

For God so lo **V**ed the world  
that He g **A**ve  
His on **L**y  
begott **E**n  
So **N**  
tha **T** whoever  
believes **I**n Him  
should **N**ot parish  
but have **E**ternal life

Ash Wed. Feb. 18:  
1 pm Chapel & 7 pm  
Sanctuary

### **Lenten Services**

You are invited to attend our Wednesday  
Lenten meals, 5 pm and services, 7 pm  
*starting February 25-March 25*

Last week, the final Sunday in January, we cancelled services on Sunday morning. Overnight and into the day that Sunday between 9 and 12 inches of snow fell and it was cold. As your pastor, I want you all to be safe. I also want you to hear and know the good news of God's love in Jesus our Lord, but I don't want coming to church to be a new Winter Olympic sport or an arctic survival challenge. Thank you all for being safe.

February does give us a few extra opportunities to come together in worship and fellowship. Lent begins Ash Wednesday, February 18. We will meet for worship at 1pm in the chapel and at 7pm in the main sanctuary. This day we will begin our Lenten journey and walk with Jesus for 40 days toward Holy Week and Easter. Join us on Ash Wednesday.

The Wednesdays following Ash Wednesday, beginning February 25, we will come together for Mid-Week Lenten services. Worship begins at 7pm and we will learn about the "Reformation Windows" that shine onto the balcony with pictures of Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, and Johannes Bugenhagen. Before worship you are invited to a light meal in the basement joining in fellowship with your sisters and brothers on our Lenten journey. The meal begins at 5:30pm.

This month we have Transfiguration Sunday. You have opportunity to drop off your palms from last year so we can make ashes for this year. We missed one opportunity to be together, but we have many more. Join us as we gather in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving and as we begin our Lenten journey.

Pastor Steve

Dorothy Love  
Monthly Worship  
Service 10 am  
*Feb. 17*

Love   
one another  
as I have loved you  
John 15:12

# The Lenten Season

# The More You Know...

In our community we have people from many different cultures and countries as well as some who have been Christians for many years and others who have just recently decided to trust in Christ. Every year around this time I get asked by multiple people; "What is Lent?" "Is Lent in the Bible?" "What are we supposed to do for Lent?" "Is giving up Ice Cream good enough?" Here is a brief survey of the history of the Lenten Season.

The word Lent comes from a Latin word *Quadragesima* which means forty. Lent is meant to commemorate the 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert, where He was tempted by Satan (Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, and Luke 4:1-13). Lent has become a season of mourning and anticipation for Christians as we prepare our hearts for Easter. The heart behind Lent is to help us focus on the central themes of the Gospel. Christians are to mourn the sufferings of Christ on Good Friday as we anticipate Jesus victory over sin and death on Easter Sunday. Christians around the world, of every conceivable tradition, observe Lent in some way. The Eastern Orthodox Church calls it a season of "bright sadness" a moniker that captures (rather exquisitely) the tension for all faithful Christ followers.

**The Hebrew Scriptures:** 40 Days is a significant amount of time in the Hebrew Scriptures. The most prominent example we have is Moses who went into the mountains to fast and pray in preparation for receiving the Ten Commandments. In Exodus the writer records that Moses: *"Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water"* - Exodus 34:28

We also have the example of Elijah who similarly traveled 40 days and nights to be with God. (1 Kings 19:8,9). 40 seems to be a significant number in some other contexts; most notably the 40 years Israel wandered in the wilderness (Numbers 32:13).

**The New Testament:** In the New Testament we see God repeating the pattern with Christ at the beginning of his earthly ministry being Tempted in the desert for 40 days and 40 nights. The number 40 bookends Christ's earthly ministry in Acts 1:3 when we learn that Jesus was with His disciples after His death, burial and resurrection for 40 days prior to his ascension into heaven (Acts 1:9)

**The Early Church:** While there is evidence that the Christians had observed Lent prior to the third century it is the writings of the church fathers that give us the clearest picture of the significance of Lent to the early church. Athanasius of Alexandria wrote that the Lenten fast was to last 40 days and that "the entire world" would keep this fast. Saint Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-AD 430) wrote that: "Our fast at any other time is voluntary; but during Lent, we sin if we do not fast." The historical practice of Lent has always included fasting of some kind.

