

THE TIE that binds

March/April 2026

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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-bring 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.

Pastor's Page

Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.' He replied, 'Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'

Luke 23: 42-43

*Dying Jesus,
at the end of yourself
you turned,
and spoke words of
togetherness
in the places of the torn.
May we always find
words to hold,
especially in times
when the world
harms.
Because sometimes
words can
heal.*

(by Padraig O Tuama)

The season of Lent is sometimes referred to as a season of bright sadness, a 40-day focus on lengthening our discipleship of Jesus, the servant leader who lived and died for others.

This moment from Luke's gospel reminds us that in his dying Jesus spoke words to hold together what had been torn apart. Like many before us, we know the harm done in the world...

by winter storm, damaged church, public fear, private sorrow.

But we also know God's word that heals and holds together.

May our words be bright in the sadness of this season.

MISSION AND OUTREACH ACTIVITY

America for Christ Offering —March 15

This year's theme is "The Wisdom and Power of Storytelling" as inspired by Matthew 13:34-35:

"I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden since the foundation."

Jesus chose stories—parables—to reach people's hearts. Matthew 13:34–35 reminds us that His words were not just lessons but living testimonies that have connected listeners across time, culture, and experience.

When we give to America for Christ, funds raised go toward supporting American Baptist missions and ministries across the United States and Puerto Rico. There will be offering envelopes in the pew racks. We thank you for making a difference in these challenging times where love is sorely needed. Thank you!

A Message of thanks from an Atria resident and Atria worship attendee...

Dear Rev. Crooks,

*My thanks to the Prayer Shawl Group for the lovely shawl.
And thank YOU for the inspirational talks.*

May God bless all of you!

Evelyn S.

Prayer Shawls may be found in the Music Room, through the Sanctuary door by the piano. Please feel free to take one for someone you feel would love one.



Council Update

The education wing of our building was extensively damaged by a burst of heating system pipes on January 30, with water and steam damaging ceilings, floors, walls, and contents on first and second floors. Thankfully, utility repair and emergency damage control and remediation services were able to be on-site the same day to repair pipes, assess and minimize further damage. We are grateful our Sanctuary was spared! Much good news: the lighted Last Supper wall panel was not affected, Catherine Hiller assessed that church archives are in good shape, the second floor globe light fixtures and fans are fine, prayer shawls were rescued and dried promptly, the office printer works and wi-fi is intact.

We've got a long road ahead and share a sense of urgency to recover after the loss of our primary fellowship rooms and offices. Our Deacons of Buildings and Grounds (Sue, Dave and Jonathan) have diligently tackled and stayed on top of the evolving scene: working with plumbers, electricians, town building inspector, remediation service, and insurance adjuster; itemizing contents, communicating with Council and insurance company, managing and monitoring on-going electrical, heating and remediation impact. The major damage was to Prayer Shawl room, ceilings and carpeted floors of 1st and 2nd floor in fellowship rooms, the Mason & Hamlin piano, light fixtures in Miner (Purple Room), bookcases and desks.

The insurance company has received the adjuster's report and will communicate coverage and/or next steps once the review of the report is complete, expecting extended processing times due to high volume of claims due to severe weather events. Servicemaster will make recommendations as to repair contractors, but we make the final decision. SUNL responded generously with \$3000 to our request for grant monies which will go toward the insurance deductible.

Thank you for your offers of help! Hold that thought! After we hear from the insurance company we can put together a restoration timeline, expecting that to be several months in the future. The time will come for "all hands on deck"; watch for information in announcements, email, and Tie seeking your ideas and offers of contributions and physical help.

We will keep you all updated as there is news to share. You can count on news in the Tie as well as via email or Sunday morning services. We are hard at work on your behalf. One of these days our spaces will be cleaner and even more beautiful!

HOLIDAY BAZAAR 2026

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

9:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

December 5—the date for this year’s bazaar, will be here before you know it!

All who participated in our 2025 Holiday Bazaar as well as those interested in helping at our 2026 Holiday Bazaar are encouraged to attend.

We will review highlights of last year’s bazaar while still fresh in our minds and bring forward fresh ideas for this year, bearing in mind we will need to be flexible and possibly do things a little differently.

Spring Tag Sale

You’re wondering...church Tag Sale?

What about my Spring cleaning donations?

We have not forgotten the traditional Tag Sale...but we need to wait for the necessary space for the right time.

Save your donations and keep the church in mind...

We are optimistic about a Fall date.



MARCH MINISTERS

Greeters For The Month: Becky Freeman & Belle Jordan

Lay Leaders:

- 01 - Dianne Augeri
- 08 - Holly Boyle
- 15 - Carol Gatlin
- 22 - Steve Hughes
- 29 - Alex Lew

Communion Preparation: Worship and Membership Deacons

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 06 - Sawyer Wilbur | 15 - Gianni Pezzolesi |
| 07 - Josh Chomicz | 18 - Matthew Johnson |
| 10 - Mela Magno | 18 - Cassie Johnson |
| 11 - Claudine Crooks | 18 - Robert Johnson |
| 11 - Ann Mauer | 21 - Cheryl Piscitello |
| 13 - Jennifer Kent | 25 - Heidi Butler |
| 13 - Carla Berry | 26 - Janice Watrous Quick |
| 15 - Daniel Morton | 29 - Portia Freeman |
| 15 - Sandi Burns | 29 - Carol Case |
| 15 - Peg Ackley | 31 - Aida Amuan |
| 15 - Meghan Berry | |



APRIL MINISTERS

Greeters For The Month: Barbara Brant & Cathy Greenfield

Lay Leaders:

- 05 - Marilyn Rodearmel
- 12 - Carol Rowley
- 19 - Pete Wong
- 26 - Becky Freeman

Communion Preparation: Worship and Membership Deacons

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 05 - Jonathan Liu | 17 - Stephen Morton |
| 08 - Anita Fernald | 21 - Nancy Spalluto |
| 10 - Mark Mundell | 21 - Will Vars |
| 10 - Reese Friedman | 22 - David Augeri |
| 16 - Liz Rousseau | 26 - Becky Freeman |



Bread & Broth Pasta Dinner Ice Cream Social

All of these are activities we look forward to.

Mark the dates on our calendars.

Make soup, bake bread.

Enjoy cooking talents of others who make a great plate of pasta.

Cool off on a summer day with ice cream and toppings.

We WILL enjoy these again...we just need to practice a little patience. That soup, bread, pasta and ice cream taste good no matter when we eat it together.

What makes it good is that we do it together.

***Second Sunday Food Collection—
March 8 and April 12...
Don't forget...***



edible
stroke

Every day basics like canned soups & pastas, spaghetti sauce, pasta, cereals, etc. are all much appreciated. With the holidays in sight, canned veggies, stuffing and instant potatoes, etc. are welcomed for the holiday gift baskets. At the last food drop off we were told they've had many requests for pet food, so food for our four legged friends is appreciated and needed, too.