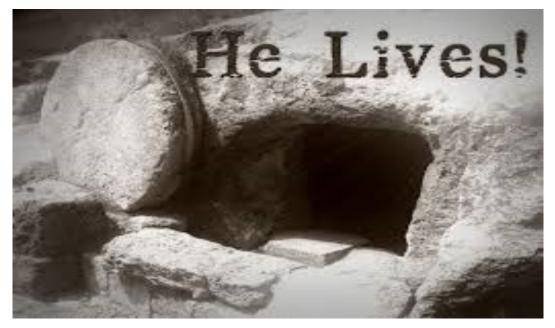
The Praise Report

The Newsletter of Ujima Village Christian Church

Rev. Dr. J.R. Norwod, Pastor 1001 Pennington Road * Ewing, NJ 08618



Spring / 2018 Issue 2 www.UjimaChurch.org



He Lives! By Pastor Norwood

The resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the crucial element of the Christian faith! The angelic proclamation at the empty grave, "He is not here. For He has risen as He said" (Matt 28:6 ESV), marks a decisive difference between Christianity and other world religions. The mediator of our faith is not dead, He is alive! The Lord Jesus Christ, who is the unique Son of God and second person of the Trinity, rose from the grave not merely spiritually, but bodily. This one who is uniquely fully God and fully man was resurrected from the dead. The apostles and disciples who saw the risen Lord did not experience a mere apparition or ghost. They were transformed by the reality that he had risen physically into a form that was eternal. It was the denial of this by another preacher that prompted Pastor Alfred Ackley to respond in a fashion that reverberates in Christian churches even today. As the story goes, it was Resurrection Sunday in 1932 and Pastor Ackley heard a well-known liberal radio preacher proclaim, "It's Easter! You know folks, it really doesn't make any difference to me if Christ be risen or not. As far as I am concerned His body could be as dust in some Palestinian tomb. The main thing is, His truth goes marching on!" Astonished by this blatantly heretical

teaching, surprisingly common among many extreme liberal theologians, Pastor Ackley, who was also a musician, was moved to write the hymn, "He Lives!" It's verses have become a standard in many churches in the celebration of the resurrection, including our own. The powerful opening words of the hymn serve to inspire and summon hearts to worship... "I serve a risen Savior. He's in the world today. I know that he is living, whatever men may say." The words of the chorus repeat a key affirmation of our faith, "He lives! He lives! Christ Jesus lives today. He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way." The disciples of Jesus Christ have a relationship with their Lord and Savior. Salvation in Christ is accompanied by a blessed intimacy with the Lord, graciously granted by the Holy Spirit. The chorus doubles down on the personal experience of that intimate relationship, "He lives! He lives! Salvation to impart. You ask me how I know he lives... He lives within my heart."

Pastor Ackley's testimony of the firm faith of believers grounded in the intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, which we enjoyed by grace, is easily affirmed by all who are saved. That is why the song is still sung so joyfully in Christian churches to this very day. However, the response provided by the lyrics of the hymn falls short of

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["HE LIVES" - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

addressing the liberal claim that Jesus' resurrection may have merely been spiritual and not physical. This claim is made by those who have neither a firm faith in the truth of Scripture, an understanding of the essential core element of the faith, or in the facts of history. While believers know that Jesus lives because of a personal and transformative relationship with him, it is important to state that, even in the absence of such a relationship, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is still a historical fact. In defending the faith, we can also testify that "Jesus lives" because history demonstrates it.

While there is plenty evidence of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we were blessed on the Wednesday of Holy Week with a special study that featured a video lecture by Dr. Gary Habermas, who broke down the "Minimal Facts Method" that provides evidence of the Resurrection. He calls it the "Minimal Facts Method" because it draws out from the wealth of evidence only those portions of Scripture and non-scriptural accounts that are viewed by skeptical and atheist scholars as being authentic. He then reduces this evidence to the bare minimum of only a handful of accounts and then demonstrates that the Resurrection is accounted for by the earliest of eyewitnesses in a fashion that even nonbelieving historians accept is accurate. Dr. Habermas' video lecture can be found online at https://youtu.be/ Ya5gq5R7teM.

A Packed House for the Seder

So many of our members gathered to celebrate the Seder on Holy Thursday that we almost did not have enough space! What a wonderful problem to have! As is



our tradition, the youth helped with the setup and were the primary servers during the meal. The Seder is the special Passover meal that Jesus celebrated with his disciples when he instituted the Lord's Supper on the night before his crucifixion. Many thanks to all of the volunteers, both youth and adult, who helped to make the event so memorable.

Norwood's Notes: Basic Bible Stories

Each Sunday over the past several months, a bulletin insert has provided a summary overview of basic Bible stories. Starting in Genesis, each insert has progressed through the major stories of Scripture. As of this newsletter issue, there have been fourteen installments leading right up to the call of the prophet Samuel. The aim of these "notes," which are quick and easy reads written by Pastor Norwood, is to provide a basic grasp of the stories of Scripture, moving through the books and chapters of the Bible, to aid believers in their understanding and increase a thirst for God's Holy Word. The notes do not include all of the Bible's stories, nor are all of the details given of the stories that are summarized. But, they serve as an introduction and overview that can aid in becoming familiar with the stories of Scripture and help in further study. While the pastor has not promised that a new one will appear every week (although so far that has been the case), he is determined to continue to provide the notes regularly, because knowing God's Word is vital to maturing as a disciple and growing in God's will.

In addition to being inserted in Sunday bulletins, the notes are also available for download from the church website at http://ujimachurch.org/resources/ and are also available from a display rack in the vestibule of the sanctuary.

International Relief

Each year, the Brotherhood of Mighty Men raises money to address international crises. Through monthly member dues and special offerings, the Ministry is able to make a donation through "World Vision," a Christian international care ministry best known for sponsoring needy children around the world. The donations are targeted to those items for which our U.S. dollars have a greater impact because their value is multiplied when they reach those in need. The value of what is raised can be worth much more when reaching foreign lands. Between December 2017 and January 2018, the Brotherhood of Mighty Men report that they were able to have the following impact (totals are adjusted for value)...

Medicine	\$1600
Refugee crisis	\$ 100
South Sudan relief	\$ 400
East Africa Hunger	\$ 350
Exploited Girls	\$ 50
Child health & food	\$ 160
Children's cloths	\$ 480
Overall Value	\$3140

To God be the Gory!!!

Family Game Nights

Game nights were held on both January 12th and April 6th. In January, the Wilkins family hosted the event. Sister Robin Wilkins had everyone play an icebreaker

named "Switch Sides," She had everyone form two lines, facing each other. As she asked questions about various life experiences, personal likes and dislikes, players would switch their side based upon their answers. We learned quite a bit about one another. We discovered that Tameeka and Sajada Hardwick both had the experience of riding an elephant. We dis-



covered that Brother Channell Wilkins Sr. has traveled to almost every continent on the planet.

The April game night was hosted by Rev. Panniell, who was also standing in for Sister Patricia Panniell who was "on the mend" from back surgery. The focus of the evening, in addition to the pizza and fried chicken wings



that were served, was a game of "Trivial Pursuit" that was brought by Sister Naomi Cullem. Quite a few brain twisting questions had the players "stumped," resulting in learning many new and interesting facts.

The next game night is on June 29th. Mark you calendars so that you don't miss the fun!

African American Christian History

Throughout the month of February, historical figures in African American Christian History were presented through bulletin inserts. Those lifted made significant contributions to American History, but are not as well known and celebrated as they should be. ..

The Rev. Lemuel Haynes (1753-1833) was a patriot involved in the American Revolutionary War, a prominent New England Congregational minister, and the first African American in America to receive an honorary college degree.

Jarena Lee (1783-c.1850) was a preacher & abolitionist. She preached all over the northeastern United States and as far west as Ohio, often to racially mixed audiences. Later, she compiled and published her memoirs in 1833, which is one of the first autobiographies by a black woman in America. **Nannie Helen Burroughs** (1879-1961) With the support of the National Baptist Convention, she was the planner and first president of the "National Trade and Professional School for Women and Girls" in Washington, D.C. ... a position she held from 1909, when she was only 26-years old. Burroughs adopted the motto *"We specialize in the wholly impossible"* for the school, which taught courses on the high school and junior college level. She continued her work at the school until her death in 1961.

The Rev. Hiram Rhodes Revels (1827-1901) was an ordained AME minister, Union Veteran of the Civil War, and the first African America to serve in the United States Senate. He also served as the president of Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College, located in Mississippi.

We thank God for the lives of these faithful trailblazers!

Additionally, a special presentation was also given by Sister Tameekia Hardwick that provided information on numerous figures in African-American History.

Puerto Rico Hurricane Relief



For months, the members of Ujima were encouraged to give directly to the relief efforts in Puerto Rico, which had been devastated by a hurricane. We thank God for those of you who gave generously to that effort. There was one of us who went the extra mile... Brother Darryl Rawls traveled with his fellow Princeton The-

ological Seminary staff members to Puerto Rico to help with the clean up and repairs at the Seminario Evangelico de Puerto, a School of Theology. Brother Rawls reports that while much was accomplished, much more needs to be done. He plans to return to continue the work.



A Personal Testimony by Ardelia Clark

Ujima Village Christian Church has been quite an experience for me and my family. It started with my brother, Minister Henry Panniell meeting Pastor Norwood and subsequently attending Ujima for many years. Sorry to say, he did not share his good fortune immediately. But eventually we decided to visit and we were impressed by the loving spirit of the people, the Word being preached with depth and sincerity, the inspirational music and choir, and the clean, beautiful building.

It has been over three years and I am still very pleased and privileged to be a part of this ministry. The Word of God is taught, and studied in depth on Sundays and Wednesdays. On both days there is an opportunity for questions and open discussions.

On Sundays we are given our spiritual food and a fellowship meal before Bible study time. Who does that?

Wednesday night service is definitely worth the effort. As a senior citizen, I have learned that knowledge and wisdom do not automatically come with age. When God gives us time, what we do with our time matters. We can continue growing in the Lord., in the Word, and in our faith.

Our family has experienced several distressing situations these past years and we are blessed to have a church family who cares and shares.

Ujima's Got Talent

On February 25th, we held another "Ujima's Got Talent fellowship. Jokes, stories, solos, duets, poems, and much more were shared to the glory of God and the delight of all in attendance. Several of those who shared poetry also submitted them for this newsletter issue... ENJOY!

Who Are You God?

Submitted by Shirley Hillery, Author Unknown

While praying one day a woman asked, "Who are you God?"

He answered, "I AM."

"But who is I AM," she asked.

- He replied, "I AM Peace... I AM Grace... I AM Joy... I AM Strength... I AM Safety... I AM Power... I AM The Creator... I AM The Comforter... I AM the Beginning and the End... I AM the Way, Truth and Light."
- With tears in her eyes, she looked toward heaven and said, "Now I understand. But God, who am I?"
- God tenderly wiped the tears from her eyes and whispered, "You are Mine"

"From a Descendent-with Love"

(an ode to the spirit of my ancestors) by Naomi Cullum

During the month of February...

Many hearts will turn to "Love"- so will mine Folks will celebrate loved ones- so will I

However...

My love will turn to my people, my culture, my heritage. I will celebrate the triumph of their spirit and the glory of their resilience. The roots run deep-back to Africa, the Motherland. Sankofa steps appear on the horizon as my head tilts back- in remembrance of my ancestors...

- <u>I was there</u> when slave ships were boarded and families torn apart
- <u>I was there</u> when the stench of oppression hovered over the Middle Passage
- <u>I was there</u> when blood, sweat and tears fell and fertilized fields cotton fields
- <u>I was there</u> when identities were stripped and humanity was sold- like parcel- on auction blocks
- <u>I was there</u> when the revelation came that: "I am African - not because I was born in Africa- but because Africa is borne in me!"
- Yes, I was there- right there- with those ancestors...for their lives and spirit are forever entangled with mine.

Time...

by Naomi Cullum

From birth to death- in every land All lives fall prey to this "Elusive One" Nature, itself, can't escape his command

Such a versatile fellow- dream maker, heartbreaker Kind to some, harsh to others Bountiful giver, merciless taker He never lets us forget him-thereby enslaving our minds He's a healer and a crippler His nickname is . . . "TIME"

A "Scar Story"

by Naomi Cullum

If this scar on my cheek could speak It would tell the story of a child at age three who was in the way of a stick-that fell from a tree

Now, it was all in fun and play But I'll never forget that particular day

Several young kids were in my Grandma's yard-I'm sure there was, at least, one person in charge

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who said, "Let's get some pears- throwing these old sticks"

Little me just stood there-right in the mix

When I happened to look up-to take a peek, That's when a piece of a stick fell into my cheek

I remember tears and blood running down my face, As I ran into the house at a very quick pace

- Although I never went to a doctor, somehow the wound did heal
- However, I won't forget that experience and how it made me feel

If this scar on my cheek could speak...

It would tell the story of a child of three

who was in the way of a stick- that fell from a tree

Welcome New Members to Our Church Family by Tina Roach

Shai Palacio

I had been looking for a church home for a while. Ms. Andranette and I work at the Family Courthouse. Actually, she invited me many times before I came to visit. The members were so welcoming and I understood the Pastor's messages. I went forward to join on my 3rd visit because I really felt this is where I should be.



I am 24, and my son Sahai, is 2 1/2. I work in the Juvenile Dept at the Courthouse and I enjoy my job. I'm also attending Empire Cosmetology School in Hamilton. Eventually, I plan to return to college and earn a bachelor's degree. I'm very artistic; I enjoy dancing, singing and writing. I've authored many poems and am writing a book entitled, "Bittersweet".

I'm hesitant to join the choir because I'm a shysinger, but I would like to join the Praise Dance Ministry. I look forward to helping out whenever and wherever I can be of assistance.

Franco Perdriel

My name is Franco Perdriel. I am a native of Haiti and I speak French and English. I live in Trenton, New Jersey with my lovely wife, Marva, and family.

My mother-in-law, (Gail Snead), My sister-inlaw, (Marsha Ponder), and My aunt-in-law, (Shirley Hillery) are also members. I decided to join

Ujima Christian Church be-



cause I needed a church home and I really enjoyed Pastor Norwood's sermons from the first time Marva (my fiance at the time) brought me here. I also liked that the atmosphere was welcoming, and I felt the love in the Church as a Whole Family of Togetherness to serve the Lord.

I am very happy to be a part of the Ujima Village Christian Church and Grateful to have married the love of my life in matrimony here. Be blessed and thank you for letting me share a part of my life.

Our 26th Anniversary

February 18th marked 26 years as a congregation. During the morning worship, Pastor Norwood challenged us with his sermon, *"What Do You Want to Be?"* from Acts 2:42-44. Gifts were presented to various church members, based upon length of membership, during the fellowship meal. We were blessed to have Pastor Richard Norris II and the Bethel AME Church of Pennsauken minister during our afternoon worship. There was a bit of a reunion for our choir, with some who were previous choir members joining in to sing during the celebration. Another great blessing was the reformed children's choir, "Joyful Noise," ministering in song.



New Church Officials!

On Sunday, March 4th, new church officials were installed. The Consistory gained five new members: Daniel Roach, Sandra Baez, and Kathleen Rawls were elected to the Council of Trustees to serve as 2nd Vice Chair, Clerk, and Assistant Clerk, respectively; Sheldon Ewing and Clifford Rawls were consecrated as stewards to the Council of Ministers. Pastor Norwood also appointed Darryl Rawls to a newly created position, "Foreman of the Facilities Guild," to gather volunteers to address repairs and upkeep issues for the building and grounds.

Deacon Charles "Pop" Manning, Cynthia Solice, Diane Watkins, and Trinity Norwood were all honored for their service to the Council of Trustees and Consistory.

News from the Council of Trustees

by Trinity Norwood

Offerings and Donations: Please make sure you are using and filling out envelopes for your offerings, tithes, donations, etc. Please be sure to record your name, the date and the amount you are giving on your envelope. This is the only way we can track your giving!

2018 Roster: We are working on updating and expanding the roster this year. Please complete the form found on the back table in the sanctuary and drop it off in the trustee's office.

Lenten Sacrificial Offering: Through the season of Lent we raised \$2000.00 through our Lenten Sacrificial offering. Together with an anonymous donation received from a member earlier this year, the total toward raised in \$3000. Also Brother Channell Wilkins Sr. donated the two of monitors for the sanctuary to be used for special presentations. Thank you to everyone who put aside extra and gave! There are many things that need to be done around the church and with your sacrifice they will be!

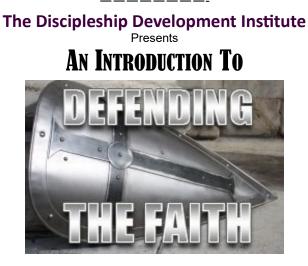
Church Policy and Procedure: There has been some questions about the processes for ministry funds raised by various organizations of the church. It is important that we all follow the same process to ensure accurate records. Below are some of the standing operating procedures the Council of Trustees would like to highlight:

*<u>Reimbursements-</u> When purchasing items for the church or a specific ministry the purchase must be preapproved! Members should submit an estimated cost to the Council of Trustees to be reviewed and approved by Pastor. Once approved, a reimbursement can not be processed until the original receipt has been submitted to the Council of Trustees.

*<u>Donations-</u>Church members are at liberty to make financial or in-kind donations to the church at anytime. For financial donations, please make sure you fill out a special offering envelope. Any in-kind donation should be preapproved by the Pastor to ensure it is an item the church has need of. Additionally, when donating items, please make sure it is reported to the Council of Trustees. This is to ensure that all donations are reported in your annual giving statement!

*<u>Ministry Fundraising-</u>ALL funds must be submitted to the Council of Trustees for church/ministry fundraisers, collection of dues, retreat money, etc., on the Sunday the funds are raised/collected or the closest Sunday to the event/collection. An individual member <u>CAN NOT</u> hold funds for the church. When funds are submitted to the Trustees, the member heading the fundraiser will receive a receipt for the funds submitted to keep a running total for their fund raiser. Fundraisers that require petty cash (i.e. candy and soda sales), can request that no more than \$50.00 be held in the church safe and not deposited into the ministry account until the fundraiser is complete.

*<u>Disbursements</u> Any disbursements of ministry funds must be submitted and approved by the Pastor on a case to case basis.



Two Free Wednesday Night Classes April 18 & 25, 2018 * From 6:30 to 8:30PM

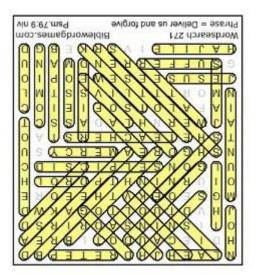
...In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect

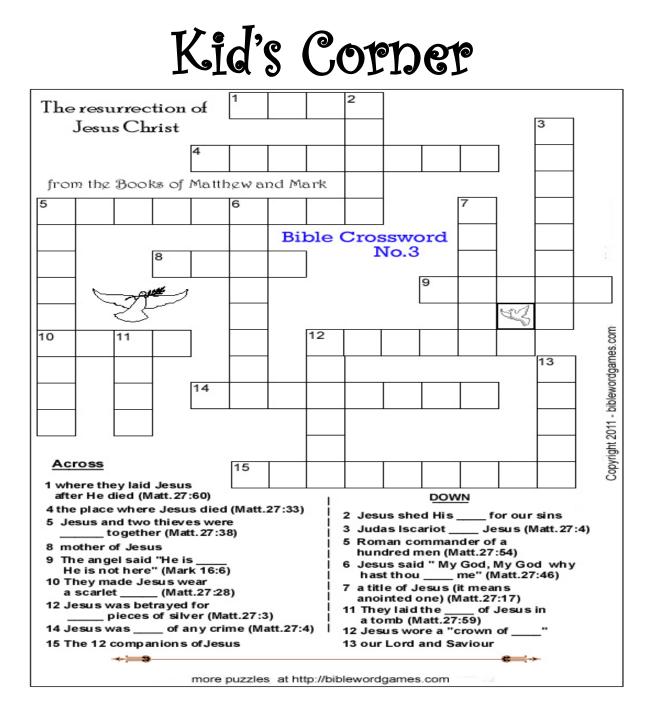
1 Peter 3:15 (ESV)



——————-NO PEEKING! Fold here until you finish! ——-

The Answer Key is upside down







UJIMA VILLAGE CHRISTIAN CHURCH WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship - 10:30AM Sunday "Time for Truth" after Morning Worship Wednesday Children's Activities 6:30PM Wednesday Bible Study Adult and Teen Classes at 7:00PM

SUNDAY MORNING PREACHING SCHEDULE

April 2018: 1st - Pastor Norwood; 8th - Pastor Norwood; 15th – Pastor Norwood; 22nd – Pastor Norwood; 29th – Pastor Norwood May 2018: 6th - Rev. Panniell; 13th – Pastor Norwood; 20th – Dea. Tanya Norwood; 27th – Pastor Norwood June 2018: 3rd - Pastor Norwood; 10th – Dea. Pamela Hill; 17th - Pastor Norwood; 24th – Pastor Norwood

ANNOUNCEMENTS

"NORWOOD'S NOTES: BASIC BIBLE STORIES" – are aimed at building greater biblical knowledge and encouraging Bible reading and study. Copies are also in the sanctuary vestibule and on the church website under "Resources."

INTRODUCTION TO DEFENDING THE FAITH CLASSES on two Wednesdays, April 18 & 25, from 6:30PM - 8:30PM.

WORHIP AT GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH on Sunday, April 22, at 4PM. Pastor Norwood is preaching for their Usher's Day. The Music Ministries and Ushers are asked to minister. All are invited.

THE FACILITIES MINISTRY will be removing a dead tree from our property on Saturday, April 28th. VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED. See Brother Darryl Rawls if you are able to help.

SPECIAL TESTIMONY SERVICE on Wednesday, May 2nd from 6:30PM - 7:00PM. Bible Study to follow.

FREE MOTHER'S DAY CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & HAT CONTEST Sunday May 13th at 9:00am. Please plan to attend and bring a friend. Ladies are not required to, but are encouraged to wear a hat and participate in the hat contest.

THE CHILDREN'S "**JOYFUL NOISE**" **CHOIR REHEARSALS** are on the 1st and 2nd Sundays after Time for Truth Studies for youth aged 5-10. Parents/ Guardians are asked to stay with their children for the brief rehearsal.

THE CHOIR REHEARSALS ARE ON THE 2ND AND 4TH SUNDAY'S after Time for Truth studies.

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW? ... If you are a member of the church and have not been receiving automated calls from the pasture every now and then please see the clerk to update your contact information and ensure that you are on the call list.

"WHO ARE YOU?" CHURCH INVITE CARDS are available in the vestibule. Take a few, give them out, leave them wherever you go.

THE SUNDAY PREACHING SCHEDULE is posted on the church website and around the building.

THE CHOIR IS RAISING MONEY FOR ROBES through snack sales after worship. Please support their effort.

WANT TO SHARE A BRIEF TESTIMONY? Sunday's "A Word of Praise" can be scheduled by the Pastor for members of the church. See Pastor Norwood for details.

THE SENIOR USHERS MEET EVERY 3RD SUNDAY after Time for Truth Studies.

UJIMA'S MIGHTY MEN MEET for a breakfast fellowship on the first Sundays at 9:30AM in the Lighthouse Café. This is an Outreach Opportunity!

SINGLE WOMEN'S MINISTRY ... See Deacon Pamela Hill for details.

IF YOU DON'T USE AN ENVELOPE, YOUR OFFERING OR TITHE CAN NOT BE CREDITED TO YOU. Please fill in the information on the appropriate envelope and use it in order to have your donation recorded.

CHURCH LOGO PINS ARE AVAILABLE! Gold tone and Silver tone pins are \$7 each. See Brother Caleb Collins for details. Sponsored by the Brotherhood of Mighty Men.

PASTOR NORWOOD'S RECENT SERMONS can be downloaded or streamed online at www.UjimaChurch.org or at www.facebook.com/RevNorwood

Upcoming Events:

Community Day - 6/2

Father's Day - 6/17

Graduates Celebration – 6/24 after Worship

Game Night - 6/29 at 6:30PM

Summer Christian Education Retreat – 7/2-6

Vacation Bible School - 8/1-3

Upcoming 2018 Holy Days and Special Observances: Ascension Day 5/10; Mother's Day 5/12; Pentecost 5/20; Father's Day 6/17; Church Picnic 9/16; Blessing of the Animals 10/4 (Observance 10/7); Reformation Day 10/31; Celebration of Salvation 11/3; All Saints Day 11/1 (observed 11/4); Christmas 12/25; Watchnight 12/31



Saturday, June 2, 2018 10:00AM—2:00PM

(Church Volunteers are need from setup at 9:00AM to break-down at 3:00PM)

Fun * Food * Music * Presentations * Venders