**Here & Now:** How are modern Christians supposed to observe Lent? Some people will give up an indulgence like wine or ice cream, others will undertake something more challenging such as giving up meat or even undertaking a 40 day fast. If you are going to undertake a fast of this length you should make sure you are healthy enough and do so. John Chrysostom (c. 347-407) was the bishop of ancient Constantinople who gave a sermon on the practice of Christian fasting you can access it an excerpt here. ([https://www.redeemer.com/learn/prayer/prayer\\_and\\_fasting/fasting\\_basics](https://www.redeemer.com/learn/prayer/prayer_and_fasting/fasting_basics)) If you are new to Christianity or perhaps you have trusted Jesus for years but never undertook a fast here are a few tips and encouragements.

**Give up something you will feel.** I once knew a young women who told me quite proudly that she ordered the cake for dessert because she was giving up ice cream for Lent. While it's possible that she really, really likes ice cream so much that the concession of eating cake instead actually meant something to her, I suspect she misunderstood the nature of fasting. You should have the sense, while you are fasting, that you are "going without" in order to remind us of how Jesus "went without" on the Cross as He lost His life, His dignity, and love of the Father. **Don't brag about it.** Jesus gives us instructions as to the condition our hearts should be in as we fast. *"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fast- and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."* - Matthew 6:16-18

Keep up your outward appearance and try to resist the temptation to pat yourself on the back. **Do not look down on others who aren't fasting or not going to the same lengths as you.** A fast is an inner discipline between you and God. Resist the temptation to look down your nose at people who are less disposed or disciplined. If undertaken with the right attitude spiritual disciplines like fasting can result in a kind of spiritual pride that undermines the Gospel of grace.

By Jeff Schoch



# Lori Holt

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
February, can you believe it? The month of Groundhog Day and Valentine's Day. Looking ahead Thursday, March 26, is Opening Day for our Reds, hosting Boston!! This is the first time the Reds have opened the season against Boston!! Now this is just so y'all can mark your calendars, Reds fans!!

We continue celebrating Epiphany, Sunday, February 1, 8, and 15. Please join us for these Sundays. Church Council members will be installed February 1 at both 8:30 and 10:30 services.

Wednesday, February 18, is Ash Wednesday. There will be worship services with Holy Communion and distribution of ashes in the Chapel at 1:00 and at 7:00 in the Sanctuary with Holy Communion and distribution of ashes. Please plan to join us at one of these worship opportunities.

Sunday, February 22, will be the first Sunday in Lent. Please plan to be at one of these worship services.

Wednesday, February 25, will be our first Lenten service. These worship opportunities are at 7:00. Please join us!

We can always use help with Altar Guild. If you feel moved to help with this ministry, which doesn't take long; please contact me at the office. Thank you!!

We can always use help with PB & J, too. Again, if you feel moved to help with this music ministry, please contact me at the office. Thank you!!

Happy Birthday, Diana!!

Love in Christ,  
Lori

## Love is patient, love is kind.

Love does not envy,  
is not boastful,  
is not arrogant, is not rude,  
is not self-seeking,  
is not irritable, and does  
not keep a record of wrongs.  
Love finds no joy  
in unrighteousness  
but rejoices in the truth.

It bears all things,  
believes all things,  
hopes all things,  
endures all things.  
*Love never ends.*

-1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Altar Guild Volunteer  
February  
Mary Ann Loomis  
Patti Puckett  
We Need Volunteers!  
Sign up today!

**Quilting Circle**  
to meet  
**Wednesday,**  
**Feb. 25**  
**9 am**

### Coffee Time!

Every *first Sunday of the month*,  
**9:30 am**, we will be having a fellowship gathering in our church "Christ and Coffee" bar for coffee, donuts, and fellowship!

December 23, 2025

Dear Congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your very generous gift to the Council of Religious Education in the amount of \$6000.00 on December 22, 2025 and your continued support of our program.

Your generous contributions and support help us to provide our classes of first through fourth grade students in the Sidney City Schools with Christian Education. We appreciate your faithful help in fulfilling our mission of reaching the unchurched children in our community.

With gratitude,

*Pam Wagner*

Council of Religious Education

Pam Wagner, Secretary

2025 has been an exciting year for me as Director. A lot of changes have happened with the reorganization of the shop as well as adding three new volunteers. Business has picked up since the addition of a yard sign and with posting more on Facebook. Donations have increased and when we can't use all of them, the Special Olympics of Ohio will pick them up.

