



NEWSLETTER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Serving the Newton Conover Area since 1858

Partners with Iglesia El Redentor, Guatemala

www.fpcnewton.org

March, 2024

Dear Saints of First Presbyterian,

Well, here we are, in the middle of Lent. It seems early this year; Easter comes too early. Why? Can't we just decide that Easter will be the Sunday after April 15, or something like that? Actually, the Church has known the date of Easter since the Council of Nicaea, the first one, in the year 325! The formula is complicated, and related to the Jewish Lunar Calendar, so of course there are about three ways to interpret it. Nothing in church history is ever simple.

What that means for us, in Newton, in 2024, is that Easter will be here at the tail end of March, in a few weeks. It means that before the flowers are fully blooming, we will be celebrating the Resurrection of the Lord. It means that we will have our Easter morning sunrise service when it is still pretty cold at 7 AM. I hope you — some of you — will join us on the Deal Lot next door for that! After the service, we will go to the Fellowship Hall for breakfast (and hot coffee!) before going to the sanctuary for the main service of the day. After that service, the children will have an Easter Egg Hunt on the Deal Lot.

With Easter we will see another big transition in our lives: Cathy Murdock will retire from serving as our Director of Music. Her time with us will be celebrated on Palm Sunday at a luncheon. And then in early April we will meet our new director, Brandon Winbush. So much change!

Our faith centers on the Resurrection of Jesus. Everything he taught pales in comparison to that and yet gets its meaning from that. All that he said and did comes into focus as important when we realize that this man — the God-Man — rose from the dead. He shows us that love conquers death, and so nothing can separate us from God's love in him. Nothing! No amount of change can affect or overturn his love for us. Cling to that, for it is true!

We celebrate Easter the same way every year and in much the same way as our neighbors in other congregations. We have special music and flowers, and these other events. Another way we could celebrate is to get out among the people of the town, and let them know the good news: the God who created all of us loves us enough to die for us, and will never stop loving us no matter what we do. That's the good news, and many of our neighbors need to hear it! I challenge you to find ways to share it all around the town.

David Roquemore

News of the Church Family

Prayers for those with Recent Health Concerns

CHURCH MEMBERS: Lee Cranford, Julie Jones, Sondra Phillips, Nancy Gargis, Laurie Joplin, Jim Teubner, Kay Long, Jeannie Clark, Elise Yaussy, Jo Todd, Judy Fulton, Terryl Anderson & family, David Roquemore, Rick Knowles, Ron Valentini, Dale Whitaker, Tom Witherspoon, Eric Ellis, John Taylor, Dennis DeBalso, Joe Jones, Angela Mauney & family, Scott Cranford, Linette and Brian Foley and family



FRIENDS & FAMILY: Zachary Ausel, Maryia Johnson & family, Margaret Hale, Caitlan Reese, Zak Kuhn, Cora Compton, Luke Ohman, Michelle Nelson-Beers, Leenie Vallandingham, Nancelle McAlpin, Katie Day, Megan Bergman, family of Leah Lowdermilk, Gary Hefner, Amanda McDonald-Miller, Toby Hemphill, the Frazier family, the Porterfield family, Nancy Kiser, Brooke Powell, Kenny & Vicky McConnell, Jean Bentley, Dr. Chris Bensen, Dawn Vosburgh, Robin Wood, Mary Williams, family of Doug Boliek, Judy Kennon, Georgia Case, Bill Clark

Condolences:

To the family of Janet Drum on her death, February 11th.

Prayers for those in Assisted Living/Homebound:

CHURCH MEMBERS: Dennis DeBalso, Betty Epps, Frances Inscoe, Frances Ennis, Wanda Hicks, Ann White, Peggy Templeton, Richard Hedrick

Prayers for those with Long-Term Health Concerns:

Pete Keel, Robin Miller, Frankie Sigmon

Prayers for those in Military:

- John Hardin, U.S. Army, Ft. Sill, OK
(Cindy Baldwin's nephew)
- Captain Joshua Smith, U.S. Marines, Camp Lejeune, NC
(Brenda Smith's son)
- Major Christopher Walker, U.S. Army, Fort Knox, KY
(Tammy Walker's son)
- LT Max Morrill, U.S. Navy, Washington, DC
(Joan Inscoe's grandson)
- Captain Patrick Day, Chaplain, U.S. Army Multinational Force Observers, Egypt
(Amy Yenderusiak's brother)

