



March 2026

THE Messenger

SYCAMORE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

The Eucharist in Lent

In our Methodist tradition we're accustomed to celebrating communion once a month. There's no theological reason for this. It's just because three centuries ago the only ordained clergy who could preside over the sacrament was a circuit rider who was only in town once a month or so. For most of history, and still in many denominations, the Eucharist (*Communion*) is a regular part of weekly worship.

The Eucharist (*Communion*) speaks to Lent: it replicates the meal Jesus shared the day before he surrendered to the cross. It touches on Lenten themes like repentance, grace, transformation, and reconciliation. Of course, it is a Resurrection meal— but resurrection is what draws us to the cross: the promise that when we give our lives in love God gives us new ones.

We are inviting all to join us on these Sundays on Lent and experience God's means of grace ...

Blessings and peace,
Pastor Luis



Country Charm
SUMC Fundraiser

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
Saturday, March 7

DINNER w/SILENT & LIVE AUCTION

TICKETS: Adults - \$25; Children 5-12 - \$10; under 5 - FREE
5:00 PM - Appetizers • 6:00 PM - Beef Brisket/Pulled Chicken Dinner
5:00-7:30 PM - Silent Auction • 7:00 PM - Live Auction

Sycamore United Methodist Church, 160 Johnson Ave., Sycamore IL

Purchase your tickets in the church office, the Concourse on Sundays, or online by scanning the QR Code.



Lenten Cantata
The **Body of Christ**

Performed by the SUMC Chancel Choir

Sunday, March 29th at 5:00 PM
Sycamore United Methodist Church
160 Johnson Avenue, Sycamore, IL

See page 5 for more details



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Sycamore United
Methodist Church



@sycamoreumc



MARCH 2026 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays at 9:30am
Children's Sunday School at 9:30am & 4:30pm
Sunday Evening Service at 4:30pm

www.facebook.com/SUMCIllinois/ or
www.youtube.com/results?searchquery=sycamore+umc

MARCH 1 2ND SUNDAY IN LENT SERVICES OF HOLY COMMUNION

Psalm 121
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
John 3:1-17
Liturgist: Sheri Goray

MARCH 8 3RD SUNDAY IN LENT

Psalm 95
Romans 5:1-11
John 4:5-42
Liturgist: Kristin Miller

MARCH 15 4TH SUNDAY IN LENT

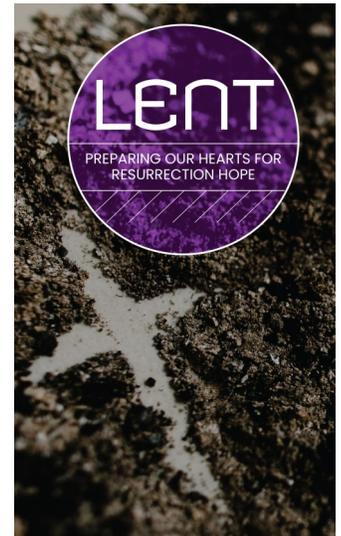
Psalm 23:
Ephesians 5:8-14:
John 9:1-41
Liturgist: Jenny Slater

MARCH 22 5TH SUNDAY IN LENT

Psalm 130:
Romans 8:6-11:
John 11:1-45:
Liturgist: Diann Welsh

MARCH 29 PALM SUNDAY

Liturgy of the Palms
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29:
Matthew 21:1-11:
Liturgy of the Passion
Isaiah 50:4-9a:
Psalm 31:9-16:
Philippians 2:5-11:
Matthew 27:11-54
Liturgist: Julie Sgarlata



In Our Thoughts & Prayers

Those for whom we pray:

Nancy	Mike Milyanovich
Diana Grace	Kelly Brens
Neil Weir	Jessica Hagendorn
Mark McGee	Damian
Matthew Herbaugh	Becky Sass
Jimmy Schmidt	Vicki
Bob Clarner	Otto
Norma Clarner	Linda Toles
Jerrica Newby	Regan & James
Blake Trout	Lois Cullison
Austin & Becca Fraedrich	Kathy M.
and their	Beth Rommel
newborn twins	Aimee Alanis
Bea Skelton	Merle Probasco
Larry Mathey	Ellis McLives

We extend our sympathies to the family of:

Donna Mathey
Claren Schroeder (Joann Tallon's mother)
Tom Fenstermaker
Ben Bianco (Rick and Jan Bianco's son)

The Service Personnel and Their Families

SGT Matthew Einhorn	*Maj Steve Haack
PFC Timothy Einhorn	*CPL Joshua Caraballo
*CPO Frank Incapreo	SPC Sutit Jackson
SFC Christopher Isabel	PV2 Liam Keller
MSG Matt "Scott" Stewart	E-5 PO Hayden Royer
*LT Matthew Herbaugh	E-3 Amanda Royer
PO3 Samuel V. Bell	*PV2 John Archer
SSGT Brock Grimaldi	<i>*indicates deployed personnel</i>
*SPC Alexis Jones	

STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION ARE YOU PRAYING!