It would not have been possible to help people the way we were able to without the many donations, including monetary ones, we received over the past year. We had people coming out of jail needing clothes and some needing birth certificates to be able to get a job. Next, we helped people that were either laid off or had lost their job needing help with utility bills and we also were able to help them with a gas card so they could look for a job. Lastly, we helped people that are homeless with clothes and blankets.

Most of the people we helped last year never came back for more help other than a small few. One of the many things I learned this past year is that some people just need a little help to go on with hope. Romans 15:13 says "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (NIV)

In Kind assistance: 14 for \$161.00

Cash assistance: 14 for 276.96

I want to thank you for supporting the thrift shop and believing in the mission we have there. ~~Melissa

## **Volunteer Opportunities For You!**

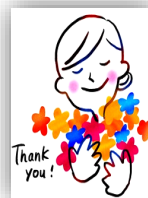
~Thrift Shop Cashier or  
Pricer

~Read the Lessons during  
Worship

~Altar Guild 4 times, 1  
month, a year

*In Christ Love Wins!*

**Ways You  
can Help**





## St. John's Church Council Minutes

### St John's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Date: January 12, 2026

**CALL TO ORDER:** by President Myron Koester

**OPENING DEVOTIONS:** Pastor Steve Edmiston

**AGENDA REVIEW:** Kaleb motioned to approve agenda as amended (assignment of Christmas donations added to new business). Kathy seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Norb and Deb Mertz volunteered to serve a term on council. Pastor Steve motioned to accept them to council. Ann seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Kathy nominated Myron Koester for president and Kaleb Headings for vice president. Ann seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Dave Bollheimer will remain treasurer and secretary is undetermined.

A cell phone sign up list was passed around for council use only. This will assist in quicker response when communication between council members is needed.

The church entrance has been closed until repairs can be made. A contract has been signed for the repairs and will be started as weather allows. Side doors will be opened as needed for events such as upcoming funeral.

Christmas offerings will go toward the budget to meet 2025 budget. Determining where special offerings (Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas) go will be placed on the agenda before these events in future years.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** A copy of the Secretary's report was distributed with the agenda. Kaleb moved to approve as submitted and Kathy seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

The Treasurer's Report was distributed. Kaleb moved to approve the report as submitted. Josh seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### **STAFF REPORT:**

Pastor Report- Presented by Pastor Steve

Christmas services went well.

Becky fractured her wrist the Sunday before Christmas. She is doing well but has a lengthy road to recovery.

Christmas decorations have been taken down.

Fred Figley funeral service this week. Will need to open a side door for this.

## Church Council *Part 2*

Bob Vogler asked for a motion to increase AA contributions from \$3.60 per meeting to \$5.00 per meeting to cover cost of wear and tear. This group meets 3 times per week in the basement. Pastor Steve moved to increase this contribution to \$5.00 per meeting. Pat seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Lent is coming soon. Ash Wednesday is Feb 18, 2026.

Volunteer Coordinator Report - no reports submitted

Thrift Shop Report - Financial report enclosed.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### *Ministry - Education & Youth:*

Youth Christmas party cancelled due to weather. This will be rescheduled.

#### *Ministry - Music & Worship:*

Becky, a cello player and a violinist all suffered injuries.

Deb questioned if a small donation could be given to guest musicians. Was told that there was money in the budget for this. Deb will be lining up some contacts for this.

#### *Outreach - Evangelism:*

No activity

#### *Outreach - Parish Life:*

Lining up Lenten meals for Wednesdays during Lent (except Ash Wednesday). A sign up sheet was circulated for volunteers to provide these. Last year this was attended by approximately 15 people per meal. Will also accept a free will offering to offset cost.

#### *Operations - Finance:*

Made budget 2025

W-2's have been sent

Joy Circle check has been sent.

#### *Operations - Property:*

Still looking for a good location for a ramp into church.