Prayers for Missionaries and International Faith Partners

- Lawrence & Inge Sthreshley in Congo;
- Our partners at *Faith Ministry* in Reynosa, Mexico;
- Rev. Dr. John McCall in Taiwan;
- Eliane Menezes, Guatemala

Prayers for El Redentor, our Sister Church in Guatemala:

- For the well being of all members of our sister church
- For all 20 scholarship students as they begin a new school year
- For Humberto Robles, elder, who is fulfilling requirements in secular education in order to continue his studies at the seminary.
- For Dayana Rojas, who is receiving a university scholarship to study nursing
- For Yesmi Monterroso, who is receiving a university scholarship in 2023 to study business



Dear FPC Circles,
Thank you for all the women of First Presbyterian who so lovingly provided a beautiful reception following Mom's service. I know she was smiling down thinking of the love you all showed her over the years. I hope you all know we are all deeply grateful for all of you.
Sincerely,
Cheryl and the rest of Johnsie Abernethy family

Financial Stewardship Report

2024 Pledge Budget	475,000.00
Pledge Budget through 1-31-2024	39,583.00
Pledge Receipts through 1-31-2024	79,669.98



FPC Care Team

The FPC Care Team will now meet four times per year on Mondays, rather than monthly.

The 2024 meetings will be held on the following Mondays at 5:30 p.m. in the conference room:
April 8th, July 8th and October 14th.
Please mark your calendars!

The next meeting will take place on Monday, April 8, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Care Team Members are:

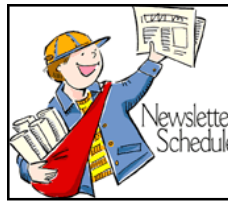
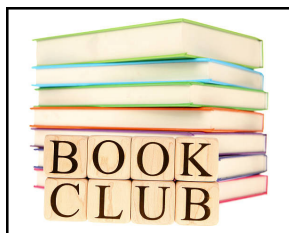
<i>Sylvia Bajorek</i>	<i>Robin McGraw</i>
<i>Texie Doolittle</i>	<i>Sylvia Payne</i>
<i>Lottie Ethridge</i>	<i>Debby Reynolds</i>
<i>Barb Forshey</i>	<i>Susan Roquemore</i>
<i>Mimi Michael</i>	<i>David Roquemore</i>
<i>Faye Morgan</i>	

The church office will send you emails keeping you apprised of pastoral care developments in the congregation, and I hope you will continue to call and send cards to folks. That is a very important part of what we do, and of the overall pastoral care of the congregation.

The Book Club meets on the **fourth Tuesday** of each month at 10:00 a.m. Join in as your schedule permits. Please e-mail Becky McRee at raiamnc@gmail.com if you have questions about the Club.

Join us at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 26th in the parlor

"Covenant of Water"
by: Abraham Verghese



Newsletter Article Deadline

The newsletter is usually published **monthly** on the last Wednesday of the month. The deadline for articles is Wednesday noon prior to the Wednesday that it is published. This is a **FIRM DEADLINE**. E-mail articles are preferred. Send them to Kim at kberry@fpcnewton.com. However, handwritten articles are welcome. **Our Visitors . . . If you are receiving our newsletter for the first time**, perhaps it is because we just heard that you had moved into our neighborhood or you have visited FPC. We would like to extend to you a warm welcome to this community and most especially to any activity in our church. If there is any way we can help you, please let us know.

