



# The Celtic Cross

September 2016

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Dearly Beloved,

What a blistering hot summer it has been! And the heat has been not only in nature's temperatures, but also in the nature of the speech in our civic life, with name-calling and accusations ramping up that temperature daily.

Contrast what we hear around us with these instructions from scripture:

*"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt;"* (Col 4:6)

*"Show yourself in all respects a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, and sound speech that cannot be censured..."* (Titus 2:7-8a);

*"You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger..."* (James 1:19)

In the Church, we know we are not perfect people. But we are trying to be a people who cultivate a community in which we speak, and listen, differently, a community which follows an alternate Way through the world.

In a couple weeks, thanks to the support of your mission offerings, we will welcome to Pottstown two people who embody that Way, Dr. Reeta Rao and her husband Hari, our mission partners in Dehrundan, India. Our congregation first met these gentle souls over 10 years ago, when Dr. Reeta preached and spoke among us. What a contrast are Dr. Reeta and Hari to the sound and fury around us! With gracious speech seasoned with salt, they build up rather than tear down, they inspire with strength and power which is not bluster, but which arises from being rooted and grounded in the grace of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Reeta and Hari have much to tell us about what the power of God is doing among the rag people in India. Come meet and hear them! There will be four opportunities: Thursday, Sept, 15, at 9:15 in the Community room, Sunday, Sept. 18 in the Forum, and in worship that day. And following the service, with help from the talents of chef Patty Picardi, the Mission committee will host a luncheon in the Fellowship Hall. *If you are able to house Dr. Reeta and Hari for a night or two during their stay, September 14—22, please talk with Kerry or Barbara Longstreth.*

As the heat of summer turns to September, it is time to gather again as a community, and renew our efforts to be formed into people through whom the world can hear what salty grace sounds like.

See you in church,  
Carter and Kerry

P.S. We are sensing a call to be involved in another kind of conversation, with gracious speech seasoned with salt, a conversation about race. If you are feeling the same nudge from the Holy Spirit, talk with Kerry.

## Worship Matters

### Upcoming in Worship—Worship moves to 10:30 on September 11!

- September 4: Service of the Lord's Day at 9:30 a.m.  
Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
- September 11: Service of the Lord's Day at 10:30 a.m.  
Commissioning of Sunday School Teachers, Young Children and Worship Ministers and Youth Advisors
- September 18: Service of the Lord's Day  
Dr. Reeta Rao preaching  
Luncheon on the Fellowship Hall
- September 25: Service of the Lord's Day  
Preparation for the Lord's Table

### Music Notes:

As the long, hot days of summer come to a close, we welcome back the choirs, both children and adults, to rehearsals and our Sunday services. On **Thursday, September 1st**, the **Chancel and Handbell choirs** will kick-off the rehearsal season with their annual gathering of "Just Desserts."

Beth Ann Straub will conclude the summer Sundays with two beautiful pieces during **September 4th's** service, along with Tim Allen's original piano composition during communion. Deb Voytko will round out the musical offerings with a fugue and recessional on the organ.

The **Chancel Choir** will resume regular Thursday evening rehearsals beginning on **September 8th** from 7:30 - 9:00 PM in the choir room. Organist, Corinne Griffiths, will join us during worship on **September 11th**. Our Rally Day service will include the Chancel Choir's anthem "With a Voice of Singing" by Martin Shaw. **Thursday, September 15th**, the **Handbells** will resume their evening rehearsals from 6:30 - 7:30 PM followed by the Chancel Choir from 7:30 - 9:00 PM.

The Celtic Singers will resume Music & Rec on **Wednesday, September 14th** with Mrs. B and Pastor Jeff! The **Cherubs** will resume their rehearsals during Sunday School starting on **September 18th**.

The Chancel Choir offer two other beautiful anthems this month, Mark Hayes' "Be Thou My Vision" on September 18th and Fetteke's "The Prayer with Lead Us, Lord" on the 25th. Deb will also play two Mark Hayes piano arrangements of praise classics "Great is the Lord" and "How Majestic is Your Name" later in the month, as well as "Tallis' Canon," Handel's "The Rejoicing," and a Fugue and Allegro on the organ.

