

The SPIRIT *February 2026*

The Journey of Lent

Messiah Youth Group

This month the youth group will be hosting a pancake breakfast to celebrate Fat Tuesday and the upcoming season of Lent. Breakfast will be after church on February 15. The youth group will be making all the food, and the menu will include pancakes, sausages, and fruits.

The youth group is currently working to raise money for a Gaga ball pit, and this breakfast will be another fundraiser to help us towards that goal. Gaga ball is a form of dodge ball played inside an octagonal pen. The youth group believes that a Gaga pit will be a major asset to the church and will provide fun for all the children who come to Messiah.

We hope that you can come and join us for some pancakes, syrup, and plenty of Mardi Gras beads. It should be a wonderful time of fellowship, community, and indulging in sugar and youthful energy as we prepare ourselves for Lent. We are also encouraging costumes, so feel free to dress up and pull your old mask from the closet. If you would like to be a part of this breakfast in any way or would like to donate to the event, please contact Vicar Abbey.



This Month's Highlights

- Youth Group Fundraiser
- Bishop Donna Simon
- Crosslines Needs Help!!!
- Meredith's Ministry
- New Members

A Prayer for Lenten Grace

Loving God,
During the sacred season of Lent, bring me closer to you.
Prepare a place in my home and heart for silence and solitude, so that I may re-discover the grace of a prayer-full life.
Help me to fast from those things that threaten the well-being of body and soul and remind me of the grace of simplicity.
Enlarge my heart so that I give to those in need and, in so doing, re-discover the grace of gratitude and generosity.
May this season be a grace-filled time to rekindle my love for and faith in you.
Amen.



Table of Contents

Messiah Youth Group	Page 1
From the Desk of Pastor Orin Cummings	Page 3
From the Desk of your Council President	Page 4
Thank You	Page 5
Crosslines	Page 5
Parish Life	Page 5
Congregational Care	Page 6
Lunch & Scripture	Page 6
Meredith's Ministry	Page 6
Wine, Wit & Wisdom	Page 6
Messiah Book Club	Page 7
Fearless in His Light	Page 7
Messiah Lighthouse Childcare	Page 7
Lutheran World Relief	Page 7
Messiah Lutheran Church Financials	Page 8
MLCFDC Financials	Page 9
Welcome New Members	Page 10
February Flowers	Page 11
February Birthdays	Page 11
Springfield Multicultural Event	Page 11
February Scripture Readings	Page 12
Mark Your Calendars	Page 12



Messiah Staff

Rev. Orin W Cummings, PhD	Pastor	pastor@messiahmo.org
Abbey Knappman	Vicar	vicar@messiahmo.org
Nathan Carlson	Business Manager	nathan.carlson@messiahmo.org
Leisa Rushton	Office Administrator	officemanager@messiahmo.org
Missy Fite	Custodian p/t	janitor@messiahmo.org
Chris Evans	Custodian p/t	custodian@messiahmo.org
Karen Bowman	Contemporary Music Coordinator	karen.bowman@messiahmo.org
Sheryl Hansen	Senior Choir Director	sheryl.hansen@messiahmo.org
Kenny Lourwood	Lead A/V Technician, p/t	kenny.lourwood@messiahmo.org
Drew Bowman	Assistant A/V Technician, p/t	drew.bowman@messiahmo.org
Jessica Phillips	Director, Lighthouse	jessicaphillips@lighthousecfdc.org
Melody Farabee	Family Support Coordinator	messiahlighthousefsc@gmail.com

Contractor

Marilyn Boston	Musical Services	bostonmarilyn@outlook.com
----------------	------------------	--

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Saints,

Epiphany Greetings in the name of our crucified, risen, and ascended Lord and coming Savior, Jesus Christ!

As we enter the month of February, I would like to share a few upcoming events in the life of our congregation and invite you to hold them in prayer. As the prophet declares, *Call to me, and I will answer you and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known* – Jer. 33:3 NRSVue. As we seek God together, we remain attentive to ways the Lord is among us with the aid of three themes from this verse:

call – God invites us to pray

answers – Prayer is communication with the Lord, who responds to our petitions

promises – God reveals and disclose what is yet to come.