Community Sunday Suppers Sundays - 5:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Hosts

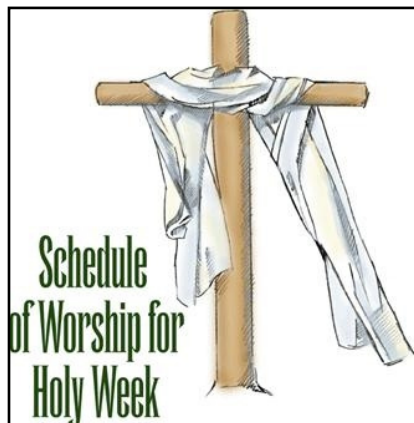
<u>March 3rd</u>	Beth Eden Lutheran
<u>March 10th</u>	Trinity Baptist
<u>March 17th</u>	Liberty Hill
<u>March 24th</u>	FPC Youth
<u>March 31st</u>	FPC Adult S/S Class



Congregational Meeting

There will be a congregational meeting on Sunday, March 10th following the 10:00 a.m. worship service in the sanctuary. The purpose of this meeting is to vote on the motion to concur with David Roquemore's request that the Presbytery dissolve the relationship between him and First Presbyterian Church effective June 9, 2024.





Thursday, March 28th

7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Worship
Service, with Sacrament of Holy Communion,
FPC Sanctuary

Friday, March 29th

7:30 p.m. Community Good Friday Service
Old St. Paul's Lutheran Church in the old
white church.
(2035 Old Conover Startown Road)

Sunday, March 31st

Easter
7:00 a.m. - Sunrise Service, Deal lot (in case of
rain, service will be held in sanctuary)
7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. - Congregational
Breakfast, fellowship hall (hosted by Session)
9:45 a.m. - Pre-service music, sanctuary
10:00 a.m. Easter Service with Sacrament of
Holy Communion, Sanctuary
One Great Hour of Sharing Offering received
11:00 a.m. - Children's Easter Egg Hunt, Deal
lot (in case of rain, will take place in the H/S
Youth Room)

The Easter Cross

On Easter Sunday, please bring flowers from your yard or garden to adorn the Easter Cross that will be located in the sanctuary. 2024 marks the 34th anniversary of this FPC tradition started by the late Dorcas Wooten, Worship Committee chair at the time. The original cross was constructed by the late Charles Major, also a long time member of FPC Newton.

Please bring flowers and help make the Easter Cross more beautiful and meaningful on this special day of worship. Flowers may be placed on the cross before you go to the congregational breakfast or before the worship service begins at 10:00 a.m.



Easter Flowers for the Sanctuary

This year an assortment of Lilies and Spring mixes will be used Easter Sunday to beautify our sanctuary. If you would like to purchase one or more plants, please include a check or cash payment of \$20 per plant as you place your order.

Anyone purchasing a plant will be able to take an Easter Lily or potted Spring mix home following the 10:00 a.m. worship service Easter

Sunday, March 31st. Checks may be made payable to First Presbyterian Church, please note on the memo line "Easter Flowers".

The deadline for ordering is Monday, March 25th.

Sign up using the form in this newsletter and return it to the church office



Lydia Circle
Circle #4

Circle #5

March Circle Meetings

Tuesday, March 5th at 2:00 p.m. at Abernethy Laurels

Monday, March 4th at 2:00 p.m. in the parlor.
Refreshments served at 2:00 with Bible study to begin at 2:30 p.m. Johnnie Leagon & Sally Sigmon, hostesses.

Wednesday, March 13th at 11:30 a.m. at Palermo's Restaurant, Conover.

Women's Ministry Events

Tuesday, March 5th

"Well, Isn't That Special?!" Lunch Group
Join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m. at Fresh Chef Restaurant, Conover.
For more information, please contact Susan Roquemore at 717-645-1220 or sue.roquemore@gmail.com

***Have Flat Hat Will Travel
or
Tales of The Raven - Part 2***

Margie Pulliam will continue sharing with us her fascinating adventures of working in National Parks across our country!

ALL are welcome!
Wednesday - **March 20th** at 10:00 a.m.
in the parlor.
Come Join us!

Circle 5 hosted 21 singles at their annual Valentine Luncheon on February 9th. Each person went home with a rose and goody bag.





Forty- three people enjoyed a covered dish supper and music from Gene Collins, Assistant Pastor at Sandy Ridge Wesleyan Church in Hickory.

Come join us for the next Adult Fellowship Dinner on Thursday, March 14th for St. Patrick's Day Bingo in the fellowship hall!

The evening will begin at 5:45 with Appetizers; Dinner at 6:00 and Bingo from 6:40 until 7:30 p.m.