Lent is a time to focus on our relationship with God. Traditionally, that includes an emphasis on prayer. This is exactly what Jesus did during his 40 days in the desert. Through his example, we can reflect on what pulls us away from God and embrace those things that bring us closer to him.

Living the rest of your life for the glory of God may require a change in your priorities, your schedule, your relationships, and everything else. The path that glorifies God will likely be more difficult. Even though it won't be easy, God will give you wisdom, strength, and faith to make the choices to live for Him. You will receive divine power through the Holy Spirit working through God's word to generously give of your time, talents, and treasures.

This power will enable you to choose the right path that gives God glory. You too will be able to echo the prayer of Jesus to God as he prepared to be crucified on the cross:

"I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do."

(John 17:4)

As you prepare for a transformed life to serve, witness, and show compassion to others, you may direct your financial gifts to the church in several ways: checks may be mailed to the church (160 Johnson Avenue, Sycamore, IL 60178, attention Business Director Jim McCue), donations may be given on-line at www.sycamoreumc.org/giving, or by text "giving" to the church phone number (815-895-9113). May your life of generosity and gratitude bring honor and praise to God.

REMEMBER SUMC IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

A legacy gift is your opportunity to support the church's work beyond your lifetime, to change lives and honor the role the church played in your life, your family's life, our community, and our world. Legacy gifts allow flexibility to respond to the greatest needs of tomorrow. Legacy gifts can benefit the giver through tax savings. Retirement assets are particularly good assets to achieve the best tax outcome for a planned gift. Consult with your accountant, financial planner, or attorney before finalizing any charitable gift.



OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER, GROW, AND SERVE

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

- **Basic Info:** We are starting to plan for this year's VBS, *Rainforest Falls*, which will be happening July 13th-17th. Mark your calendars and save the date for any kiddos age 4-entering 5th grade. Adult/youth volunteers are needed - if you're interested please contact Becca Rome. We're still looking for people for the decor team to make transform the church into the Central American Rainforest.
- **Decorators Wanted:** Those interested are invited to join us on March 1st after the 9:30 worship service, around 10:45. Or, please reach out to Becca Rome or Todd Puttkammer.



NEW DISCIPLE/MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Our New Disciple/Member class will be held Sundays, March 8 and 22, after morning worship. If you're new or would like to learn more about our mission and ministries, join us for these two short sessions to explore who we are and how we can support you on your faith journey. Please let us know if you're interested.

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

SPRING AHEAD

PAJAMA SUNDAY

Worship Service at 9:30 am

Roll out of bed and come to church in your PJs!
It's a fun and comfortable way to gather for worship — slippers optional!

YOUNG ADULT

- **Young Adults Fellowship** meets every Thursday evening from 6-7:30. Anyone age 18-29 are invited for dinner and discussion about how God is showing up in our lives. A virtual meeting is available.

YOUTH MINISTRY

- **SUMC Life Missions** will be starting the fundraising for this year's mission trip to Louisville KY. We have 11 signed up for the trip. We will be bringing back pizzas, Andale tacos, and a couple of others stay tuned.
- **Youth Group** will be every other week. The next youth group is March 1st, 15th, and 29th, 6-8 p.m. We have food, games, and devotion. All are welcome.
- **Breakfast and Devotions (BAD)** started on March 19th we will be meeting once a month coordinating with Sycamore High School's late start schedule and the FCA (Fellow Christian Athletes) schedule.

NURSERY HELP NEEDED

We are still looking for volunteers for the Nursery, Sunday school, youth group, and Christian Kids. Please contact Todd Puttkammer if you would like to offer your time and talents.

PRIDE MINISTRY UPDATES

PRIDE (Promoting Reconciliation Inclusion Diversity and Equality) is so excited to be bringing individuals and families together to join in conversations, meals, games, and fellowship. Whether you join us for our monthly Game Nights (3/21 from 4-7pm) or for our educational events; we love seeing you and joining in community! When we gather we create space to know one another more deeply and reflect God's welcoming spirit. In a world that can often feel isolating, shared experiences remind us that we belong to one another. Reminder you are a beloved child of God and we hope to see you soon!



OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER, GROW, AND SERVE

ABC PRESCHOOL MINISTRY NEWS

ABC Preschool will be hosting the Lenten Soup Supper on March 11 at 6 PM

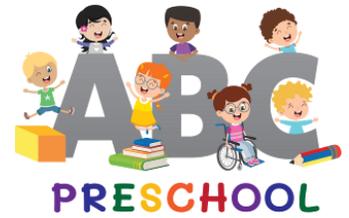
Our annual Beach Party week begins the week March 16

Spring Break begins on Monday, March 23

Registration for the fall will begin on March 2 for SUMC members and current ABC Families.

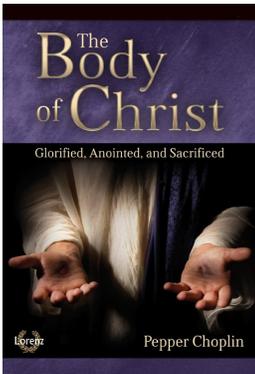
Open Registration will begin on March 4

The Mission Project this month is an annual Adopt-a-Pet in support of T.A.I.L.S.



Blessings,
The ABC Preschool Staff

WORSHIP, MUSIC AND ARTS



Lenten Cantata - Sunday, March 29, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Performed by the SUMC Chancel Choir, this beautifully and creatively crafted Lenten cantata by Pepper Choplin invites us to walk alongside Jesus through the final days of His life. Through moving music, powerful narration, and thoughtful reflection, we are drawn into the story of Christ's journey toward the cross and the deeper meaning behind His words and actions. This worshipful musical experience offers a time to pause, listen, and reflect during the Lenten season, helping us prepare our hearts for Holy Week and the hope of Easter. All are welcome to come and be inspired by this meaningful evening of music and faith.

REFUGEE GOOD NEIGHBOR TEAM

Our 2 most recent families were from Venezuela. They are doing well. The parents have jobs and the kids are enjoying school. While we are saddened that our country is not welcoming any new families, there are still ways that we can continue our mission of welcoming our neighbors from all over the world. There are many families that arrived here in the past few years that are feeling afraid and confused during this time of unrest. World Relief has recently reached out to our group, and we are blessed to be meeting a family of 7 from Syria. Please pray that we can help this family feel welcome and loved.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH UNIT MEETING

The next UWF unit meeting will be March 12, 2026 at noon. Come learn about Katharina Luther, the wife of Martin Luther who was the spark behind the Protestant Reformation in the 1500s. If you are not part of a circle please bring a hot dish or salad to share. Please bring your own table service. All are welcome.



SAVE THE DATE FOR A "WOMEN IN THE BIBLE" FASHION SHOW

UWF will host a Women in the Bible Fashion Show at 1:00 on April 26th. It will be a fun yet faithful journey as we learn about 20 different women of the Bible. All are invited, bring your friends, bring your neighbors. A free will donation will be collected.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER, GROW, AND SERVE



HOPE HAVEN FOR MARCH

Prepare or buy just one course or the entire meal to feed 60-65 people! **Please call the church (815-895-9113) to let us know if you will be delivering it. Sign-up at the Welcome Center in the Concourse or by calling the church office at 815-895-9113.** You may also get on the Hope Haven volunteer list by texting HOPEHAVEN to the church # of 815-895-9113.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS FOR MARCH

Soup	Crunchy Peanut butter	Canned meals (i.e spaghetti, beefaroni)	Toilet Paper
Canned beans	Diced Tomatoes	Salad Dressing	Tissues
Crackers	Spaghetti sauce	Paper towels	Toiletries
Canned fruit	Mayo		Bar Soap
Canned veggies			



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Join us for a Red Cross Blood Drive at Sycamore United Methodist Church in the Commons on **Saturday, April 4**, from **8:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.** To schedule an appointment, call **1-800-RED CROSS** or visit **RedCrossBlood.org**. Please bring a **photo ID**, your **blood donor card**, or **two other forms of ID** with you to your appointment. Your donation can help save lives — thank you for supporting this important ministry of care for our community!

American Red Cross

ALL-RECOVERY MEETING AT SUMC – BEGINNING MARCH 11TH

We are beginning an **All-Recovery Meeting** on Wednesdays at **6:30 p.m.** starting March 11th. This gathering is designed to be welcoming to individuals from all recovery pathways, including AA, NA, SMART Recovery, and others. All-Recovery Meetings are open to anyone who supports recovery and honor multiple pathways, recognizing that each person's recovery journey is unique.



These non-denominational meetings provide a safe space focused on hope, connection, and healing—because recovery does not happen alone.