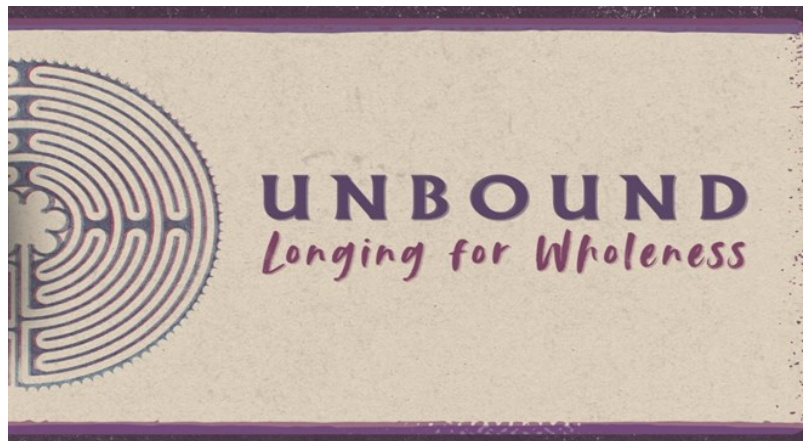
Our Church Council will gather for a retreat on Saturday, February 7. This time is set apart for prayer, reflection, and discernment as we seek God's direction for our shared ministry. Please keep our council members in your prayers as they listen to the Spirit's leading.



We are also grateful to welcome Bishop Donna Simon for a visit. Following worship on Saturday, February 7, she will join us for a potluck dinner. After dinner, she will offer a presentation on the ELCA Social Statement **Faith and Civic Life: Seeking the Well-being of All**. I strongly encourage you to attend this meaningful time of learning and conversation.

Her presence among us is a gift, and we look forward to her leadership and encouragement in the pulpit as we continue to live out our calling as Christ's church in this place and season.

Finally, February leads us into the holy season of Lent: a season that invites us into deeper reflection, repentance, and renewal as we prepare our hearts for the journey to the cross and the joy of Easter morning. Our Lenten theme will be **Unbound: Longing for Wholeness**, and we will be using Holden Evening Prayer liturgy by Marty Haugen. If you are unable to attend evening services, please consider joining us for the midday services on Wednesdays, beginning on Ash Wednesday.



May God bless our life together as we continue to follow Jesus Christ in word and witness, both within and beyond our church home.

In Christ's service,
Pastor Orin

From the Desk of Council President

First, it is an honor and privilege to serve as the Messiah Church Council 2026 President.

My name is Scot Franson and have returned to be member of Messiah the last 10 years. My parents help start Messiah. There is a photo of me at a very young age in a Sunday School Class in the displays in the Church Library.

Went to Springfield Public Schools and Missouri State University (still sometimes I call it SMSU) 2 brothers and 1 sister.....until recently the only sibling that lives in Missouri. One brother has recently moved to Italy. I retired 2 years ago and had Career in Sales and Marketing and also a Career in Management of Fantastic Caverns. 24 years at the Cave which was over 2 stints of time. One son - who with his wife moved recently to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Over my adult life my spare time has included coaching Kiwanis Baseball, Mighty Mite Football, and Scouts. Played Park Board Adult Basketball and Softball for many years. I have served as a National officer of my Collegiate Fraternity, Sigma, Nu, and currently serve on the Alumni Advisory Board of the Missouri State University Chapter. I am an Eagle Scout and so is my son.

Often asked by friends:

Messiah Lutheran, Where is that Church located? It's the one over by Mercy Hospital.

ELCA Lutheran...What does that mean? My answer is there are different types of Baptists – Southern, American, Free Will Baptist etc. The Internet says there are over 60 types of Baptists in total.

There are different types of Lutherans including:

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS)

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS)

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC)

These 4 Lutheran denominations have churches with Springfield addresses. The Internet says there are over 40 Lutheran denominations in America in total.

The first Lutherans in the Americas were Swedish colonists who established the colony of New Sweden in the Delaware Valley in 1638. My Great Grandfather came over from Sweden at an early age and settled in Wahoo, Nebraska.

In the 1700s, waves of German and Scandinavian immigrants settled in Pennsylvania, New York, and the Carolinas. Most early activity was German-led. The first regional gathering, or "ministerium," was established in Pennsylvania in 1748. The Augustus Lutheran Church in Trappe, Pennsylvania remains the oldest Lutheran church building the United States and is a member of ELCA.

