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DECEMBER 2013

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United Church of Christ**  
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## SENIOR PASTOR'S MESSAGE



*“Jesus Loves You...But I’m His Favorite.”*

Dear Friends,

I saw this bumper sticker on a pickup truck a while back. It bothered me then and it bothers me more now. We are at the threshold of another Christmas celebration. I know the stores started at the beginning of October but so much for commercialism! What is the focus for Jesus and our celebrations anyway? No one is more sappy than me when it comes to the holidays, the music, the decorations, the movies on Hallmark (and of course the food!). I love Christmas! But

I am led to challenge myself and each of you. We should celebrate more than a personal benefit of God coming into the world as a child. There is far too much baby worship and most of what we think we know about the history of the Incarnation and that first Christmas is more fable, mythology and lore than historical fact. We must not forget the communal ramifications of our spiritual journey this month. I loved listening to Ron Buford at our Fall Assembly of the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ in Kissimmee last month. He challenged us in terms of the way we think and live. He used the scripture from Luke 2 and Simeon:

### Luke 2:25-32 New Living Translation (NLT)

*25 At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him 26 and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. 27 That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, 28 Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, 29 “Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised. 30 I have seen your salvation, 31 which you have prepared for all people. 32 He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!”*

Buford stated that he believes that God is still speaking, creating, and re-creating both us and our world. He also proposed that we, as Christians, need to live out our theology in such a way that we believe that God is acting as such. That is Good News! We live as people who share that vision and hope even though the world may see us as unrealistic and naive. The Incarnation is what this season is all about – that we have seen, and still see, God’s salvation! Our celebrations are not about us but about God – and what God is doing in our world today!

Hoping you see God,

P.S. And every person is Jesus’ favorite!

*Pastor Bill*

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### Staff

**Senior Pastor:**  
Rev. Dr. Bill Wassner  
**Assistant Pastor:**  
Beverly Schafer  
**Pastor Emeritus:**  
Rev. Dr. Bill Ebbert  
**Office Manager:**  
Kathy Shaffner  
**Minister of Music:**  
Dr. Tom Naus  
**Media Communications:**  
Bob Brewster

## ASSISTANT PASTOR



As we look at a commercial calendar for November and December, we are reminded of two major tragedies in our national history--the assassination of President Kennedy and Pearl Harbor . I know many of us remember exactly where we were and what we were doing when we first heard the shocking news 11/22/1963 of the seemingly untimely death of JFK. I was feeding lunch to my 2 1/2-month-old daughter in Alamogordo, NM. What about 12/7/1941 -- the attack on Pearl Harbor?

I personally do not recall this alarming event which pushed us into WWII, but I turned one-year-old on that very day, and my Mother shared with me that she was hanging up my diapers when she heard the dreadful news. Then there was 9/11/2001 -- at least as shocking, and remembered by most of us. All three of these horrific events have one thing in common, something I am calling humanITIS -- a person's inflated sense of power and control.

Then there are overwhelming natural disasters such as the devastating Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines as well as recent life-shattering tornadoes in the Mid-West. Who's to blame? Some blame it on the wrath of God, some blame it on Satan, and still others say we ourselves are to blame for not providing sturdy enough structures to withstand the power of nature which we surely need to learn to anticipate. One thing for certain is that God is with us during and after such tragedies as is evidenced through God's love and compassion extending through those able to immediately aid and assist as well as through all who follow, whether it be on site or through prayer and generous gifts of time, talent and treasures. In such disasters, we immediately come together as God's Family -- always the true blessing in disguise arising in such painful situations. (If you find yourself struggling with WHY God "allows" such tragedies to occur, join our Adult Sunday School Class to learn how the Bible truly becomes The Living Word.)

Through it all, whether in good times or bad, let us allow ourselves to spread the Good News that the Christ Child whose humble birth we celebrate every year on the holiday honoring Him lives through all who believe in Him, for He is our EMMANUEL -- God With Us -- bringing God's promise of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy!