Looking forward to making a **joyful** noise unto the Lord.  
Cindy, Deb and Jo Ann

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **RALLY DAY FOR ALL AGES!**

**September 11th– 9:15 a.m.**

Sunday School is here and we want to kick it off in style! Come to the Fellowship Hall at 9:15. Teachers will be there to get to know the students. Catch up with your friends and meet your new classmates! Adults will be able to learn more about the adult Sunday School opportunities! All are welcome to join us as we embark on the pathway God laid out before us as we:

**“Step into Sunday School!”**

YOU are invited to the annual

### **CHURCH PICNIC!**

**Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup>**

**4:00 – 7:00 p.m. (Dinner at 5:30 p.m.)**

Please join us for a “Country Fair” with sack races, 3-legged races and a water balloon toss. The Ga-Ga pit will be open and there will be bingo inside and volleyball outside. And the photo booth returns!

**Plus special this year—free horse rides!**

**What to bring:** a side dish to serve 6-8 people—the Deacons will provide chicken, refreshments, and desserts. Please also bring a chair or blanket to sit on.

**Please sign up or RSVP to the church office by September 7 so the Deacons know how much chicken to order.**



## **DR. REETA RAO OF SNEHA SPEAKING SUNDAY, SEPT. 18!**

One of our international mission partners for many years has been SNEHA. The core focus area of SNEHA is to provide value-based education to underprivileged children with special focus on the Chakma and Hajong children in India by setting up formal and non-formal schools among underprivileged communities. Dr. Reeta Rao and her husband Hari are coming to the USA and will be in the area from September 14 – 22<sup>nd</sup>. They will join us in worship on Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> and at a luncheon following the service. Dr. Rao will lead the Women of the Way Bible Study on September 15<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome — including guys! Mark your calendars!

If you are interested in hosting the Raos or treating them to a meal please contact Barbara Longstreth at 484-300-4738 or [barbara.longstreth@comcast.net](mailto:barbara.longstreth@comcast.net).



**SNEHA**  
Education for universal compassion

## Spiritual Formation Opportunities

### Adult Spiritual Formation on Sundays

All classes meet together on **Rally Day, September 11 in Fellowship Hall**. And on **September 18, we will all gather in the Community Room to hear Reeta and Hari Rao of SNEHA speak**.

- **Forum (Community Room):**  
**September 25: Martin Luther and the German Reformation Teacher: Carter**  
Carter will share pictures from the church trip to Germany this summer and share details about Martin Luther and the German Reformation. Time permitting, there will also be pictures from Berlin and Salzburg!
- **Thoughtful Christians (Mary Ann Yost Room) Topic: To be determined**  
**Discussion leaders: Debbie Remelius and others**
- **Men's Sunday Mornings (Pastors' Conf. Room): "Galatians"**  
**Teachers: Gary James, Binky Huff, Tim Peckham and Carter**  
Join us for a five or six-week discussion of Paul's letter of freedom that was so important for the Protestant Reformation.
- **Faithful Friends Sunday School (Fellowship Hall) Coordinators: Gwen and Tim Allen and Kim Wheelles**  
This is a brand new Sunday School gathering. We will gather around a table in Fellowship Hall with coffee and discuss issues relevant to our faith and daily lives. Our resource will be the "Wired Word," which can be read before or at the beginning of our time together.

### Adult Spiritual Formation During the Week

- **"Sisters of the Way":** 9:15-10:45 a.m. every Thursday beginning September 8. Teacher: Kerry
- **"Praying the Scriptures":** Led by Kerry, this meditation circle (lectio divina) meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month beginning October 4.
- **Next Week's Sermon:** Meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month 7:30-8:30 p.m. beginning September 27. Teacher: Carter
- **Theology Reading Group:** Join Carter and the group. Our next book to discuss is What Money Can't Buy by Michael Sandel. We will discuss the first two chapters when we meet on Monday, Sept. 26 at Carter's house. If you want to just come and listen, please do. If you have questions, want directions, or need help acquiring a copy of the book, contact Carter.

