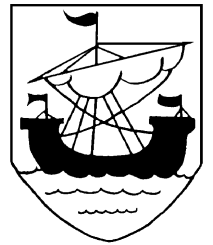


Canterbury Tales



The Newsletter of St. Anselm's Church, Lafayette, California

February 2024

From Rev. Will

Dear St. Anselm's,

Lent the word itself in Old English and Dutch as well, means spring season and while that doesn't officially start until March 19th, the buds on the plum trees, daffodils, and new growth on my rose bushes seem to suggest that spring is here already.

Since gardening has become more and more part of my life, I've been reading books and watching television shows about plants, landscaping and vegetable gardening. One thing that I found interesting was the definition of a weed, which according to one author, is any plant growing where you don't want it to be.

This reminds me of the definition of sin I recall from Sunday School, that is "anything that gets in the way of our relationship with God."

That's the invitation of Ash Wednesday and of the season of Lent as a whole, this is a time for us as individuals and as communities to deepen our relationship with the Divine --- to pause and notice the weeds, those things that have grown up in the gardens of our lives in places we did not want them and to scrape, pull, or dig them out.

Lent is also a great time, as is the season of spring, to notice those relationships, those plants, that are growing well that perhaps have even sprouted pups, that are ready for a new spot of their own, it's the season of separating bulbs so that those healthy and verdant things might have the space necessary to grow more abundantly. What activities, relationships, or practices might you embrace with greater vigor during the upcoming season of Lent?

Ash Wednesday and Lent are not lonely go it alone activities, and like gardening there's so much to be gained by connecting with people who have similar interests. Perhaps this is a season when you choose to take on a new study group, or discipline, a time for moving in a new direction or choosing in a deeper way community that enlivens and animates those things that grow your relationship with God. In this issue of Canterbury Tales you'll find information about St. Anselm's Lenten Sunday speaker series, Thursday evening "Living Well Through Lent" study group on zoom, and the return of the 5 p.m. Sunday service.

A few years ago I was walking on the Ohlone Greenway just down the hill from our home in El Cerrito and I was amazed by all the people utilizing the path on bikes, running, and simply strolling along, and then noticed folks working in gardens along the way, pulling weeds, and then I happened upon a man who was kicking glass off the path that someone had either intention-

(Continued on page 6)

Anselm's Angels

A very big thank you **Rev. Will Scott** for leading the Congregational Listening Session.

Many thanks to **Judy Peak** for coordinating our January Lectors and Lay Eucharist Ministers: **Katie Taggart, Marian Mulkey Sally Fischer, Peg Matson, Allen Zhang, Eva Woo, Joni Pearce and Dimitri Seletzky**. To **Doug Merrill** for coordinating our ushers; **Joan Martin, John Ruby, Greg Heiman, Don Liddle, Gary Bacon and Bob Eddy**. To **Sylvia Williams** for coordinating our coffee hosts; **Marian Mulkey, Peg Matson, Julie Rinkenberger and Katie Taggart** and Altar Guild volunteers; **Joan Martin, Sharon Harichandran, Dharmini Harichandran, Edee Allison, Sara Swimmer, Sylvia Williams, Elisabeth Ida, Sally Fischer, Joni Pearce and Eva Woo Slavitt**. And to **Peg Martin** for coordinating our counters; **Don Liddle, Julie Starr, Sylvia Williams, Al Eames and Marian Mulkey**

And special thanks to **Chris Young** for his tireless work as our weekly Zoom cameraman. And to webmaster **Elisabeth Ward** for keeping us all informed through the church website: www.stanselms.us





SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY



February 11th is the Super Bowl, and as we have in years past, St. Anselm's will be taking collection to support the work of the Contra Costa and Solano County Food Bank. The need is more critical than ever. For those parishioners attending in-person, a youth member or usher will be collecting donations at the main door after the service. If you attend the service via Zoom, you may send a check to St. Anselm's with "Souper Bowl Sunday" on the memo line. Our mailing address is 682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, CA 94549. The church will match all donations up to \$500. **GO NINERS!!**



PRAYER CHAIN



St. Anselm's Prayer Chain is a list of our parishioners and loved ones for whom prayers have been requested. Prayer is voluntary and on your own whenever you wish to pray. If you would like to receive the Prayer Chain or if there is someone you would like to add to the Prayer Chain, please email Vicki at vrpappas@gmail.com.

STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. ANSELM'S

Have you ever wished for someone to listen, care, and pray for you? Are you going through a difficult time and wishing for a caring person who will listen, but keep your troubles confidential? Stephen Ministers are such people. Stephen Ministry exists because Christ commanded that we care for each other:



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

Rejoice with those rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. - Romans 12:15

Encourage one another and build each other up - 1 Thess. 5:11a

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the Law of Christ. - Galatians 6:2

Stephen Ministry is Christ caring for people through people. Stephen Ministers provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care to people who are going through a difficult time. A Stephen Minister is a well-trained caregiver who listens, cares, prays, encourages, and offers the love of Christ during a time of need. Stephen Ministers understand that Christ is the "cure-giver" and Stephen Ministers are the Caregivers. A Stephen Minister is there to walk beside a person facing difficulties such as divorce, serious illness, loss of spouse, job loss, and much more. You will find videos and more information at www.stephenministries.org. Please contact Vicki Pappas at vrpappas@gmail.com or call (925) 818-7051, or Naomi Chamberlain-Harris at orchidsnrch@yahoo.com if you want more information or desire to receive care from a Stephen Minister.

LENTEN SOCK DRIVE

As Lent comes early this year, new white socks are needed more than ever for our homeless brothers and sisters. My basket will be in the church near the front doors waiting for your donations of socks. I will be collecting them until Palm Sunday and then will deliver them to Trinity Center. My deepest thanks for your generosity in this time of need in our community.



—Deacon Naomi

Canterbury Tales

is the monthly newsletter of

St. Anselm's Episcopal Church
682 Michael Lane, Lafayette, CA

Phone: (925) 284-7420

web site: www.stanselms.us

Editor: Margaret Wolfe

e-mail: margaret.w@stanselms.us

In-Person & Virtual Sunday Service:

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

St. Anselm's Staff

The Rev. Will Scott, Guest Priest

The Rev. Naomi Chamberlain-Harris, Deacon

Margaret Wolfe, Office Manager

To schedule an in person conversation with Rev. Will, email rector@stanselms.us

February open office hours:

Mondays 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

Wednesday 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

Fridays 12 p.m.-2 p.m.

From The Senior Warden

As we head toward our 2024 Annual Report and Business Meeting on 2/18, I'm amazed at how much change we have experienced in such a short a period of time and how "The Change" has affected all of us at St. Anselm's. "The Change" last fall initiated a great deal of anxiety, institutional and self-examination. It prompted many actions of which some are still in motion. At the December 18th Vestry meeting, it was determined not to elect new Vestry members at this time. Bringing new members up to speed on the key issues would be extremely difficult in the middle of this examination and healing process. Thus, the Vestry decided on December 18th to ask the Senior members (Chris Young, Elisabeth Ward, Neva Flaherty, and me) to extend our terms for up to six months. All members of the Senior class agreed. If you recall, the class before us were in the middle of a search process a year ago and did the same extension. Thus, we will hold an election of new Vestry members when feasible, but no later than the end of June.

While it is painful to reflect on what happened both personally and institutionally, it is also a lifelong belief that change forces adaptation and innovation. The more dramatic the change, the greater the response. In the days ahead and in the next few months, I pray that all of us will embrace the responses to the "The Change" we endured. For one thing, it brought us Rev. Will, a priest of Christian love who already has a deep commitment to our congregation. We appreciate and are thankful for the way he has embraced us and the wisdom and spiritual nourishment he has provided. "The Change" also forced us to restructure several old operational practices to "best practices." We are also addressing the interpersonal issues that surfaced with the hiring of a consultant and that process has just started.

In reflection, Sally & I just celebrated our 58th anniversary, 50 of those have been shared with our St. Anselm's family. We've been part of a lot of history and changes, some joyous and some painful. Throughout our years, the St. Anselm's family has been an important part of our lives. It was that warm and loving family we could return to each week over the years and it still is, in spite of all the issues we have faced. There were times when our life's changes were devastating, the deaths of parents, the kids leaving the nest to pursue their own lives, the highs and lows of business and much more. Time heals as only time can. I look forward to seeing our St. Anselm's family get through this process.