### *Additional Notes:*

**PRAYER REQUEST:** JoAnn Koester (Myron's mother), Becky Mann and the family of Fred Figley.

**DEVOTIONS:** Kathy Vogler

### **INFORMATION:**

\*sign up sheets for communion assistants and devotions was passed

\*Newsletter deadline: January 21, 2026

\*Next council meeting: Monday, February 9, 2026 -7:00 PM

### **ATTENDANCE :**

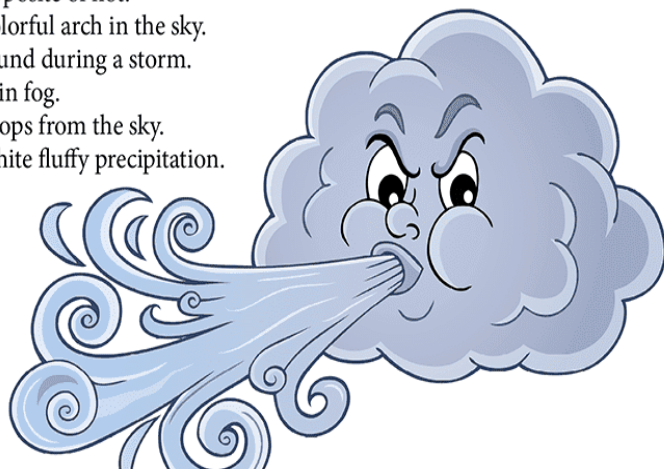
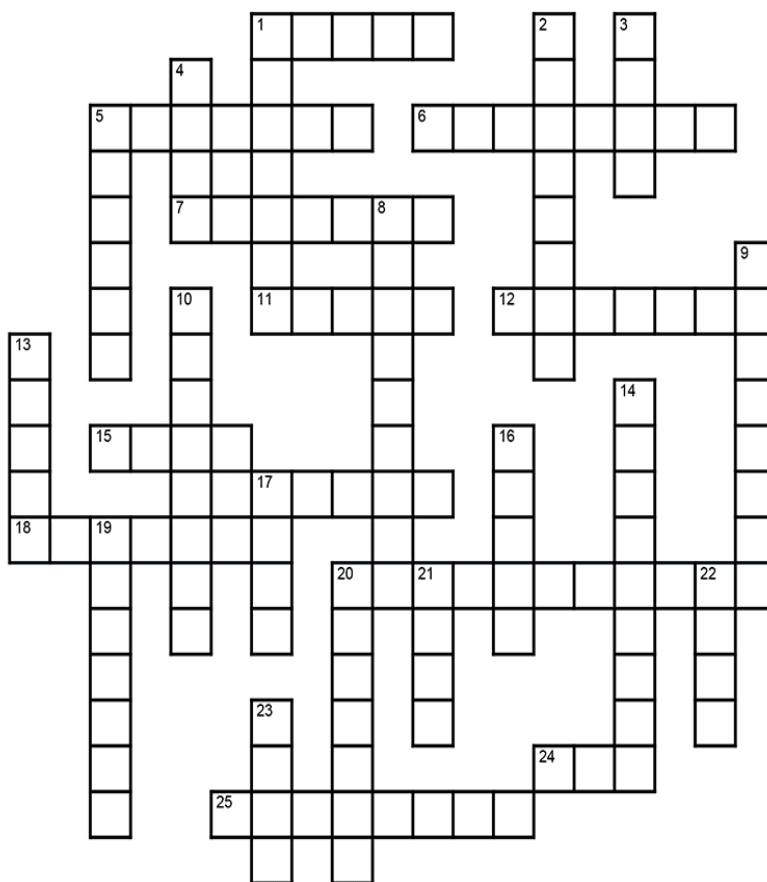
*Present: Pastor Steve Edmiston, Myron Koester, Ann Hubler, Kathy Vogler, Kaleb Headings, Dave Bollheimer, Pat Mullen, Wes Cavinder, Michelle Cavinder, Deb Mertz, Norb Mertz, Josh Ward, Bob Loomis, Fred Billing*      *Absent: Steve Holt (ill)*      Margy Headings (present as secretary until this position is filled)

# ACROSS

1. Full of sunshine.
5. Long-term atmospheric conditions.
6. Moisture in the air.
7. Extended period of dry weather.
11. A strong disturbance in the weather.
12. Light rain.
15. Pleasant temperature.
17. Not cloudy.
18. Rotating funnel of air.
20. Measure of thermal energy.
24. Low visibility weather.
25. Prediction of weather.