The meeting will be facilitated by **Steve McBride**, DeKalb County Recovery Coach with **Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery (SVVOR)**. SVVOR is a **Recovery Community Organization (RCO)** serving Lee, Whiteside, Ogle, and DeKalb counties. As a non-profit organization, SVVOR supports individuals and families through peer support, family support, and more than 10 recovery support groups across the four-county region. SVVOR also operates two sober living homes: **Legacy**, a men's recovery home in Dixon, and **Cledy's House**, a women's sober living facility in Rock Falls, Illinois.

For more information, go to their website at svvor.org

THE GREATER CHURCH

- **District Leadership Training:** If you serve on a committee or would like to learn more about how to serve the church, consider joining us for our greater District Training Day on March 7th from 9-noon @ Oregon UMC. More information can be found here: <https://www.umcnic.org/calendar/prairie-south-leadership-training-2026>
- **Help Shape the Future of the Church:** A denomination-wide survey open to **ALL** United Methodist Clergy and Laity (available in six languages). It asks what you hope for, what you envision, and what message you want gathering participants to carry forward. It is open until February 15. <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/council-of-bishops-leadership-gathering/survey>

CHURCH SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION



The Memorial Committee will be awarding scholarships to deserving and qualified students planning to attend a 2 or 4-year-college or university next year, a trade school, or an apprenticeship program. Applicants for the church scholarships must be an active member of Sycamore United Methodist Church. Church membership is not required for the Karen S. Palm-Hale-Hagen Nursing Memorial United Methodist Endowed Scholarship.

Applications and specific criteria for the scholarships are available in the church office and online at www.sycamoreumc.org. The application needs to be completed and returned to the church office by March 31, 2026. Be sure to use the 2026 scholarship applications to be considered for a scholarship. The scholarships will be awarded in June.

Scholarship Options:

- A limited number of scholarships of at least \$500 will be awarded from the Church Scholarship Funds. The number of scholarships vary each year and will be determined by the amount of money in the scholarship fund at the time the applications are reviewed in April as well as the applicant's involvement in church activities. Contributions to this fund can be made at any time during the year.
- The \$1,000 Marion B. Marsh Memorial Scholarship will be given to a person entering the freshman year.
- The Barbara J. Rodgers Memorial Scholarship of with a minimum of \$1,000 and a maximum of \$5,000 will be given to a full-time student who has completed the freshman year and is planning to continue his/her undergraduate, graduate, or post-graduate studies at an accredited college or university, majoring in a religious or education vocation. Priority will be given to a prior recipient of the Barbara J. Rodgers Memorial Scholarship. If no applicant meets the criteria, the scholarship will not be awarded.
- The Midge Hartsuch Memorial Scholarship of \$500 will be given to a student who will be attending Kishwaukee Community College in Malta. If no applicant meets the criteria, the scholarship will not be awarded.
- Sycamore United Methodist Men Scholarships - Two \$500 scholarships will be available. If only one qualified candidate applies in a given year, a \$1,000 scholarship will be given in both Warren's and Joe's names:
 - ⇒ The Warren Lowe College Scholarship to honor and provide financial assistance to one student who will be attending a 2 or 4-year college or university in the following school year.
 - ⇒ The Joe Villa Helping Hands Scholarship to honor and provide financial assistance to one student who will be pursuing further education in a "hands on" Trade/Technical School or Apprenticeship Program.
- The Ronald and Genevieve Maurer Scholarship -A \$1,000 scholarship for a student at any level of a degree program, trade school, or apprenticeship program with special consideration to a student pursuing an education degree, is attending Northern Illinois University, or Kishwaukee Community College.
- The Karen S. Palm-Hale-Hagen Nursing Memorial United Methodist Endowed Scholarship, based on funds in the account, with the minimum of \$500 will be awarded to one high school senior declaring "Nursing" as their college major or an active college student pursuing a nursing degree each year for their dedication to serving others in the surrounding Sycamore/DeKalb communities. If no applicant meets the criteria, the scholarship will not be awarded. (NOTE: The criteria and application for this scholarship are different from the Sycamore United Methodist Church Scholarship criteria and application.)