What will we become as a result of "The Change" that caught our church family by surprise? Only the future will tell. But I firmly believe things happen for a reason. I see a future of progress and deep commitment to who we were, are and always will be, a loving and welcoming community in the body of Christ.

Marty Fischer
Sr. Warden

MICHAEL LANE PRESCHOOL UPDATES

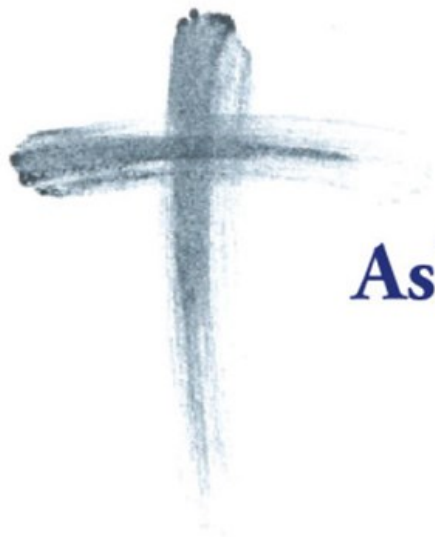
Happy February!

Recently, we have been learning about bears and hibernation. We built our own bear cave out of egg cartons and painted thick paper, then made some black bears to hibernate inside. We have enjoyed acting out how bears spend their days - fishing, swimming, finding berries, and then going down for a big winter sleep. In this cozy season, the children have also been helping more in preparing their daily snack. From making sandwiches, kale chips, applesauce, to polar bear faces on bagels, those little hands have been busy!

A team of parents has been assembled to plan our Spring Parent Auction and party. This is always a special way to end our year by gathering together and raising some funds for our school.

Enjoy these cozy days!
Warmly,
Holly Higgins
Director, Michael Lane Preschool





Ash Wednesday
— Lent Begins

***ASH WEDNESDAY
SERVICES***

**Wednesday
February 14th**

**at Noon
and
7:00 p.m.**

CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

**Sunday, February 18th
11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**



Following the 10am service, we will hold a congregation wide meeting in the parish hall to review our 2023 Annual Report and plans for 2024. There will also be oral reports including a review of the 2023 financial results and the Vestry approved 2024 operating budget. In addition, we will hear from Rev. Will about his observations and plans. Reports will be made by our Deacon, Naomi Chamberlain-Harris, Sr. Warden Marty Fischer and other committee heads. We will introduce nominees and elect Convention and Deanery Delegates. Some of our members will also be honored for their outstanding service to our congregation in 2023 and before. Please plan to attend and take part in this important meeting.



***SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP SERVICE
with Iona Liturgy***

**returns Sunday, February 18th
at 5:00 p.m.**

A small group of St. Anselm's parishioners are coming together to host a 5 p.m. Eucharist during Lent. We will use prayers from the Iona Community, an ecumenical movement founded in Scotland. Following a brief service of word and sacrament in the sanctuary, we will offer a simple meal in the parish hall. We look forward to welcoming you. If you would like to support this service by playing music, making soup or bringing bread, or if you have questions, please contact Rev. Will at rector@stanselms.us or 415-987-3029.



Vestry Update *Next Steps in Listening and Healing*

Efforts continue to deepen our shared understanding of the factors and events that resulted in Rev. Stephen Siptroth's short tenure as St. Anselm's Rector in 2023. Beginning February 1, St. Anselm's has engaged Rev. Audrey Miskelley, a local Episcopal priest who specializes in leadership transitions and church healing, to work with us as a part-time external consultant. Rev. Audrey is undertaking a confidential listening process and will develop options and recommendations for Vestry consideration. Through Rev. Audrey's work we expect to gain more insight into the rifts that emerged last fall and identify actions that will help move our community forward with healing and reconciliation. Rev. Audrey's engagement is expected to extend over the next two to three months with a check-in planned for the March 17 Vestry meeting.

After church on February 4, we held a congregational listening session facilitated by Rev. Will. Because Rev. Audrey's work was barely underway, the February 4 session focused on listening, not on finding definitive explanations or unveiling solutions. The tone was pastoral, with Rev. Will and speakers expressing concern for one another and for the church community. Many church members voiced their questions, concerns, and hopes. Some offered observations and ideas about what happened and what next steps are needed. Vestry members were primarily in listening mode and appreciated the diversity of views and the commitment to St. Anselm's future that people demonstrated through their participation. Members of the Vestry took notes and will continue to reflect on implications and next steps.