# DOWN

1. Different climates throughout the year.
2. Heavy snow.
3. Ice pellets from the sky.
4. Moving air.
5. Covered with gray.
8. Powerful tropical cyclone.
9. Prolonged period of hot weather.
10. Covered with clouds.
13. Ice crystals on surfaces.
14. Bright electrical discharge.
16. Frozen rain.
17. Opposite of hot.
19. Colorful arch in the sky.
20. Sound during a storm.
21. Thin fog.
22. Drops from the sky.
23. White fluffy precipitation.





Dear Valued Supporter,

Thanks to your incredibly generous donation to Match Day 2025, Rustic Hope received a check for \$79,375.00! Wowza!!! To say we are thankful is an understatement. We acknowledge how truly blessed we are to have such strong community support and value each and every one of our donors. Because of the nature of this ministry, we have no income except for the donations we receive from caring people like you. The money received from Match Day 2025 will be used throughout 2026 for operating expenses (diapers, baby hygiene items, food, etc.).

In the past, The Community Foundation of Shelby County has always done Match Day on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. This year, however, they have decided to change the date of all future Match Day events to the Spring. The 2026 Match Day is scheduled for March 4<sup>th</sup>. We realize that this date is literally right around the corner, and it is for this reason that we have decided NOT to participate for 2026. We are strategically budgeting so that the generous donations we just received will carry us throughout this year and into 2027. At that time, we will once again participate in Match Day.

May God bless you for your support and we thank you for helping us provide emotional, physical, and spiritual support to families in need.

Faithfully,

Connie McEldowney  
Executive Director

937-526-2704  
www.rustichope.org  
rustic.hope@gmail.com

**A Match Day** thank you from New Choices. Survivors of domestic violence in Shelby County will receive the services that they need for a life free from abuse.



January 7th, 2026

St. John's Lutheran Church  
c/o Luther's Purse  
120 W. Water ST  
Sidney, OH 45365

We appreciate your monetary gift to the Right to Life of Shelby County during the 2025 calendar year. We are very grateful for your generous support. With your gift of \$400.00, RTL of Shelby County can aid our community in protecting the unborn to the born and holding onto the value that all lives are from the Creator from conception until natural death.

Right to Life of Shelby County is a 501(c)3 charitable organization. Please keep this written acknowledgment of your donation for your tax records.

On behalf of all of us at Right to Life, I wish you a peace-filled and prosperous 2026.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Covault  
Financial Secretary  
finsec@shelbycountyrighttorg

St. John's,

We would like to thank you for your generous donation. Your donation helps us to keep assisting the community and we are truly grateful. Thank you and God bless.

Right to Life Thrift Shop of Shelby County.

RE: Match Day 2025

THANK YOU doesn't begin to express how grateful we are for your support and kind donation this Match Day!!! Samaritan Works relies on donations like yours to continue our mission of Faith Filled Sober Living. Our vision is to create a safe and supportive environment where individuals living with addiction can find hope, healing, and recovery through our faith based programming. We strive to empower people to break free from addiction and live a life of purpose and joy.

To highlight our 2025 year, we were the proud recipients of a grant from The One Ohio Foundation, that allowed us to add a third home. We opened our Graduate Home in May 2025, and it has housed 5 graduates from our program, with a waiting list to get in. We also hired an Outreach Coordinator in July 2025, allowing us to take our program to the community for those who cannot reside in our sober living homes.

Samaritan Works has also purchased a second vehicle to add moving services to our list of services for our residents. Those moving in or out of our homes, now have our assistance in relocating to a new home. All of these expansions in 2025 are rooted in our mission to provide the best sober living program and support to those in recovery in our community. Your dollars go directly to program supplies and costs for our residents and our outreach clients. Without your support, none of this programming would be possible.

Again, I sincerely thank you for your continued support and generosity to Samaritan Works. Your efforts go a long way in preventing another family from losing a loved one to addiction.

For more information feel free to call 937-638-4545, or visit our website at [www.samaritanworks.org](http://www.samaritanworks.org), or follow us on Facebook

Sincerely,

Tricia Anderson, Executive Director  
Executive Director  
937-638-9061 cell

Thank you for supporting Mercy Mission House through Match Day!

Shelby County Community Foundation.

**ST. JOHN'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

120 W. WATER STREET  
SIDNEY, OHIO  
45365

PHONE: 937-492-8047  
FAX: 937-492-2462  
HTTP://WWW.SIDNEYSTJOHNS.COM

**ST. JOHN'S  
THRIFT SHOP**  
319 SOUTH OHIO AVE.  
SIDNEY, OH 45365  
PHONE: 937-492-0337

**WORSHIP SERVICES:**

SATURDAY, 6:00 P.M.  
SUNDAY, 8:30 & 10:30 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL, 9:30  
AM

*"Go therefore and make disciples  
of all nations, baptizing them in  
the name of the Father and of the  
Son and of the Holy Spirit, and  
teaching them to obey everything  
that I have commanded you. And  
remember, I am with you always,  
to the end of the age."*

*Matthew 28:19-20*

*God's Vision,  
Our Mission*

**Please pray for our Homebound Members and mail them a card to:**

Elaine Boughner, 736 Stratford Dr., Sidney, Oh 45365  
Erika Montgomery, 2333 Apache Dr., Sidney, Oh 45365  
Rhonda Vance, 1302 Spruce St., Sidney, Oh 45365  
Dick Wilson, 5577 Heathrow Dr., Powell, Oh 43065-7970

**Dorothy Love, 3003 W. Cisco Road, Sidney, Oh 45365**

Christine Weber-A03

Brenda Riddle, A-23

**Dorothy Love Apartments: 2400 N. Kuther Rd., Sidney, Oh**

Margaret Ike, Apt. 213  
Jeanne Mears, Apt. 301  
Gary Paul, Apt. 324  
Dick Clark, Apt. 303N  
Shirley Sparks, Apt. 117

**Fair Haven, 2901 Fair Rd., Sidney, Oh 45365**

Residents: Ellen Freytag


**Landings of Sidney, 1150 Russell Road, Sidney, Oh 45365**

Resident: LeRue Gooder, Rm. 506  
Phyllis Blust, Rm. 508  
Linda Steenrod, Rm. 802  
Nick Miller, Rm. 306

**Ayden Health Care (Piqua) 275 Kienle Drive, Piqua, Oh 45356**

Pamela Morgan Rm. 307

*At St. John's, we are given the opportunity to worship God,  
study His Word, and serve Him in many capacities, while at  
the same time enjoying Christian fellowship. Please consider  
ways that you can get involved!*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Worship, 8:30 & 10:30 am Adult & Children Sun- day school, 9:30 am Donuts, 9:30 am	2 Office Closes, 3pm AA, 12 pm	3 Office Closes, 3pm	4 Office Closes, 3pm AA, 12 pm PB&J, 5:30 pm	5 Office Closes, 3pm Senior lunch, 12 pm	6 Office Closes, 12 pm AA, 12 pm	7 Worship, 6 pm, NA, 8 pm
8 Worship, 8:30 & 10:30 am Adult & Children Sun- day school, 9:30 am	9 Office Closes, 3pm AA, 12 pm <b>Church Committee Meeting, 6 pm Church Council Meeting, 7 pm</b>	10 Office Closes, 3pm	11 Office Closes, 3pm AA, 12 pm PB&J, 5:30 pm	12 Office Closes, 3pm	13 Office Closes, 12 pm AA, 12 pm	14 Worship, 6 pm NA, 8 pm  <i>Valentine's Day</i>
15 Worship, 8:30 & 10:30 am Adult & Children Sun- day school, 9:30 am	16 Office Closes, 3pm AA, 12 pm	17 Office Closes, 3pm <b>Dorothy Love, 10 am</b>	18 Office Closes, 3pm AA, 12 pm PB&J, 5:30 pm <b>Ash Wednesday Services, 1 &amp; 7 pm</b>	19 Office Closes, 3pm	20 Office Closes, 12 pm AA, 12 pm	21 Worship, 6 pm NA, 8 pm
22 Worship, 8:30 & 10:30 am Adult & Children Sun- day school, 9:30 am	23 Office Closes, 3pm AA, 12 pm	24 Office Closes, 3pm	25 Office Closes, 3pm Quilting, 9 am AA, 12 pm PB&J, 5:30 pm Lenten Meal, 6 pm <b>Lenten service, 7pm</b>	26 Office Closes, 3pm	27 Office Closes, 12pm AA, 12 pm	28 Worship, 6 pm NA, 8 pm
Quilting, - 4th Wed of month						Church Office Open: Mon-Thurs. 8-3 pm Fri., 8 am-12 pm