MARCH 2026 EVENTS CALENDAR

The deadline for the April issue of The Messenger is March 20th

<p>1 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 10:45 AM VBS Decorating Committee 4:30 PM BREAKTHROUGH Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 PM Confirmation Class of 2026 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group</p>	<p>2 Board of Ordained Ministry in building 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 12:00 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Bible Study: The Book of Romans 7:00 PM Trustees</p>	<p>3 4:30 PM GS Troop 4294 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 1 6:00 PM GS Troop 697 6:30 PM Food Pantry Board</p>	<p>4 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Lenten Adult Book Study 12:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:00 PM Lenten Soup Supper 6:30 PM Pack 141 Den 7 6:30 PM All-Recovery Mtg. 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>5 3:00 PM TOPS 5:30 PM Lenten Adult Book Study 6:00 PM Young Adult Fellowship Group 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:30 PM Pack 141 Den 3 7:00 PM Handbell Choir</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 8:00 AM UMM Breakfast 5:30 PM SUMC "Country Charm" Fundraiser</p>
<p>8 PJ SUNDAY 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 11:00 AM Float Team 11:00 AM New Disciple/Membership Class 4:30 PM BREAKTHROUGH Sunday Evening Worship</p>	<p>9 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Magic Mondays 12:00 PM Food Pantry 4:45 PM GS Troop 5070 5:30 PM Finance/Stewardship Committee 6:00 PM Bible Study: The Book of Romans 7:00 PM Church Council</p>	<p>10 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 4</p>	<p>11 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Lenten Adult Book Study 12:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:00 PM Lenten Soup Supper 6:30 PM All-Recovery Mtg. 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>12 12:00 PM United Women in Faith Unit Meeting 3:00 PM TOPS 5:30 PM Lenten Adult Book Study 6:00 PM Young Adult Fellowship Group 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 5 7:00 PM GS Leader Mtg 7:00 PM Handbell Choir</p>	<p>13 12:30 PM ABC Preschool Staff Meeting 6:00 PM GS Troop 912 6:00 PM GS Troop 983 7:00 PM Pack 141 Pack Meeting</p>	<p>14 5:30 PM GS Daddy/Daughter Dance</p>
<p>15 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 11:00 AM NOW Circle 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group</p>	<p>16 9:00 AM ABC Preschool PTO Meeting 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 9:30 Ruth Circle 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Food Pantry 5:30 PM Discipleship Committee 6:00 PM Bible Study: The Book of Romans 6:00 PM Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee</p>	<p>17 POLLING PLACE 1:00 PM Grace Circle 4:30 PM GS Troop 4294 6:00 PM GS Troop 697 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 1</p>	<p>18 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 10:00 AM Caring Ministry Team Meeting 11:00 AM Lenten Adult Book Study 12:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation 4:00 PM Christian Kids 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:00 PM Lenten Soup Supper 6:30 PM Pack 141 Den 7 6:30 PM All-Recovery Mtg. 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>19 3:00 PM TOPS 5:30 PM Lenten Adult Book Study 6:00 PM Young Adult Fellowship Group 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:30 PM Pack 141 Den 3 7:00 PM Handbell Choir</p>	<p>20 ABC Preschool early dismissal</p>	<p>21 8:00 AM UMM Breakfast 4:00 PM PRIDE Game Night</p>
<p>22 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 11:00 AM New Disciple/Membership Class 4:30 PM BREAKTHROUGH Sunday Evening Worship</p>	<p>23 ABC Preschool no school 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Food Pantry 4:45 PM GS Troop 5070 6:00 PM Bible Study: The Book of Romans</p>	<p>24 ABC Preschool no school 1:00 PM UWF Missions Team 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 4</p>	<p>25 ABC Preschool no school 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Lenten Adult Book Study 12:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:00 PM Lenten Soup Supper 6:30 PM All-Recovery Mtg. 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>26 ABC Preschool no school 7:30 AM Breakfast and Devotions for HS Youth 3:00 PM TOPS 5:00 PM PRIDE Comm. 5:30 PM Lenten Adult Book Study 6:00 PM Young Adult Fellowship Group 7:00 PM Handbell Choir</p>	<p>27 ABC Preschool no school</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 PALM SUNDAY 9:30 AM Sunday Worship Service 9:30 AM Children's Sunday School 5:00 PM Lenten Cantata 6:00 PM Middle & High School Youth Group</p>	<p>30 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Food Pantry 6:00 PM Bible Study: The Book of Romans</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1 9:00 AM Faithful Fitness 11:00 AM Lenten Adult Book Study 12:00 PM AARP Tax Preparation 5:30 PM Children's Choirs 6:00 PM Lenten Soup Supper 6:30 PM Pack 141 Den 7 6:30 PM All-Recovery Mtg. 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>2 9:00 AM ABC Easter Event 3:00 PM TOPS 5:30 PM Lenten Adult Book Study 6:00 PM Young Adult Fellowship Group 6:00 PM Pack 141 Den 2 6:30 PM Pack 141 Den 3 7:00 PM Handbell Choir 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service</p>	<p>3 ABC Preschool no school 7:00 PM Good Friday Service</p>	<p>4 8:00 AM UMM Breakfast 8:00 AM Red Cross Blood Drive</p>