left with the office on or before April 19. Please note that this is a gift, therefore, no tax receipt can be issued.

There is fun and great entertainment planned. Everyone is invited to attend!



THANK YOU TO OUR EDITOR

Linda Haines is preparing to retire from her role as editor of ConnXions. This March issue will be her last, and we owe her a huge debt of gratitude for her dedication, her time, and her attention to detail, as she has worked to get the newsletter out in a timely fashion. She has used her computer skills and organizational gifts in chairing meetings, collecting articles, working with proof readers, and designing and formatting the newsletter. The newsletter has always been important in connecting people and communicating information, and Linda's leadership has helped to make this happen. Thank You!

The ConnXions team is looking for new people to join their group to help put together an informative newsletter. Articles are gathered, proofed and sent to the Communications Coordinator for formatting. If you are interested, please contact Judie Coleman at judieco@yahoo.ca.







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Barbara English

Team Member

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ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH MARCH CALENDAR

MONDAY 02

TUESDAY 03

9:30 am Coffee & Conversation (Karl English Lounge)
7:00 pm S&P Facilities (Karl English Lounge)
7:00 pm Mission Team (Faith Finders)
7:00 pm Stewards by Design (Lower Fireside)

WEDNESDAY 04

9:00 am Brown Bagging (Kitchen) 9:45 am Side by Side (Karl English Lounge)

THURSDAY 05

7:00 pm Youth Group (Upper Room) 7:00 pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

FRIDAY 06

SATURDAY 07

1:00 pm Food Bank (Trinity Hall) 5:30 pm Take 150 (Trinity Hall)

SUNDAY 08

9:30 & 11:15 am Sunday Worship Services (Sanctuary)

MONDAY 09

TUESDAY 10

9:30 am Coffee & Conversation (Karl English Lounge)
1:00 pm Stephen Ministry (Lower Fireside)
1:30 pm Ladies Afternoon Guild (Karl English Lounge)
7:00 pm S&P Leads (Karl English Lounge)

WEDNESDAY 11

9:00 am Brown Bagging (Kitchen)
9:45 am Side by Side (Karl English Lounge)
7:00 pm S&P Stewardship (Karl English Lounge)
7:00 pm Christian Ed (Lower Fireside)

THURSDAY 12

6:00 pm Worship Team (Karl English Lounge)
7:00 pm Youth Group (Upper Room)
8:00 pm Praise Team Practice (Sanctuary)

FRIDAY 13

SATURDAY 14

1:00 pm Food Bank (Trinity Hall)

SUNDAY 15

9:30 & 11:15 am Sunday Worship Services (Sanctuary)

MONDAY 16

7:00 pm Ladies Evening Guild (Karl English Lounge)

TUESDAY 17

9:30 am Coffee & Conversation (Karl English Lounge)
7:00 pm Session (Upper Room)

WEDNESDAY 18

9:00 am Brown Bagging (Kitchen) 9:45 am Side by Side (Karl English Lounge) 7:30 pm Handbell Choir (Upper Room)

THURSDAY 19

7:00 pm Youth Group (Upper Room) 7:00 pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

FRIDAY 20

SATURDAY 21

1:00 pm Food Bank (Trinity Hall)

SUNDAY 22

9:30 & 11:15 am Sunday Worship Services (Sanctuary)

MONDAY 23

TUESDAY 24

9:30 am Coffee & Conversation (Karl English Lounge)
1:00 pm Stephen Ministry (Lower Fireside)

WEDNESDAY 25

9:00 am Brown Bagging (Kitchen) 9:45 am Side by Side (Karl English Lounge) 7:30 pm Handbell Choir (Upper Room)

THURSDAY 26

7:00 pm Youth Group (Upper Room) 7:00 pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

FRIDAY 27

6:30 pm Movie Night (Karl English Lounge)

SATURDAY 28

1:00 pm Food Bank (Trinity Hall)

SUNDAY 29

9:30 & 11:15 am Sunday Worship Services (Sanctuary)

MONDAY 30

TUESDAY 31

9:30 am Coffee & Conversation (Karl English Lounge) 6:30 pm Renewal Task Force (Upper Room)