The Vestry subgroup coordinating this work includes Marian Mulkey, Don Liddle and Elisabeth Ward. Questions or comments may be addressed to any one of them.

A Message From Audrey+

Hello and blessings to you, the beloved community, St. Anselm's!

I am the Rev. Audrey Miskelley and I was a classmate with Rev. Will - way back at Virginia Theological Seminary. Like many clergy my professional trajectory has gone in directions that I had not expected and yet am so grateful for. I am currently serving with Holy Cross Castro Valley, and have served numerous other congregations throughout this diocese such as St. Paul's Walnut Creek and St. Michael & All Angels Concord/St. John's Clayton - now Holy Spirit. As an "intentional interim" I work only with churches who are in the midst of transition. Therefore, I encounter people who can be anxious about what is next. Being in transition can often be uncomfortable, particularly after a long pastorate or if/when a community is experiencing a challenge that feels contrary to who you define yourselves as. As churches are a community of human beings who strive to follow God's call, that journey will encounter times when what was expected is not what transpired. My call is to help a community discover who they are especially in the midst of events that challenge. To focus on forward and what is, in fact, next.

My steadfast guide to my ministry is simple and rests in 1 John 3:2-

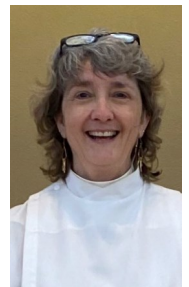
Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when God is revealed, we will be like God, for we will see God as God is.

We know that the revelation of God is not magic, it is manifest through us - you and I - the children of God. We must ask ourselves this question: Are we manifesting God and all God's glory, or are we doing something else? This is remarkably simple and yet amazingly complicated. A lot like our life.

I will be engaging in pastoral conversations that are by their nature confidential and advising the vestry on a path forward that honors who you are as St. Anselm's but does not avoid the challenges that are important to move through and tackle with honesty and generosity.

I ask for your prayers as I hold you in my own prayers.

Peace,
Audrey+





JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Tom Henry
 Gary Bacon
 Jan White
 Pam Carey
 Samuel Weaver
 Jeff Borero
 Edee Allison
 Bill Donovan
 John Weaver
 Marcia Ellicott

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

John Powers
 Tim Brown
 Don Liddle
 Kathleen Trapani
 Leslie Weaver
 Jane Dawkin

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Tom & Vicki Pappas
 Betty & Tom Frangoulis
 Cathy & Paul Witkay
 Jean & Mark Stanley
 Bob & Pamela Green
 Kim & Scott Smigielski
 Dick & Jan White
 Marty & Sally Fischer

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Norm & Sheila Gorsuch



SUNDAY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

GREETERS to offer a warm welcome and a friendly face when people take the time to visit us every Sunday morning. If interested in helping, please contact Keith Pearce at pistolprce@gmail.com or call 650-281-6881.

COUNTERS to assist a Vestry member with the responsibility for counting and recording cash and checks on a written counter form and securing the deposit. If interested in volunteering as a counter, please contact Marty Fischer or Peg Matson.

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS to provide refreshments following the service. To sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c044bada722a2f85-coffee> or contact Sylvia Williams at sw94565@yahoo.com or 925-586-0730



2024 ALTAR FLOWERS

The 2024 Altar Flower donation chart is now available in the church, on the wall by the east entrance. By making a donation you can have altar flowers dedicated to the memory of a loved one, in honor of a family member or simply to the glory of God. Please sign-up for your selected date (s) and complete a dedication card from the stack next to the chart. You may also email parish@stanselms.us with your selected date(s) and dedication.

FORWARD DAY-BY-DAY

The February/March/April issue of "Forward Day-by-Day" is now available. If you are attending the in-person services, please feel free to take one home. If you are attending remotely and would like a copy mailed to your home address, please email parish@stanselms.us. These will be available on a first come, first served basis

From Rev. Will

(Continued from page 1)

ally or accidentally broken right in the middle of the path covering both sides with little bits of shattered glass. His young daughter was seated in one of those nice strollers with bicycle tires, the man was clearly worried about their own tires being punctured, but also about the many others riding by whose bikes, strollers or other vehicles might be damaged by passing through those shards. His care made me want to stop and help, and for 5 minutes or so we silently stood there kicking the glass off to the sides of the path. There was something prayerful about that activity.

May Lent be a time for all of us at St. Anselm's to engage in activities and practices that deepen our relationship with the Divine, help us grow more fully alive and remove obstacles along our shared paths.

See you soon!

The Rev. Will Scott
Guest Priest



OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH DURING LENT

Building Community in Times of Change

This will be an in-person Speaker Series held on Sundays after church. Following a light lunch, these sessions will begin at 11:30 a.m. and conclude by 12:45p.m. Speakers will offer insights and inspiration about building and healing community. Some involve particular populations, others focus on current issues, but all will offer food for thought and opportunities for discussion. All are welcome to attend some or all of the sessions:

February 25: Maya Smith, Kindness Champion and Mental Health Advocate, will discuss the importance of kindness to ourselves, to each other and to our community. She will share the benefits of kindness as well as invitations to be kind in Lafayette and beyond.

March 3: Cynthia Cudaback, Ph.D., an educator, geophysicist and leader of her congregation's Interfaith Power & Light "Green Team," will discuss science-based solutions to climate change and ways our faith community can make a difference, beyond the greening of our campus.

March 10: John Nickerson, Superintendent of Acalanes Union High School District, will discuss opportunities to support connection and community among teens and families.

March 17: To be announced

Living Well Through Lent 2024: Practicing Forgiveness

This weekly contemplative series, facilitated by Rev. Will and members of the Christian Formation Commission, will meet via Zoom each Thursday from 6 to 7 p.m. from February 22 through March 23. Contact Marian Mulkey to receive the Zoom link. Inspiration and ideas will be drawn from the Living Compass resource, ***Living Well Through Lent 2024: Practicing Forgiveness with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind***, booklets that offer weekly and daily meditations and scripture resources for the entire season of Lent. Print copies are available in the back of the church beginning February 4. The document can also be downloaded at <https://www.livingcompass.org/lent>.

For more information about either program contact Marian Mulkey, Anne Brown or Rev. Will.

Building Community In Times of Change

**Sunday, February 25, 2023
11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**



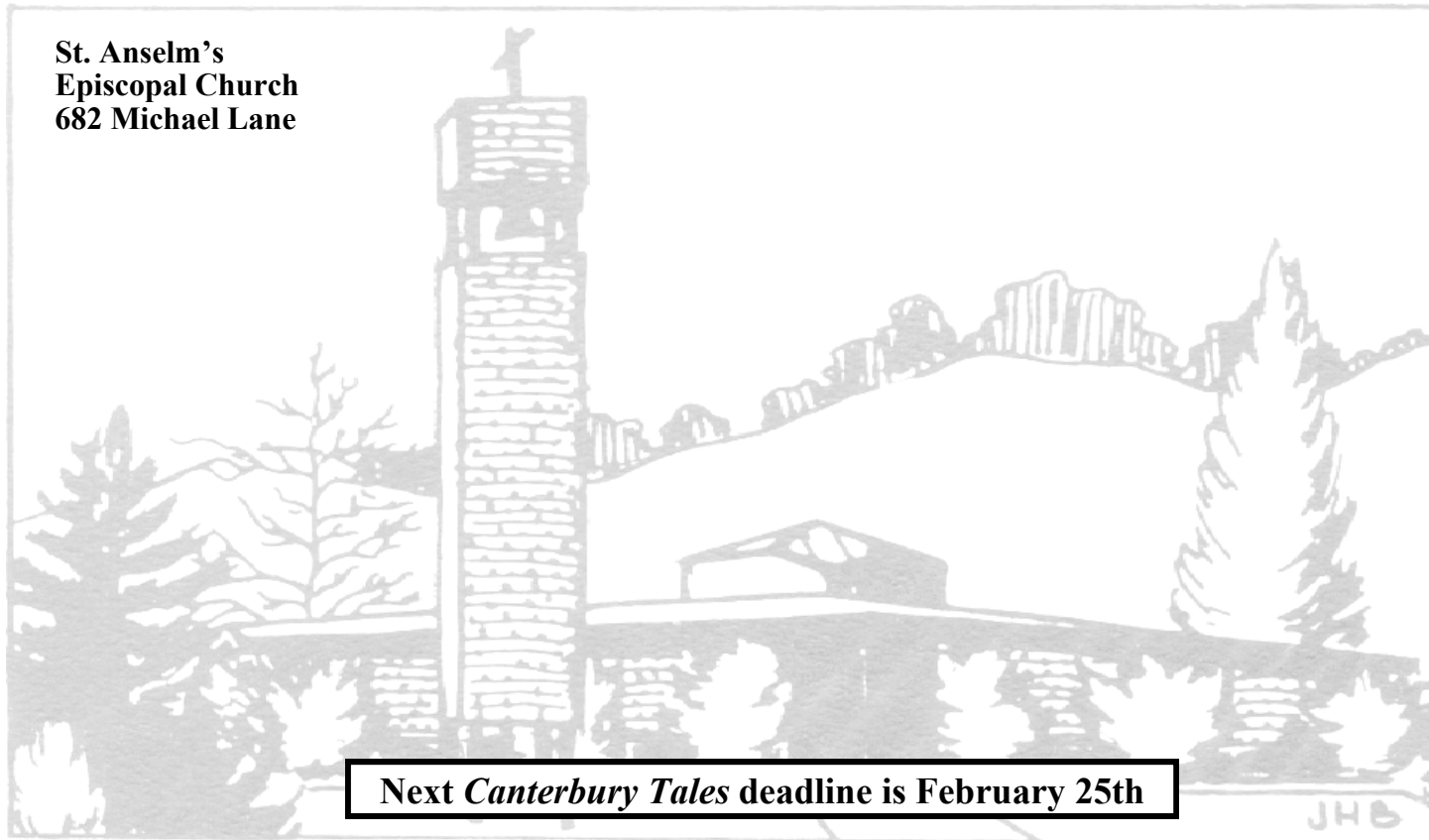
Maya Smith, Kindness Champion and Mental Health Advocate

Maya was the Executive Director of Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation for over a decade, where she worked to empower young people to create a kinder, braver world, and also be a source for mental health support. Prior to that, she was CEO for Mobilize.org, where she worked with millennials to identify societal challenges unique to their generation and fund their solutions through grants.

Now Maya helps companies and nonprofits realize their pro-social missions in the world through her expertise in strategic visioning and building/scaling movements. Her current client work includes strategic partnership development for nonprofits working with young people, development work for leading edge cancer care and patient advocacy organizations, and supporting the board development and mission alignment work of place-based community organizations.

She envisions a kinder, more inclusive, and more just world where every person is heard, validated, and celebrated and where we collectively respond to crises with urgency and love.

St. Anselm's
Episcopal Church
682 Michael Lane



Next *Canterbury Tales* deadline is February 25th

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday February 13th/20th/27th — Morning Prayer will be led by Deacon Naomi via Zoom at 9:00 a.m. To be invited, email Deacon Naomi at orchidsnrch@yahoo.com.

Tuesday February 13th/20th/27th — Evening Bible Study will meet via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. To be invited, email Deacon Naomi at orchidsnrch@yahoo.com.

Sunday February 11th — Cancer Support Group will meet in the conference room and via Zoom at 11:45 a.m. To be invited, email Julie Rinkenberger at jrjpmaggie@hotmail.com.

Wednesday February 14th — Ash Wednesday Services will be held at Noon and 7:00 p.m.

Sunday February 18th — Congregational Business Meeting from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Sunday February 18th/25th/March 3rd/10th/17th — Evening Worship Service will be held at 5 p.m.

Monday February 19th — Vestry will meet in the conference room and via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. Vestry members will receive an email from Chris Young with the meeting link.

Wednesday February 21st — Stephen Ministers will meet via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. Stephen Ministers will receive a link from Vicki Pappas.

Thursday February 22nd/29th/March 7th/14th/21st — Living Well Through Lent 2024: Practicing Forgiveness with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind will meet via Zoom at 6:00 p.m. Facilitated by members of the Christian Formation Commission and Rev. Will. To be invited, email Marian Mulkey at marianmulkey@comcast.net.

Sunday February 25th/March 3rd/10th/17th — Building Community In Times of Change in-person Speaker Series held following a light lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.