Each person is asked to bring one of the following: an appetizer, main dish or dessert; plus a Bingo prize. Bingo prizes can be a homemade item, something to re-gift or something everyone would like!

Feel free to come dressed as your favorite Irish character! Please contact Barb or Alan Forshey by Sunday, March 10th to let them know what you plan on bringing. Call or text Barb at 828-244-1200 or email her at cleefor@yahoo.com.

Hope to see you there! — FPC Council on Caring



3 Taylor Edwards

4 Cathy Murdock
Susan Strickland
Caitlin Harris

5 Lynette Incoe

6 Maria Walling

8 Dennis DeBalso
Jane Hinson

9 Payton Nolley

10 Kara Hodges

15 Ann Sperry

16 Grady Krueger
Vivianne McGraw

19 Margie Pulliam

21 Cindy Combs

23 Ben Moose

24 Charles Davis
Wesley Paul

25 Penn Waldron

28 Brian Tate

29 Mike Induni
Norris McRee

31 Randy Miller



Adult SS Class Update
(Meets in the Library, second floor across from the elevator)

Pastor David will lead us for two Sundays (Feb. 25th & Mar. 3rd)) on the topic of 'Christ in the Culture' as a follow-up to the classes on Humanism.

Topics include: "How do we understand the place of Christ in our culture? How do they “fit” together? One answer was given some years back by Richard Niebuhr in “Christ and Culture.” Join us as Dr. Roquemore teaches us about this book and the options it offers us.

On Sunday, March 10th, we will begin a Lenten Study called “Witness at the Cross”. That day we will hear about the ‘Bystanders and Scoffers’, and on the 17th about ‘the Other Victims’.

There will be no Sunday School on March 24th or 31st, but the study will continue on April 7th and go through April 28th, taught by a variety of people. We hope you will join us!



***Celebration of Cathy Murdock’s
Ministry as
Director of Music at FPC***

As many of you know, Cathy will be retiring as our Director of Music following this year’s Easter service. Since 1991, Cathy has blessed us with her talent, knowledge, faithfulness, and leadership, always suffused with grace. Some of her work has been visible and audible to us all, but much has not. She has collaborated with several pastors, organists and other musicians, has worked diligently with Worship Committees, Organ Committees and Building Committees, and has always thoroughly prepared our choirs for their service. She has prayed with and for us all. As a result, our worship of God has been enriched and made more faithful. While we will miss her dearly from her spot in front of the choir or the handbell group, we are pleased that she and Bruce will continue as active members of the church, and we want to wish them well as retirement permits them more freedom for family time and flexibility for other pursuits.

Please help us honor and thank Cathy for her years of service by attending a celebratory luncheon following worship on Palm Sunday, March 24, 2024. A meal will be served starting at approximately 11:20, and time will be set aside for expressions of our appreciation.

Reservations can be made by signing inserts in the bulletin on Sundays, or by contacting the church office (828-464-0648 or kberry@fpcnewton.com).



Don’t Forget!!!

***Sunday, March 10th
Daylight Savings Time
Begins . . .
Remember to move your
clocks forward one hour
Saturday night,
March 9th***



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Youth Connections

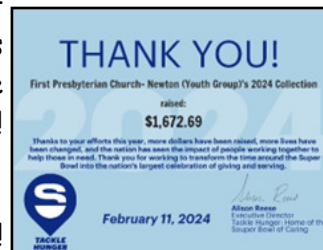
February Recaps



February 4th - Our Youth and Young Disciples helped prepare for our upcoming Ash Wednesday service by burning the palm branches from last year. This is a wonderful way for them to learn about the Lenten season! Following burning the ashes, our Confirmation class met for the first time. This group also met on February 18th to discuss who is our Lord and who is our Savior?

Please continue to be in prayer for this special group of young people: Julian Jefferson, Joaquin Jefferson, Cruz Stinson, Jaylin "Jay" Stinson, James Philhower

February 11th - A huge thank you to the youth, young disciples and adults that helped make the 2024 Souper Bowl of Caring a success! Thanks to your generous contributions we were able to raise \$1,672.69! This will allow us to donate \$836.34 each to The Corner Table and Ashure Ministry (formerly ECCCM)!!! Thank you so much!



February 25th - We had lunch and played board games! We love learning and growing in our faith together! But, we also love having fun and fellowship together. Come join us! Anyone is welcome!

MARCH 2024

Sunday - March 3rd

11 a.m. - Noon
Confirmation Class

Sunday, March 10th

Time & Event TBA

Sunday, March 17th

11 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Youth - St. Patrick's Day Irish Lunch & Confirmation, H/S Youth Room

Sunday, March 24th (Palm Sunday)

10:00 a.m. - Youth & Young Disciples
Palm Sunday Processional
4:30 p.m. - Youth, Community Sunday Supper / Prep Easter Eggs

Sunday, March 31st (Easter)

11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. - Easter Egg Hunt
No Youth Fellowship

January - The Youth served the Community Sunday Supper. March 24th will be the next time Youth will serve. Feel free to join us!





DEDICATION OF DORCAS WOOTEN BENCH

The Church parlor was the scene on Monday, February 12th for the unveiling of a beautiful hand-stitched bench cover presented to the women of the church by Terry Henderson. Son-in-law of well-loved church member, Dorcas Wooten, Henderson described how Dorcas had worked tirelessly on the cover but was unable to finish it before her death in 2022. Terry's late wife, and Dorcas' daughter Rebecca, also helped from time-to-time. Dorcas had wanted the beautiful artwork to be a gift of love for First Presbyterian's women.

Henderson said he sought help in several areas to get the beautiful and intricate cross-stitch- artwork- cover finished after the deaths of both his mother-in-law and wife; he finally was informed of a firm overseas that could complete the work.

The bench is presently placed in the parlor where it will likely remain and is truly lovely to look at. Angels in rich gold thread are the main theme and the quote, "Angels of Mercy" also adorns the beautiful cover.

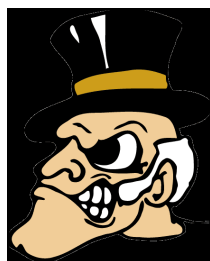
The event was hosted by the church's Creative Hands Committee who served delicious light refreshments, and guests enjoyed mingling while viewing the new bench. Terry Henderson came from his home in Raleigh for the occasion and also spoke from his book, *Hayes Barton @ 100*. The attractive and recently released book tells stories of the people, places and events in one of Raleigh's older, historic neighborhoods.

Basketball and a food drive...a winning combination!

It's time for the 6th Annual March Madness Food Drive Challenge!! Ashure Ministry (formerly called ECCCM) provides food for those across the county who need food supplies for their families. FPC is proud to participate in this challenge.

Here's how it works: from March 1st through April 10th, there will be collection boxes in the narthex. We ask you to donate food or money on behalf of your favorite college basketball team. We will have four boxes: Duke, UNC, Wake Forest, and "Other Teams". Food donations count as 1 pound= 2 points. Financial donations are even more helpful, so money counts as \$1 = 3 points. The team with the most points at the end of the period wins the challenge! If you donate on behalf of a team in the "Other" category, you may write your team's name on the product or the bag, and your team will get credit when Ashure tabulates the results. For monetary donations, please write "FPC" and your team's name on the memo line and turn it in to the church office. Donations can also be made at ecccm.org/mmc.

Let's have fun supporting Ashure Ministry and our favorite teams as we help those in need with food and financial crisis assistance.





American Red Cross

BLOOD
DRIVE

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

First Presbyterian will be hosting our Spring Blood Drive on **Tuesday, March 26th from 2:30 until 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.** Along with three other churches in the community, our church sponsors quarterly blood drives and over the years, have provided many, many units of badly needed blood to The Red Cross.

The need is great. Here are some sobering facts: Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood; More than 38,000 blood donations are needed each day; One out of every ten people admitted in a hospital needs blood, and the total number of blood transfusions in a given year is 14 million! Donating blood is a safe and easy process. To be eligible, you must be 17 years old and weigh more than 110 pounds. A healthy donor can donate red blood cells every 56 days. Blood donation is a simple four-step process: registration and medical history, mini-physical (blood pressure and temperature check and check of red blood cell count), donation and refreshments. The actual blood donation typically takes less than 10-12 minutes and the entire process, from the time you arrive to the time you leave, takes about an hour. One pint of donated blood can save the lives of three people!

So, how can you help? Volunteers are needed to assist with the drive: set-up of the Fellowship Hall prior to the drive; assistance with registration and welcoming of donors; providing refreshments after donation and clean up. You need not commit for the entire drive, so if you can work for an hour or two, that would certainly help! Donations of baked goods are also needed. We are often told that our church has the best desserts of all the locations, so please bake up your favorite! Let Patty Neill or Kim Berry know if you can help in any way. And finally, the most important way that you can help, is to give the "gift of life" by donating a unit of your blood to the Red Cross!



Stop Hunger Now!

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!!! *Rise Against Hunger's* packaging program is a volunteer-based initiative that coordinates the assembly-line packaging of highly nutritious dehydrated meals comprised of rice, soy, vegetables, and 23 essential vitamins and minerals. During the four past events, volunteers have packaged

over 65,000 meals. Our church will again sponsor an event on **Saturday, April 20th** at 12:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Again this year, we are excited to be working with our friends from Beth Eden Lutheran Church. We will also be assisted by a group of young adults from the Junior Beta Club at Riverbend Middle School. This event is for all ages and we encourage everyone to participate as they are able. Set up will begin at 11:00 am and several volunteers are needed for this. To volunteer, please visit the following link:

<http://events.riseagainsthunger.org/FirstPresbyterianNewton2024>

or fill out the form below and return it to the church office by **Monday, April 15th.**



The Presbyterian Church (USA) collects four Special Offerings throughout the church year which allows the whole Church to join together in response to God's grace. They represent the largest, collective way Presbyterians come together to work for a better world. The first Special Offering of the year is the One Great Hour of Sharing and will be received on Easter Sunday, March 31st. Envelopes will be available at the Easter service and donations may also be sent to the church office or made online at the church's website (www.fpcnewton.org). The "OGHS" enables the church to share God's love with our neighbors-in-need

around the world by providing relief to those affected by natural disasters, provide food to the hungry, and helping to empower the poor and oppressed. The receipts from our congregation will be disbursed to several PC(USA) organizations including Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program and Self Development of People. For more information on this effort please visit specialofferings.pcusa.org.

Easter Flowers for the Sanctuary

No. of plants ordered _____ Cash or check enclosed _____

Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church. Cost per plant is \$20.

Ordered by: _____

In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____

Order Deadline: Monday, March 25th

Rise Against Hunger
Saturday, April 20th (12:30 - 3:00 p.m.)
FPC Newton Fellowship Hall

Name: _____ Phone _____

Email: _____

I will: Volunteer: _____ Donate financially: _____ Help Set-Up: _____ (11:30 a.m.)

Family Members Volunteering: _____ Names: _____

Return to the church office by Monday, April 15th

THE NEWSLETTER is published monthly by:
First Presbyterian Church, Newton, NC

Website: www.fpcnewton.org
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Editor: Kim Berry (kberry@fpcnewton.com)
Church Office Hours:
9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday
9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Friday
Sunday School: 11:15 a.m. Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
701 North Main Avenue
Newton, NC 28658

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Place Address Label Here

March 3rd

3rd Sunday in Lent

10:00 a.m. worship, sanctuary
Sacrament of Holy Communion

March 10th

4th Sunday in Lent

10 :00 a.m. worship, sanctuary
Daily Change Offering received

March 17th

5th Sunday in Lent

A.W.E. Service, sanctuary
Celebrate the Gifts of Women
10 :00 a.m. worship

March 24th

Palm Sunday

10:00 a.m. worship, sanctuary
Rev. David Roquemoire preaching

March 28th

7:00 p.m. - Maundy Thursday worship with
Sacrament of Holy Communion, sanctuary

March 31st

Easter

7:00 a.m. - Sunrise Service, Deal lot
7:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. - Congregational Breakfast
9:45 a.m. - Pre-Service Music, sanctuary
10:00 a.m. - Easter Service with Sacrament of Holy
Communion, sanctuary
One Great Hour of Sharing Offering received



Worship
SCHEDULE