The mid-to-late 1800s saw a massive influx of Northern Europeans. Germans settled primarily in the lower Midwest, while Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes moved to the Upper Midwest (Minnesota, Wisconsin, and the Dakotas).

The 1900s were defined by the "Americanization" of the church, as congregations shifted from native languages to English and sought greater unity.

People talk about their Church Families.....and I feel quite at home as part of the Messiah Church Family. Bring a friend.....Introduce them to your Church Family!!!



The Cummings family is deeply appreciative of the generous gift and extends heartfelt thanks to all members for their kindness and support.

Thank You

We wish to express our deepest gratitude for the beautiful Celebration of Life honoring CJ Hankins. We were incredibly moved by the stunning floral arrangements, the wonderful luncheon, and the overwhelming love and support shown by this congregation.

CJ loved this church community dearly and would have been overjoyed to see everyone gathered together in such a meaningful tribute. Thank you for walking beside us during this time.

Sincerely,
CJ Hankins' family

Thanks to everyone who helped green the church on Saturday, November 29, 2025 and take down the green on Saturday, January 10, 2026. We enjoyed coffee, donuts and wonderful fellowship together. I hope you can join us again next Advent.

Fondly, Jeanie Bardy

Parish Life

LENTEN SUPPERS!!!

Lenten suppers will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 18. The parish life committee will provide the meal on February 18, with other groups in the church taking care of the following weeks, with a representative from our committee to help facilitate things. The menu will vary from week to week, and we will do our best to publicize what it will be, but it will be. Supper will be available from 5:15 PM to 6:30 PM. Come and join us. It is a wonderful opportunity to fellowship with your church family.

Our committee continues to provide a fellowship coffee hour following Sunday morning worship. Come and join us for that as well. Another fellowship opportunity!

Crosslines Needs

Your Time and Talent

Current locations needing Volunteers:

PHONE ROOM: Answer and transfer calls. Explain programs and answer caller questions when asked.

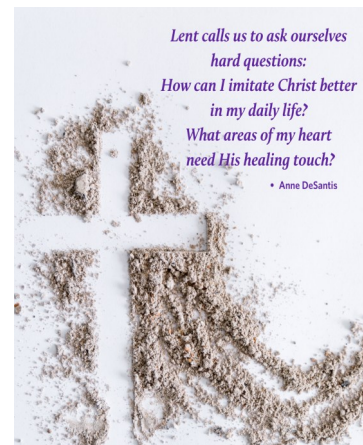
Shift options: Tuesday 12 - 4 p.m. OR Wednesday 12 - 4 p.m. OR Thursday 8 a.m. - noon

ADMIN. RECEPTION DESK: Greet guests, accept donations and write receipts, answer phone and transfer calls, notify staff when appointments have arrived. (Sometimes very low key. Will want a book or handwork to keep occupied.)

Shift options: Thursday OR Friday 8 a.m. - noon OR Wednesday noon - 4:30 p.m.

SAFE TO SLEEP: (Overnight shelter and case management services for homeless women) Staff works each night and provides training and guidance for volunteers. Volunteer duties include: Assist in overseeing shelter operation, setting up evening and morning refreshments, and helping guests with basic needs. Shift options (open all days of the year): 7 p.m. To 10 p.m. OR 7 pm to 7 a.m. (with 2-hour sleep break) OR 10 p.m. To 7 a.m. (with 2-hour sleep break). SHELTER IS SOON TO BE RELOCATED TO CROSSLINES BUILDING, 3055 E. Division.

To ask questions and/or volunteer call 417 862 2129 and ask for Bambie (Volunteer Coordinator) or Diana (Volunteer management).



www.messiahmo.org



messiah@messiahmo.org

MessiahMOELCA



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA



925 E. Seminole, Springfield, MO 65807

MessiahMoELCA



417-881-2192

Congregational Care

Most of us are not strangers to taking on or giving up something for Lent. Maybe you've thought your sacrifice would be to give up chocolate or some other food that you enjoy. In recent years the taking on of something seems to be popular.

This Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday on February 18th, you might want to consider not denying yourself or taking on an additional task with an already busy schedule but doing what you do daily in a more meaningful way. You might choose to just take each day of Lent day by day, navigating any anxiety you may be feeling by celebrating joy found in the present. Take time to feel all your feelings and seek meaningful ways to honor the season.

Here are some faith practices for your journey:

Deep breaths. It sounds simple and it is simple. Yet often we don't take the time to do simple things. Find time for deep breaths and perhaps meditate on a mantra such as *I breathe in peace. I exhale my worries.*

Centering prayers. Step away from screens for Lent and take time to contemplate on a prayer—it doesn't have to be long. You may want to light a candle focusing on its glow or the scent. You could repeat, whether aloud or silently: *Jesus is the light of my world.*

Connect. Be intentional about connecting with others. Reach out to someone you haven't seen for a while—maybe someone you've missed seeing at worship. When you connect, whisper a prayer of thankfulness for friendship.

Create. Savor the art of creating something—maybe it is baking, knitting, sewing, painting, coloring, woodworking—in your creativity remember that God is present.

Finally, maybe most importantly, give yourself grace. Lent is not about achieving or doing but resting in the God who walks with us on our journey through this gift of life. We are called to hold postures of hope in the face of turmoil. When we reach the final days of Lent, we are met not by what we have done but by what God has done on the cross.

Lunch & Scripture

Everyone is welcome to join us at MaMa Jean's on the corner of South Campbell and Sunshine for Lunch and Scripture on **February 10 at 12 noon.**

If you have any questions please reach out to Ileen Kendall.

Meredith's Ministry

A big THANK YOU to everyone who has been donating yarn for Meredith's ministry! We are truly grateful for your generosity.

At this time, however, we have **plenty of yarn** and are especially in need of **yarn crafters**—knitters, crocheters, and weavers. We are making baby blankets for **Lutheran World Relief**. Blankets should be **at least 32 inches and no more than 52 inches**, and may be **square or rectangular**.

All yarn, needles, and accessories are provided and can be found in the **fabric cabinet in the office next to the Pastor's office**. Patterns are available **on top of the cabinet near the library**.

You are welcome to join us from **2:00–4:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Mondays of each month**, or you may simply pick up supplies and return your finished items when complete.

If you have any questions, please contact **Marilyn Dial at 850-642-0148**.



Do you ever feel like going out to dinner, instead of cooking? Duh, who doesn't! Maybe you'd enjoy sipping on a glass of wine while enjoying the company of a group of witty women! Sound even better? Then we hope you will join us for **Wine, Wit and Wisdom**. We generally meet on the fourth Thursday of each month. For more information you can contact Debbie Corlett at 417-848-9426 debbiecorlett@sbcglobal.net.

Who knows, **unwittingly**, you may gain some "pearls of wisdom" through the conversations we have. Hope to see you then!

Messiah Book Club

We will meet February 12 at 2:30 p.m. in the Library at church.



FEBRUARY 2026 Winter Solstice, published 2000, by Rosamunde Pilcher, is about an actress who moves from London to the little village of Dibton, eager to make a fresh start.

Fearless in His Light

One of my favorite Psalms is the 27th, which speaks of the light of Christ. As we bask in the light of our newborn King, I want to share with you a devotion about Psalm 27 that I ran across in my daily meditations.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" Those opening words of Psalm 27 answer the deepest anxieties of the human heart. Fear stalks every corner of our life—fear of trouble, enemies, failure, sickness, and finally, fear of death.

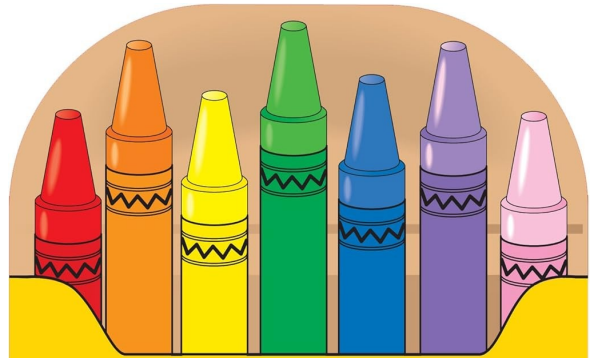
Yet David lifts his eyes above every shadow and declares that the Lord himself is his light, his stronghold and his confidence.