## Children and Youth at First Presbyterian Church

### Music and Recreation for Children in Grades 2-5

Calling all 2nd—5th graders! Music and Rec is starting Wednesday, September 14th . Same time, same place! 4:30 to 5:45. The first half of the evening is in Fellowship Hall playing some SUPER-FUN GAMES! The second half of the evening we are in the Junior Seekers room singing some SUPER FUN TUNES! We have new songs, new games, new projects, new friends, and lots of laughter. We can't wait to see you there!

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### Third Graders Welcomed to the Lord's Supper and Worship

Third graders and parents (and any other interested parents and children) are invited to join Jeff, Kerry and Carter for a pizza supper and discussion concerning worship and the Lord's Supper on Sunday, September 25 at 4:30 p.m. at the church. Then, on Sunday, October 2, we will introduce the children to the congregation and welcome them to the Lord's Table. This is an important rite of passage as our young ones join the rest of the church family in celebrating the Lord's Supper. Please RSVP to the church office, and call Jeff, Kerry or Carter if you have any questions.

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## **KICKING OFF THE SEEKER YEAR! -**

**Seekers— The year starts with the picnic!** Come to the picnic to spend some time with your friends and church family! **There will be a brief (mandatory) meeting for parents and seekers from 5:00-5:30.**

**Jr. Seekers** The first event of the year is mini-golf at the Manatawny Green golf course! On September 18th the Junior Seekers will meet at the church at 6:00 and then head out for a fun evening of pars, birdies, holes-in-ones or \*shudder\* bogeys. Pickup will be from Manatawny Greens

**Sr. Seekers**, our first event to kick off the year is right after the picnic! Mark your calendars... September 11th starting at 7:15! We will have a fire at the Allens' house to roast some marshmallows and celebrate the start of another year of fellowship, service, and praising God together!

**Sr. Seekers**, Second event is on September 25th. We'll hop into some kayaks and spend the day navigating a river together, splashing and paddling around. We're looking forward to having a great time together on the river in the sun. Bring a packed lunch to church and the day will be docked and headed home by 3:30

## **Live Free—Volunteering Our Time**

### **TUTORS AT BARTH ELEMENTARY**

The tutoring program will begin its seventeenth year in October. Can you offer one hour a week to work with one student who could use some extra help? Studies show such a time commitment will have far more influence than you know. Our coordinator, Sharon Holloway, has a wealth of experience working with students in the Pottstown School District. Contact Sharon and say “YES, I’ll help!”

### **COMMUNITY MEALS**

On the second Thursday of each month, we provide a free dinner in Fellowship Hall to those in need in our community (on other Thursdays, other congregations serve the meal in our church). If you can help cook on a second Thursday, please contact Sandy Allebach, Elaine Siever, or Kerry. If you can help serve and clean-up the meal (4:45—6:15), please contact Kerry or Carter. The more the merrier!

### **CLUSTER OUTREACH CENTER, 57 N. FRANKLIN STREET**

The Cluster Outreach Center is always in need of **volunteers**. Volunteers are needed to help with various needs. Some of the opportunities:

- Serving food/putting food orders together
- Stocking/sorting food in the Food Pantry
- Meeting with clients to sign-up for Food pantry assistance
- Sorting clothing and household goods
- Administration and office assistance

To volunteer, you can submit an application online at [www.pottstowncluster.org](http://www.pottstowncluster.org), or contact the Cluster volunteer coordinator at 610-970-5995.

### **MEALS ON WHEELS, 1976 E. HIGH STREET**

The Meals on Wheels program that serves the Pottstown area is in great need of volunteers to deliver meals to the home-bound elderly and disabled in our community. Most volunteers give of their time once a week for less than 2 hours. We currently have four open routes in Pottstown. Meals are delivered Monday through Friday from approximately 10:30 to 12:00. If you can help, contact Alicia Adams, 610-326-1610, ext. 328 or at [aadams@fsmontco.org](mailto:aadams@fsmontco.org).

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## **A New Directory Is Coming—And We Want You In It!**

Pictures will be taken October 4-8, and if needed, on November 9-10. We would like everyone to be in the directory so everyone can connect names with faces. You can sign up online following the link from the church website or by going to [www.church-directories.com](http://www.church-directories.com). Representatives from Legacy Church Directories will also be here on at least one Sunday after church. Everyone who sits for a picture will get a free picture and directory—and have the opportunity to purchase additional pictures, but only if they want to do so!

## **Live Free—Back-to-School Collection take a trip!**

1 pair of pants at Barth = a SNEHA student's book for a year

1 shirt for a Barth student = a SNEHA teacher's salary for a day

This year, our Back-to-School Collection takes a trip across the ocean to the SNEHA school, our mission partner in Dehrundan, India. Check out the Mission bulletin board where you will find a colorful array of index cards bearing the cost of anything from a primary school uniform for \$6, to middle school tuition of \$10, to a monthly teacher's salary of \$250. Take as many cards as God tells you to take, and put them in one of the envelopes provided, with a check made out to First Presbyterian Mission Budget/SNEHA to cover the cost of your cards. Put the marked envelope in the offering plate or the church office. We'll tally them up and present them to Dr. Reeta, Sept. 18

## **Santa's Elves Need Your Help (already!)**

Santa's elves are already hard at work preparing for our annual Alternative Gift Market. If you have any quart sized canning jars (wide-mouthed preferred) you can spare, please put them in the basket at the foot of the cross in the sanctuary. Date of this year's fair: December 4.

## **Fellowship**

### **PRIME TIMERS—**

28 Sept. Trip to See "Samson" at Sight and Sound - For all of those who purchased Tickets, we will contact you in mid-Sept. to distribute tickets, set up drivers and riders and dinner plans following the show.

SAVE THE DATE: 10 Dec. Sat Matinee, 2:00PM "A Wonderful Life, the Musical" at Steel River Theatre ( we have reserved 40 seats, sign up & pay beginning early Oct.)

## **MEN'S BREAKFAST, Saturday, September 10, 8 a.m.**

Come join Carter and other men for fun and fellowship on the second Saturday of each month. This month we meet on Saturday, September 10 at 8 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. We break at 9 a.m.

## **FAITHFUL FRIENDS (YOUNG ADULTS)**

Plans are taking shape as the *Celtic Cross* went to press for a gathering of Faithful Friends, a younger adult group, this month. We meet every other month for fellowship, a potluck supper (generally, discussion, and prayer—and lots of fun. To find out details about this month's gathering what to bring, or to get directions, contact Carter or Kerry.

## **PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY—Tuesday, September 20 at 7 p.m.**

The Prayer Shawl ministry will meet once a month from September through May. We meet in the library from 7 p.m. to about 8:30 p.m. Please join us as we create loving comfort for our church family and the wider community. If you knit or crochet, or would like to learn, please contact Jane Barndt, 610-469-9165, and become part of our group. .

## Women's Retreat—October 28-29

*The wind blows wherever it pleases.  
You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going.  
So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” John 3:8 (NIV)*

Spiritual discernment is often thought of as something reserved for the big moments and decisions in our lives, but have you ever wondered if it matters in your day-to-day choices? Can you think about discernment as a process in which we become aware of how Holy Spirit is present, active and calling us to move? The art of spiritual discernment is the practice of awakening and sensitizing our hearts to the movement of God's Spirit moving in our daily lives. Together we will contemplate, discuss and explore the art of spiritual discernment in our daily life, as well as ways of discerning and praying during life's big decision moments.

Amy Shutt will be returning as our retreat leader this year. Amy is a Spiritual Director with a heart for noticing the movement of God in her life, the lives of those she companions on the journey and the life of the world. She is a Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church USA and has facilitated small group spiritual formation for over 20 years. Amy has two adult children, is employed as an engineer and enjoys reading, quilting, yoga, and gathering with friends.

Please join us at Mariawald Renewal Center in Shillington from 5:00pm Friday, October 28 to 5:00pm Saturday, October 29. Double occupancy is \$75.00 per person. \*Please note-since our last retreat at Mariawald, all rooms have been converted to double occupancy. Three rollaway cots are available for those that would like triple occupancy (first come, first served) however, rates remain the same at \$75.00 per person. Three meals beginning with **6:00 pm dinner** on Friday evening are included. Scholarship money is available, please talk to Kerry.

Come for rest, fellowship and spiritual understanding as we explore and respond to the invitations Holy Spirit offers. Enjoy a fall weekend with your Sisters in Christ! Reserve your space with a check to the church office or Gina James by October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Contact Gina at 610-367-6067 or [gina.james@comcast.net](mailto:gina.james@comcast.net).

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### Lectionary Readings

We invite you to use these readings for your daily devotions :

**September 1-3:** Jeremiah 18:1-11, Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18, Philemon 1-21, Luke 14:25-33

**September 4-11:** Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28, Psalm 14, 1 Timothy 1:12-17, Luke 15:1-10

**September 11-18:** Jeremiah 8:18-9:1, Psalm 79:1-9; 1 Timothy 2:1-7, Luke 16:1-13

**September 18-25:** Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15, Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16, 1 Timothy 6:6-19, Luke 16:19-31

**September 25-Oct. 2:** Lam. 1:1-6; Lam. 3:19-26, or Psalm 137, 2 Timothy 1:1-14, Luke 17:5-10

## Church Family News

**Please keep in your prayers** the following people who have been ill or hospitalized or receiving treatment: Brian Duncan, Jill Wrigley, Jack Orgill, Sara Grim, Lynn Reichenbach, Ruth Ann DeRenzo and Dan Stetler.

**We send condolences** to the families of Kay Edelblute Dannehower and Rev. Dr. James “Max” Creswell who recently entered eternal life. Meredith Creswell gives thanks for your love, support, and kindnesses — her thank you note is on the bulletin board.

**We pray for** all teachers, administrators, children, and youth, and their families as the new school year begins.

**We rejoice** with Shane Dugan, who soloed for his pilot’s license and with Jeff and Carrie, who are expecting their first child this January.

**Thanks** to all those who kept our **gardens** watered and weeded this summer: Lorraine Estell, Diane Shallcross, Kathy Benning, Sue Moyer, Marcia Zeigler, Jane Barndt, Chuck Krueger, Robin Lambert, Becky Bostwick, the Clarks, Joan Burke, Laura Hazeltine, Diane and Rob Land, Jo Ann Bathurst, Adele Klein, Judy and Tom Babbony, Bonnie Stahl and Richie Skone, the Glens, Cindy Foust, Barbara Allen, Dedra Phillips, the Deegans and Amy Francis.—and thanks to Sue Moyer for coordinating the summer schedule!

**A Big Thanks** to our **Pathways Through Parables coordinating team**: Jacki Greenewalt, Kati Stafford, Linda Hale, Jane Deegan and Heather Temple. Thank you to all who helped with **Mission Mornings** for our junior high youth: Sheila Dugan, Tim Peckham, Barb Peckham, the Kirkwood Camp staff, Rosie Roseo and Deanne Orzechowski as well as a big thanks to all of the places that hosted us: PDIDA, the Mennonite Resource Center, the Pottstown Training Center and Kirkwood! **Finally**, thanks to all who volunteered to do childcare during worship this summer. What a great team helped us all keep our baptismal promises!

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## Faith and Nature

After a long hot summer it is a great feeling to be thinking ahead to some cooler days, and getting back out on the trails. Our first hike for the fall will be on Sunday, October 2nd. We will hike the trails of the Daniel Boone Homestead near Birdsboro. The homestead has a nice mix of woods and meadows mixed with a bit of history. We will cover approximately 4 miles on the trails, but please feel free to come and go as you wish. Meet at church parking lot @ 1:45 pm. Please sign up on the bulletin board or contact me at: mdeegan2882@comcast.net.

And looking ahead, we will have our annual full day hike on Saturday, November 5th. This year we plan on travelling to the Delaware Water Gap area for a hike to Sunfish Pond, one of the top scenic wonders on the east coast. More details in next month's Celtic Cross.

Hope to see you out there.

—Mike Deegan

*“Not all who wander are lost.”*

*J.R.R. Tolkien*

## Parish Nurse Corner

Thank you to several generous donations from church families, we have a good supply of healthcare equipment in the attic. We have several wheelchairs, walkers, commodes, shower chairs, canes, crutches and a few misc. items. **Please sign out equipment when you borrow it.** There will be instructions near the items and you will be able to keep it confidential if you choose. It is important that we keep track of where the items are in case an urgent need arises and we need to locate equipment that may not be being used.

I also have a few things in my office that were donated. These items are Ensure Enlive Vanilla, Ensure high protein, Always women's briefs S/M, Med Briefs Velcro size M and a Care One medication planner with 4 lg compartments per day. If you know anyone who can use them please email me at [dskelly@fpcpottstown.org](mailto:dskelly@fpcpottstown.org) or leave me a note in my mailbox.

Healthy Blessings, Dawn

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## Counters Corner—September

Head Counter: Sharon Trevoy

Regular Counters: Andy Hazeltine, Matt & Sharon Sgricca, and Kurt Holloway

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## Coming in September—New Playground Equipment

Check out the playyard in September. You should see a great addition to our playground: new swings and a fun ADA-compliant play apparatus. Installation is possible because of contributions to our Capital Improvement fund, a Porter-Broward grant, and money raised by the staff and parents of our HENS Nursery school. Come and play!!

## Live Free—Have you forgotten anything?

Many of us were away during the summer but the church's ministries continue 365 days a year. If your weekly contributions went missing while you were missing, can you "catch up" your giving this September—so that we can continue to do Christ's work in Pottstown and in the world? **Online giving is now possible**, either on a one-time or recurring basis—check out the webpage!

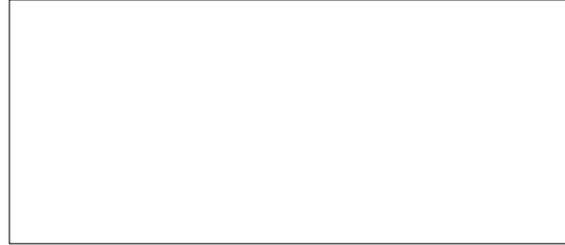
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## HENS Nursery School Welcomes Becky Bostwick!

The HENS Nursery School Committee is happy to introduce Becky Bostwick as the school's new director. Becky brings a love for children, enthusiasm for learning, and 10 years' experience at HENS. Due to the current enrollment, we made the decision to have the director be a part time position this year. Becky will remain the teacher in the 2s class. Becky has been busy getting ready for the school year, and we appreciate her dedication to making HENS the best it can be! If you know anyone looking for loving, nurturing place for their children, please tell them about HENS! More information can be found on the HENS website, <http://hensnurseryschool.weebly.com/> or by calling Becky in the HENS office, 610.326.3690.

# SEPTEMBER 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Yoga—10 am Seekers 1 pm Health Ministry 1:30 pm Meal 5 pm “Just Desserts” handbell and chancel Choir	2	3
4 Worship/ Communion at 9:30 am Sunday School orientation after worship	5 Labor Day Office Closed	6 Yoga 11 am	7 Yoga 11 am Relay 6:30 pm Evening prayer 7:15 pm Committees 7:30 pm	8 Sisters Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Meal 5 pm HENS Back to School 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	9	10 Men’s Break- fast 8 am Rally Day and Picnic set up 9:30 am
11 Rally Day. 9:15 am Worship 10:30 am Picnic 4-7 pm Seekers Parents Meeting 5:00 pm Seekers Bon Fire 7:15 pm	12 HENS Classes begin	13 Yoga 11 am	14 Yoga 11 am  Music/Rec 4:30  Deacons’ mtg. 7:30 pm	15 Sisters Bible Study 9:15 am with the Raos Yoga 11 am Meal 5 pm Bells 6:30 pm Choir 7:30	16	17
18 Sun School 9:15 am Worship/Reeta Rao, preaching 10:30 am  Jr. Seekers playing putt- putt 6 pm	19	20 Yoga 11 am  Prayer Shawl ministry 7 pm	21 Yoga 11 am  Music/Rec 4:30  Session mtg. 7:30 pm	22 Sisters Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Meal 5 pm Bells 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	23	24
25 Sun. Sch. 9:15 Worship 10:30 Sr. Seekers kayaking 12:30 pm 4:30Prep. For Lord’s Table	26	27 Yoga 11 am  Next Week’s Sermon 7:30 pm	28 Yoga 11 am  M/Rec 4:30 Theology Grp 7:30 Comp Friends 7:30	29 Sisters Bible Study 9:15 am Yoga 11 am Meal 5 pm Bells 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm	30 Zeigler/ Schittler wed- ding rehearsal 5:30 pm	



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