Christmas Blessings to All,

*Pastor Beverly*

P.S. I know our shut-ins would love to receive a Christmas greeting from members of the Congregation. A list of their names and addresses will be available **December 1st** from the ushers.

## Financial Update

Operational Budget as of 10/2013



	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>
	<u>Jan.-Oct. 2013</u>	<u>Jan.-Oct. 2013</u>
<b>Income</b>	\$143,159	\$145,336
<b>Expenses</b>	<u>\$147,145</u>	<u>\$141,423</u>
<b>Net</b>	\$ -3,986	\$ 3,913

*We are slightly better this month, but still in the red, through October. Even though we may end the year in the red, I believe we are still in good shape, as long as we don't incur any additional unexpected expenses. Respectfully submitted by Susie Greiff, Treasurer*



## OPERATIONS TEAM



At the November 11th Operations Meeting, plans for the November 17th Church Workday were discussed and the 2014 budget was reviewed and finalized. The next Operations Meeting is scheduled for **Monday, December 9th at 6:00 PM.**  
*Rich Thole, Chair of Operations*

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE & ANNUAL MEETING



In preparation for the annual Congregational Meeting, the Nominating Committee met on November 11th to discuss the 2014 Slate of Officers. If you are interested in serving on one of the committees, please contact Pastor Bill or Bob Gaither. The Slate of Officers will be presented at the annual **Congregational Meeting to be held on Sunday, January 26th at 11:00 AM following the Combined Worship Service at 9:45 AM.**

## DEACONS CORNER



### The Ministry of Deacons

Hello from the Deacons Corner,

Well it has been an interesting year serving on the Deacons' Committee with such a fine group of people, and it has been my privilege to serve as head of Deacons. I am looking forward to our Annual Meeting at which time we will determine the path that lies ahead for us in 2014. Please remember the main goal is to establish with as many people as possible a relationship with God. We are to be instruments to guide people in search of God to Him. If you have any concerns, please take time to seek out a Deacon. They will be happy to take care of any issues or questions you may have with regard to our worship services.

God Bless. *Joe Thompson, Chair of Deacons*

## THE GIFT AND THRIFT STORE



January 1st, 2013 we began collecting Christmas holiday items. We are now in the process now of displaying these items and more that are donated daily.

From \$1.00 stocking stuffers and decorations, to Ruby Red glass collectables, Depression glass, lead crystal pieces to everyday glasses and dishes. We have a large selection for you to choose from.

If you have never checked out the Store...you will be pleasantly surprised. We are so much more than clothing, shoes, purses. Not only are you saving money but you are helping the Gift & Thrift Store and thus our Church. If you require a special showing, let any of our 30 volunteers know. We will work with you to set a convenient date and time.

The shop will be closed on Thanksgiving Day and will be **OPEN BLACK FRIDAY** regular hours 9:00 AM-3:00 PM. *Barb Pountain*



## TERRIFIC TUESDAYS



Wow, has our Terrific Tuesday group been busy starting with the Halloween costume party on October 29th. As you can see from the picture, we had a very scary group. Thanks to Pastor Beverly, Sue Turner and Lauren Scalf for all the great food, the Creepy, Crawler & Scream Room and loads of fun!

With the Christmas season upon us, our recent meetings have highlighted the groups' creative talents. On November 5th our youth spent the evening making a total of 75 festive Christmas cards for our wounded soldiers in Walter Reed Hospital.



The next Tuesday the group put the finishing touches on 95 angel ornaments for the Angel Tree Mission Project which begins *December 1st*. Thanks to Sue Turner for cutting and hole punching the angels. The kids had a great time and their creative efforts help so many in need.



We are now focused on practicing for our children's play "*Christmas with the Animals* (written by Pastor Bill) to be presented on Sunday, December 22nd at the Combined Service beginning at 9:45 AM. Practices will be on Tuesday evenings and Sunday mornings (during non-Confirmation days).

**Note: No Terrific Tuesday after December 17th until January 14th.**

# Walk on Water

Coming up *January 17th-19th* is the Walk on Water Youth Retreat at Union Congregational Church in West Palm Beach. The cost is \$40 per youth. To raise money for their trip, the group is sponsoring Bake Sales during the Coffee Hour on Sunday mornings. To date they have raised \$365.87. Thanks for your generous support.

**Dancing Angels**



Our Angels *Skylar Davis, Jenna Geist, Madison Hobson, Rowan Schafer-Ramoutar and Blake & Tommy Buller* are meeting every Saturday morning from 9:00 to 10:30 AM. Thanks to Bonnie Morisset, we can look forward to them participating in our worship services in the near future.

## MISSION NOTES



Your Missions Team (with your generosity) continues to provide help for those who are less fortunate. We recently received a note from the Pregnancy Crisis Center thanking us for the recent donation of infant clothing, diapers and formula.

We are still in need of volunteers to help prepare and serve the residents at Palmetto House. If you can help us once a month, just let me know. The 2014 schedule will be available at end of December. Thank you for your continued support of many Mission projects. *Jackie Gaither, Chair of Missions*

**PALMETTO HOUSE CHRISTMAS BAGS:** Collecting donations of toothbrushes, toothpaste, cosmetic bags and 2014 calendars from **December 1st-December 15th** to distribute to the residents. Look for the large box in the Sanctuary for your donations. Your generosity will be appreciated.



This year we are partnering with both Spruce Creek and Palm Terrace Elementary Schools in support of children within our community. The tree decorated with angels listing the names, ages, sizes and clothing requests of the children will be in the Sanctuary on **Sunday, December 1st** and Jackie Gaither will be available to answer any questions you may have. We are asking that you purchase one piece of warm clothing (sweater, hooded sweatshirt or jacket, tops, pants) for each child. The wrapped gifts, with the name tag attached, should be placed under the tree by **Friday, December 15th** so that they can be delivered prior to Christmas vacation. Your labor of love at the holiday season puts big smiles on the faces of those in need.

**THE 25TH ANNUAL CROP HUNGER WALK:** Thanks to our four walkers: *Kathy Cratin, Kimberly, Travis & Tyler Dotson!* Through your generosity a total of \$154 for this worthwhile event. Also, thanks to Lisa Wassner and Van Thompson who also collected money for this worthwhile cause. Thanks to all of you who donated a total of 66 jars of peanut butter to help feed the hungry. *Great job!*



**2013 CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING “We Have Come to Bear the Light of Christ”:** Is a special mission offering of the UCC that grants us an opportunity to recognize and honor those who have served and continue to serve in lay and authorized ministries of the United Church of Christ. This offering will be received on **Sunday, December 22nd**. Envelopes for this offering will be in the bulletin in December.

## YOUR FOOD BASKET DONATIONS



We continue to collect food items to help the hungry. **Communion Sundays are designated as “Fill the Food Basket” Sunday.** Over 30 bags of food were collected and donated to the Council of Aging Thanksgiving Food Drive on the first Sunday last month. If we all bring a food donation, we will fill the basket each month. Please be generous and make sure all donations have NOT passed their expiration dates (clearly marked on all cans, boxes, and containers). There is a specific need for rice, breakfast cereal, pasta items and sauce and peanut butter...PLEASE donate ONLY 1 pound bags of rice and 1 pound jars of peanut butter so they can be given to individual families.

## ADVENT 2013: An Overview



### **FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT DECEMBER 1, 2013**

**(Two Services 8:45 & 10:45 a.m.):**

FOCUS: HOPE

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS: Rev. Larry and Cindy Deitch at 8:45;  
Jim & Joellen Hopkins at 10:45

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Isaiah 2:1-5 (NLT)

### **SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT DECEMBER 8, 2013 (Two Services at 8:45 & 10:45 a.m.):**

FOCUS: PEACE

ADVENT LIGHTERS: Valerie Hill and Cindy Pierson at 8:45; Erika and Madison Hobson at 10:45

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Isaiah 11: 1-10 (NLT)

### **THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT DECEMBER 15, 2013 (Combined Service at 9:45 a.m.):**

FOCUS: JOY

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS: Bonnie Morisset and Dee Darden

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Isaiah 35: 1-10 (NLT)

CHORAL PRESENTATION: *"Lessons and Carols"*

### **FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT DECEMBER 22, 2013 (Combined Service at 9:45 a.m.):**

FOCUS: LOVE

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS: The Dotson Family

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Isaiah 7: 10-17 (NLT)

CHILDREN'S PRESENTATION: *"Christmas with the Animals"* (A short play by Pastor Bill)

### **CHRISTMAS EVE DECEMBER 24, 2013 (7:00 p.m.):**

FOCUS: LIGHT

CHRIST CANDLE LIGHTERS: Pastor Bill and Lisa Wassner

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Isaiah 9: 2-7 (NLT)

CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP WITH CHOIR AND PRAISE TEAM

### **FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 29, 2013 (Combined Service at 9:45 a.m.):**

FOCUS: NEW YEAR AND GOD IS WITH US!

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Revelation 21: 1-6a

Peace Love JOY Peace Love JOY

## SECOND THURSDAY FELLOWSHIP DINNER



Every Second Thursday at 6:00 pm, POUCC has a wonderful Fellowship Dinner in the Jim Reed room.

*Make your plans to come to the next dinner Thursday, December 12th.*

*This is our Christmas celebration!*

*Ham will be provided-you bring the fixins*

*Sign-up on Sanctuary Bulletin Board.*

**SPECIAL NOTE:** After coordinating a wonderful Thanksgiving Fellowship Dinner on November 14th, as well as many other special events, June Ferreri has decided to resign as head of the Fellowship/Hospitality Team. June has served the congregation for 20 years and will continue to serve when she is able. **God bless you June for your service; we are so grateful!**



## COFFEE FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE

Schedule for the Fellowship Hour is as follows:

**December - Missions**

**January - Deacons**

**February - Teaching**



## NOTES OF THANKS



A big thank you to Dee Carroll (Sher Buller's Mother) for her donation of six round white linen tablecloths. Her kind donation will be an attractive addition to our fellowship gatherings and special events.



Thanks to *Bob Brewster Tom Buller, Dallas & Tracy Davis, Bill Greiff, Val Hill, Russ Karel, Dalen Mills, Cindy Pierson, Bob Russell, Rich Thole and Pastor Bill* for all their hard work to spruce of the grounds on the recent Church Work Day. *You all did a super job!*



On Sunday, November 10th *Sher Buller, Milissa Davis, Janna Thompson and Levi Zinke* presented to the congregation moving testimony of the importance of the Spiritual Life Team Ministry. Their presentation was well received by all; and thanks for sharing your mission with us.



NOEL HALLELUJAH MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR  
*Noel Hallelujah Merry Christmas Happy New Year*

# NEWS & Notes



**MEMORIAL BRICKS:** Have arrived and with the help of Ric Pountain they have been added to the Prayer Garden. If you already have a family members' brick in the garden and would like your new brick placed next to or nearby it, please contact the Church Office.



The Christmas Season is upon us and as is our tradition, we will be decorating our Sanctuary with poinsettias for the Christmas Eve Service. All are invited to bring in a poinsettia with your name on them by **Sunday, December 22nd** (place in Jim Reed Room). Poinsettias may be taken home or donated after the Christmas Eve Service. If interested, a sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in rear of the Sanctuary.

**HOLIDAY COMBINED SERVICES: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH, 22nd & 29th at 9:45 AM.** The choir will be featured on the **15th** with their program of *Lessons and Carols* (Sunday School will follow), on the **22nd** our children will present "*Christmas with the Animals*" and on the **29th** a special *New Year's Service*. Mark your calendars and plan to attend the holiday services which are sure to put you in the spirit of this most holy season.



Recently we have been seeing some new faces at our Sunday Services and invite all who are interested in joining the Congregation to attend the Combined Service on **December 29th**. We are happy to have you and hope you will consider becoming a member. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Bill. Following the service please join us for fellowship to welcome our new members.



We are starting a new tradition here to both benefit you and POUCC when it comes to Christmas cards. Given the price of mailing and our increased Missions during the month of December, we are encouraging you to turn in a Christmas card to the Church Office for posting on our "Christmas Card Bulletin Board. That card will be your greeting and blessing to the congregation and friends at POUCC. **THEN**, make a donation to the Church for what you would have spent on cards and stamps to send each of those people individually. Just think of the time you will save!

**WEBSITE UPDATE:** At the November Council Meeting, it was decided to update and improve our Website. If anyone is interested in sponsoring our site (cost is \$30 @ month), see Pastor Bill or Bob Brewster.



**CONGRATULATIONS:** To Levi Zinke who is the District Champion in the 100 yard Breast Stroke and in the recent Regional Meet he placed 5th in the Breast Stroke and 8th in the Butterfly. *Way to go Levi!*

And, congratulations to Cindy & Larry Deitch on the birth of their newest granddaughter Simone Deitch Houck born on November 7th.





## WEST PROPERTY UPDATE



After months of planning and construction, we gathered on Sunday, November 10th to dedicate our “chapel in the pines”. Under a beautiful blue sky, 75+ members, veterans and friends participated in the moving litany which included the presentation of the colors and TAPS by Post #3282 VFW here in Port Orange. As you can see from the pictures, a number of those who served wore their uniforms or an article that represented their branch of service which added to the occasion. Many thanks to all who made this project a reality and a special thanks to Jim Casale and the members of the VFW color guard and Bob Brewster for adding the PA system and video recording the event which is on our website and Facebook.

Work continues on the finishing touches on the chapel which will include landscaping and construction of an outdoor grill.



## SPECIAL REQUESTS



As you can see, we made improvements and needed repairs in our facility and grounds in 2013. As such are expensed have exceeded our income and we would like to make up the deficit by year end. Please give prayerful consideration to making a special generous contribution so that we can replenish our savings and end the year with a balanced financial report. *Bob Gaither, Moderator*

**Help for Typhoon Haiyan Victims:** The UCC has issued an appeal to church members and friends for \$250,000 to support response efforts. To assist in recovery, you may make a gift payable to your congregation marked for “Typhoon Haiyan”, OR send gifts, made out to United Church of Christ and marked in the memo portion “Typhoon Haiyan” to United Church of Christ; Financial Services; 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115, OR [make a secure online donation](#) to the International Disaster Relief Fund. Please note “Typhoon Haiyan” in the Comments Box. Thank you for your compassion and support.



Happy Birthday!



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS\*

Dalen Mills	12/4
Ted Batturs	
Kaylie Wierzbicki	12/5
Beverly Schafer	12/7
John MacNeil	
Helen Van Nostrand	12/8
Chuck Konopsky	12/10
Drew Knock	
Joshua Wheeler	
Tracy Davis	12/13
Susie Greiff	12/16
Joe Thompson	12/19
Terri Zinke	12/24
Suzette Wheeler	
Milissa Davis	12/25
Rose Williams	12/28



## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES\*

Bill & Susie Greiff	12/06/1970
Ron & Sondra Zinke	12/23/1958
Ric & Barb Pountain	12/24/1977
Bob & Louise Johnson	12/26/1955
Ted & Margaret Yaeger	12/29/2002



## PRAYER REQUESTS\*

Beth & Chris Brown	Family Members of the Fishers
Cindy Berdeques	Friend of Sheila Fisher
Rebecca Blankenbeckley	Friend of Charla Manning
Dee Carroll	Mother of Sher Buller
Thea Cloutier	Member of POUCC
Diana Cole	Daughter of Dee Dardeen
Dallas Davis	Member of POUCC
John DuBrule	Son of Linda DuBrule
Karen Donahue	Sister of Harold Kransi
Michael & Travis Dotson	Friends of POUCC
Amelia Dyer	Friend of Shelia & Bob Fisher
Bill & June Ebbert	Members of POUCC
June Ferreri	Member of POUCC
Logan Finney	Great-Granddaughter of Mary Daigneau
Sarah & Wes Fuchs	Family Members of the Fishers
Tyler Graf	Grandson of John & Anne Shaw
Allan Henry	Father of Lisa Wassner
Scott & Emily Hill	Val Hill's Nephew and his wife who are both Missionaries
Nancy Hosford	Bill Wheeler's Sister
Killebrew Family	Terri Zinke's Sister's Family
Floyd Malcolm	Friend of Bob & Sheila Fisher
Brian Manchester	Son of Sheila & Bob Fisher
Helen McGuffie	Member of POUCC
Mills Family	Family of Sonnie & Ron Zinke
Art McPhearson	Friend of the Gaither's
Jill Park	Friend of the Deitch's
Joanne & Glenn Payne	Cousins of Kathy Cratin
James Royce	Friend of Doreen Wheeler
Christine Scott	Friend of Sheila Fisher
Steve Sharp	Friend of the Greiff's
John Stewart	Husband of Mary Ann Stewart
The Strickland Family	Members of POUCC
Kay Taylor	Member of POUCC
Van Thompson	Member of POUCC
Nilene Tromley	Stepmother of Cassie & Sara
Walker Family	Sister of Doreen Wheeler
Bob Wood	Sher Buller's Mother's Boyfriend

### In Care Facilities:


Mary Daigneau	Member of POUCC (The Terraces)
Rosemary Smith	Member (Sterling House)

### Special Needs:

All of Our Military & Their Families

Note: \*Please contact the church office to update our records if we missed your special date or to add a Prayer Concern.

# POUCC December 2013

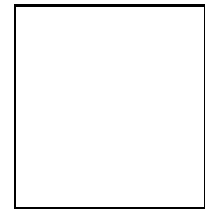
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Terrific Tuesday 6:00 pm	4 CPT 6:00 pm  Choir Practice 7:30 pm	5 Line Dancing 6:00 pm  Chime Choir 6:30 pm	6	7 Dancing Angels 9:00 am
8 Contemporary 8:45 am Sunday School 9:45 am Traditional 10:45 am	9 Operations Meeting 6:00 pm	10 Terrific Tuesday 6:00 pm	11 Palmetto House 5:30 PM CPT 6:00 pm  Choir Practice 7:30 pm	12 Fellowship Dinner 6:00 pm	13	14 Choir Practice 9:00 am-Noon
15 Combined Service Lessons & Carols 9:45 am T.S. Christmas Party 12:00 pm	16 Council Meeting 7:00 pm	17 Terrific Tuesday 6:00 pm	18 CPT 6:00 pm  Choir Practice 7:30 pm	19 Chime Choir 6:30 pm	20	21
22 Combined Service Children's Christmas Play 9:45 am	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm	25 	26 Chime Choir 6:30 pm	27	28
29 Combined Service New Year's Liturgy 9:45 am	30	31 No Terrific Tuesday Until January 14th				

*Thrift Store Hours: M-F 9 am – 3 pm Church Office Hours: M-F 9 am - 1 pm*

*Join us for Fellowship & Refreshments Each Sunday Between Services*



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**Church Staff**

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Dr. Bill Wassner  
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**Pastor Emeritus:** Rev. Dr. C. William Ebbert  
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**Media Communications:** Bob Brewster

**Office Hours**

9:00 AM—1:00 PM  
Monday—Friday

**Thrift Store Hours**

9:00 AM—3:00 PM  
Monday—Friday

**Sunday Worship**

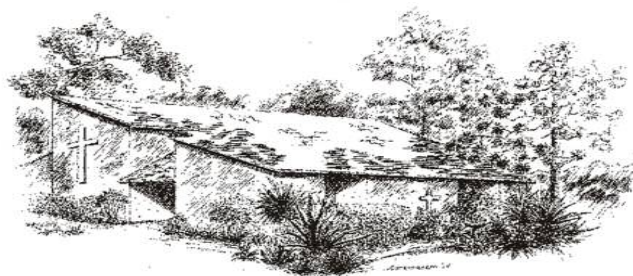
8:45 AM & 10:45 AM

**Sunday School**

9:45 AM

**Tuesday Youth Worship**

7:00 PM



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