For us who live on this side of the cross, these words shine even brighter. We know how the Lord has become our salvation. Jesus Christ stepped into our darkness, carried our sin, faced our enemies and walked straight into death. On the cross He absorbed everything that could ever terrify us, and by His victorious resurrection He shattered the power of the grave.

Because Christ lives, the tomb cannot hold those who belong to Him. The fear of death has been disarmed. So, we wait for the Lord with hope. Whatever comes, we stand in the safety of the One who conquered death for us. The grave has no claim, fear has no victory and we have a Savior who is our light and salvation today, tomorrow and forever. Amen.

In His Name,
Sheryl Hansen
Alleluia Singers

Messiah Lighthouse Child & Family Development Center



NOW ENROLLING!

We are licensed to care for children ages 6 weeks-6 years. We have openings in all of our classrooms currently. If you know of anyone looking for a playful, family-oriented, faith-based childcare center please send them our way!

If you would like more information, call the church office, or reach us directly at

417-881-4119.

Lutheran World Relief

WHERE DID LWR
QUILTS & KITS
GO IN 2025?

803,181 QUILTS & KITS
IN 15 COUNTRIES

The links below will give you more information on where all the baby care, personal care and school kits, material kits, quilts, and blankets go. They show a map where all the Lutheran donations have been distributed for 2025.

listed are: lwr.org

facebook.com/LuthWorldRelief

instagram.com/LuthWorldRelief

youtube.com/LutheranWorldRelief

Check out our impact map and report to see where your love traveled in 2025 here:

<https://bit.ly/4prECTO>

Welcome New Members



Donna and Steve Koehler

Steve was born and raised in the Lutheran faith in Belleville, IL. After high school graduation he obtained a bachelor's degree in journalism from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. His first full-time job was at the newspaper in O'Fallon, MO. In 1984 he moved here and spent 25 years on the staff of the Springfield News-Leader. He then taught journalism and did public relations work for Ozarks Technical Community College. He retired in 2018.

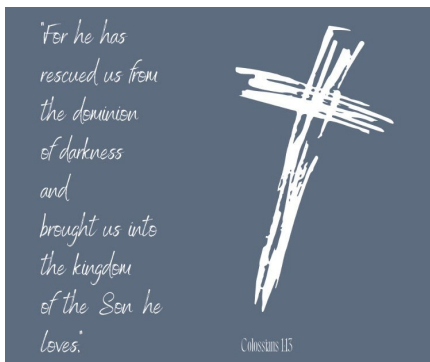
Steve's family history was steeped in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. One uncle was an LCMS district president, and Steve himself served as president of the Faith Lutheran congregation in Springfield.

Donna and Steve have two children. One lives next door, and one in Oklahoma City. The couple have five grandchildren.

Steve says he began cooking in college and continues to this day. He has been a competitive BBQ'er, and he and a friend host a BBQ podcast. Steve has also taken art classes through the years and considers himself a watercolorist. Steve states that he is impressed with our church. He and Donna appreciate Messiah's diversity.

Donna was recovering from eye surgery at this writing. She and Steve both contributed to this interview. Donna was born and raised as part of a Catholic family in East Saint Louis, IL. She attended a Catholic high school. Donna's chosen profession was library science. She held positions in the Springfield-Greene County public library system for 18 years.

Donna's hobbies are gardening (especially fairy gardens), crafts, and cooking. She also enjoys spending time with her granddaughter, Claire. Regarding Messiah, Donna especially appreciates the projected liturgy, and the variety of music and hymns.



Frances Crawford

Frances was born and raised in Springfield. She comes from a Baptist background. She completed high school in Fair Play, MO. Following high school, she took online courses in early childhood education. She currently holds a license as a Certified Nurse Aide and is a caregiver for our member, Linda Elliott. In the past she has worked at Lawrence County Manor and for Oxford Home Health.

Frances has two daughters: BreAnnah who lives in Fair Play, is also a CNA, works for Integrity Home Health, and is pursuing a degree in cinematography; and Madison who lives with Frances, attends high school in Sparta, and aspires to be a digital animator and designer.

Frances states that she converted to Lutheranism in July, 2025, and became our member last November. She says she is "very happy" at Messiah, she feels comfortable with us, and she especially enjoyed our recent cantata. In her leisure time she cares for her pet dog, journals, engages in photography, reads, and researches and solves mysteries.



Sharon Raines

Sharon was born and raised in the Baptist faith in Harrison, AR. She graduated from high school, and earned an associate's degree in business. She later completed a bachelor's program in business management. Following college graduation, she worked at several jobs, and then spent 20 years at a parking meter firm. She is presently retired.

Sharon has one sibling, a brother, who lives in Myrtle Beach, SC. Sharon bore three children: Kevin, who lives here; John, who dwells in Denver; and Melissa, who resides in La Jara, CO. A 20-year-old granddaughter, who lives locally, sometimes accompanies Sharon to church. In her leisure time Sharon enjoys working jigsaw puzzles and reading.

Sharon began attending Messiah in August or September, 2025. She happily finds our congregation to be open-minded and "wonderful".

February Flowers

	31/1	7/8	14/15	21/28
Vase 1	Gene Chrisman	Vic & Peggy Shelton	Cummings Family	
Vase 2		Vic & Peggy Shelton	Cummings Family	



Flower Vase Costs

Cost per vase is \$20. Please make checks payable to Messiah Lutheran Church, and then in the memo line, write "Altar Flowers" and the date for which you are paying. If you are using an offering envelope, you will find a line for "Altar Flowers" and the amount.



Springfield Multicultural Event

Dear Messiah Lutheran Church Family,

We are excited to share that Messiah Lutheran Church was represented at the recent Springfield Multicultural Festival by Vicar Abbey, Charles Hill, Mary Keidle, Marilyn Dial, and Lindsey Dillion on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, February 19, 2026. At this community event, our church was proud to have a dedicated table, demonstrating our commitment to welcoming and connecting with people from all backgrounds.

Throughout the day, we made meaningful connections with festival attendees, sharing information about our church and the ministries we offer. We distributed materials that highlight our mission, which guides all that we do:

Guided by the Gospel, we:

- *Welcome all to worship
- *Make disciples
- *Nurture youth
- *Hunger for ministry
- *Gather resources for growing ministries
- *Offer healing and care to all in need



Our presence at the festival was a tangible step toward expanding our multicultural outreach and living out our calling to be a church where all are truly welcome. This effort echoes the vision of Bishop Yehiel Curry, who reminds us: "...we are committed to further strengthening and expanding our Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging work. These are deep values. Who we say we are and what we do together as people of God, as a synod, matter. Our speech and action spring from our identity as children of a loving, forgiving, and just God - and from our relationships with one another."

We look forward to deepening these new relationships and continuing to grow in diversity and inclusion, as we strive to reflect the fullness of God's kingdom in our congregation.

Thank you for your prayers, your support, and your shared commitment to our mission. If you have ideas or would like to get involved in future outreach opportunities, please let us know!

In Christ's love,
Lindsey Dillion, MS, LPC

Messiah Lutheran Church
925 E. Seminole Street
Springfield, MO 65807

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Springfield, MO
Permit 1339

**Return Address Requested*

*He restores my soul, He leads me in the paths of
righteousness, for His name's sake. Psalms 23:3*

February Scripture Readings

Date	First Reading	Psalms	Second Reading	Gospel
1	Micah 6:1-8	15	1 Corinthians 1:18-31	Matthew 5:1-12
7/8	Isaiah 58:1-9a, [9b-12]	112:1-9, [10]	1 Corinthians 2:1-12, [13-16]	Matthew 5:13-20
14/15	Exodus 24:12-18	2	2 Peter 1:16-21	Matthew 17:1-9
21/22	Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7	32	Romans 5:12-19	Matthew 4:1-11

Mark Your Calendars

Feb. 7	Council Retreat	Feb. 15	Church Council Meeting
Feb. 7	Bishop Donna Simon, Preaching Dinner & Presentation by Bishop Donna Simon	Feb. 18	Ash Wednesday Services 12 Noon & 7 PM
Feb. 8	Bishop Donna Simon, Preaching	Feb. 22	Reception of New Members
Feb. 8	New Member Class		
Feb. 10	Lunch & Scripture		
Feb. 15	Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser		