

December service theme:

# Expectation

Expectation in the month of December holds our attention on the future. Do your expectations of self and of the world open your ideals or your nightmares? Is expectation freedom or a prison? Let us consider Henri Nouwen's thought that, 'Waiting patiently in expectation is the foundation of a spiritual life'.



## Sweet Expectation

*Rev. Debra Thorne* Savouring possibilities that

life may bring is a delicious joy, to be held lightly and released freely when expectations are not met; the wisdom comes from knowing when to hold on and when to let go. How can we hold on to a sweet expectation in these dark days of winter?



#### Revelation: Neither Sealed Nor Known

Rev. Ev Morris In my opinion, the essence of Unitarian truth is simple. That which separates us from, and elevates us above all other religions, is one simple phrase: Revelation is neither sealed nor known. It amazes me that something so clear and central and basic has received such little attention. This sermon tries to correct this oversight. *Rev. Ev Morris is a member of Beacon and a retired Unitarian minister who served Beacon from 1998-2002. A few* 



years ago Rev. Ev self published a little book of poetry and a book of sermons. He has recently produced a blog of what he assessed were his best sermons over his 15 year career as a minister. You can find these sermons and some of his other writings at https://evmorris.wordpress.com.



#### A Common Light

Rev. Debra Thorne and a cast of hundreds!

The Beacon family pageant is a joyous celebration of the many festivals of light at this time of year. The children and youth will dramatize the holy days of Christmas, Hanukkah, Solstice and the Islamic celebration of the birth of Mohammed. There will be guest singers and musicians and the Beacon Choir.

#### DEC 24 Christmas Eve Service, 7 pm Moments of Magic

Join us for a Christmas Eve of readings

and music celebrating the surprises of Christmas; the moments of magic when children's eyes light up, friends' smiles warm your heart and when the unexpected hoped for dream becomes real. There will be hot apple cider after the service. Please bring cookies to share.

There will be no Sunday service on December 25th. *Merry Christmas!* 

Sunday worship services and religious exploration classes are held at the Sapperton Pensioners Hall, 318 Keary Street, New Westminster. Services start at 10:30 am. More info at www.beaconunitarian.org.



## Minister's Message



Rev. Debra Thorne

The theme of 'expectation' leads in many directions. It can lead us toward despair or toward hope. We have some choice in the direction it takes us. We still have the ability to choose our interpretations of the events in the world. Is there less violence or more? Is the human condition evolving or devolving? Where do

you put your focus? What perspective on reality do you choose? Is this a time for growth of the human spirit?

The human spirit grows in all circumstances. During World War II when England was being bombed, my mother remembers it as a time when people came together to help each other, a time of great caring and generosity of spirit. Recently, I have experienced the caring and generosity of family and friends who came together to support a friend who was dying. Our human hearts expand to meet the challenge in times of suffering and loss.

Now is the moment when we need the magic of hope and the strength of determination to come alive in us. The world needs us to hope with determination that the gains and losses of human progress will tilt to the gains. The world needs us to not let go into despair and fear. Not give up today, or this month, nor next year. These are dark days in the winter of the soul of our world, yet they are also days to grow in spirit and love.

As we end this difficult year, your love is needed more than ever. Your respect for all people and your understanding of the interdependent web of all existence is needed. There is work to do in all our lives. We will be called upon to stand up for our principles, to defend those who are afraid, stand up to intolerance, and to protect the earth.

Warmly, Debra

Be strong in love.

## Announcement from the Worship Services Committee

The Worship Services Committee and I have spent a year trying to streamline the Sunday services, to tighten-up the connecting moments, to be focused and clear in the introductions, and to keep the children's story under six minutes. There are two areas of the service that we cannot control: the announcements at the beginning and the sharing of joys and sorrows. Each part has its significance in the life of the community. Each part can take up to 10 minutes of the service. If both are full that means the service runs over the 60 minute mark, often going to 75 minutes. This impacts the RE program, the coffee time and ultimately the length of time we are renting the hall. Which means it costs Beacon more money.

The Worship Services Committee and I would like to cut back on the overtime of the Sunday service, respect our rental agreement and avoid increasing our rent by moving the announcements to downstairs after the service, when we are having coffee. It will be another part of how we connect as a community. This change will begin in January.

If you have concerns or creative ideas that will help with this adjustment please speak to Marilyn Meden, Joan Morris or myself.

-Rev. Debra Thorne

## Multifaith Calendar 2017



he Beacon Religious Exploration (RE) program is taking orders for the 2017 issue of the Multifaith calendar. The Multifaith Calendar offers insight into the world's major faiths—a window that gives not only accurate information on each of the major holidays and festivals, but detailed historical information of these faiths and their relationship in time. Beautiful and varied artwork, on the theme of "Love & Compassion", illumines each month.

Calendars sell for **\$15.95**, with \$6/calendar going towards the RE social justice project. To order, please speak to, or email Laura Redmond (lauraredmond2@telus.net) by December 4th. **Makes a beautiful Christmas gift.** 

## **Board Bitz**



Audrey Taylor

approved by the board. This budget will be sent out by email or mail to all Beacon members and will be presented for adoption at our Annual Budget meeting Dec 4th at 12:00. Only members can vote on the budget, but anyone can ask questions and receive answers. There will be a soup lunch that day also. So come, sup and talk money!

The generosity of the Beacon congregation and the hard and frugal work of our committees is greatly appreciated by the board.

Also at the November 13 board meeting, we formally received and unanimously accepted the request from Terry McComas that his membership in Beacon be re-instated. Terry felt that board members had misunderstood his communication with Debra and he had not meant to resign his membership.

The Coordinating Council had it's mid-year meeting on November 15 and lots of good information was shared, good connections between committee plans made. The Coordinating Council meets only twice a year, but the information sharing is

November was a busy month! At the board meeting on Sunday November 13 a balanced budget for 2017 was presented by the treasurer and crucial to the workings of the church. The Coordinating Council is made up of representatives of each of the Beacon committees.

It is time now to begin the midyear review of contracts with staff. We will solicit feedback from committees and involved individuals as well as from the staff. We hope to have completed the process by the end of January 2017.

John Hagen has agreed to take on the role of chairperson of a Sharing the Plate committee for 2017. Please consider joining John if you are asked, or if this is something you would like to do, please let John know.

Helen McVey has agreed to take on the role of chairperson of the Nominating Committee. Peggy, Marylke and Rebecca are the other members of the committee and they will be hearing from Helen early in the new year.

It's hard for me to get my head around the fact that it is almost 2017 and that my time with the board of directors is coming to an end in April. Being on the board has been, and continues to be, an interesting and enriching experience. Board work is perhaps less visible, more behindthe-scenes, than the work of our committees, but it is foundational and fulfilling work. Something you might consider?? You might find yourself, as I have found myself, connected, inspired and transformed.

*—Audrey Taylor* 





We are having difficulty getting enough bodies at the food bank some days.There are two areas where help or backup would be welcomed.

John Hagen

- 1. A computer literate helper to input the names of our clients as they line up to get their food.
- 2. People to guide the clients in selecting their food items as they advance through the line.

Neither job is onerous, involving 3 to 4 hours every 2 weeks. Any help will be greatly appreciated. Please call John Hagen at 604-521-1335 or talk to him at church if you can help.

—John Hagen



CONNECT

With Compassion & Respect

INSPIRE Learning & Spiritual Growth

TRANSFORM Through Joy & Justice



www.beaconunitarian.org info@beaconunitarian.org

Mailing Address: #414, 552A Clarke Road, Coquitlam, BC V3J 0A3 **Consulting Minister:** Rev. Debra Thorne minister@beaconunitarian.org

Lay Chaplain: Marilyn Medén, 604-469-6797, m.j.meden@telus.net

Choir Director: Charlene Dubrule, 604-464-3992, char4myc@shaw.ca

#### **Board Executive:**

Audrey Taylor, Carol Woodworth Trustees: Rob Warner, David Krist-

**Irustees:** Rob Warner, David Kristjanson, John Hagen, Helen McVey, Dan Theal

**Connections & Membership:** Jean Donaldson, 604-461-0056, donaldsj@telus.net

#### Care & Concerns:

Renée Spakowsky, 604-463-8086

Beacon Newsletter: newsletter@beaconunitarian.org Production: Laura Redmond Proofreader: Bette Goode Distribution: Tom & Uta Poiker

Deadline for the January issue of *The Beacon*: December 15, 2016

## Let's Connect



This month the Connections and Membership committee held a Getting To Know U tea at the home of Helen McVey. Six new folk who have been attending Beacon for a bit joined us to share stories and learn something about Unitarianism and Beacon. Rev. Debra led the discussions which began with a wonderful sharing

Joan Morris

of each person's story of how they arrived at Beacon and Unitarianism.

Joan Morris, Anne McLeod and Ivy Hubbard as well as our host Helen told their Unitarian histories as well as some of the history of Beacon's 33 years in the Tri-Cities and New West area. The newcomers learned a little about our three different "homes", nine ministers, and all the current committees, activities and programs that our small, family size church manages.

Janet Pivnick, Cathy and Brigit Tingskov, Regina Ogmundson, Barbara Ladoeceur and Gail Thomson attended the tea and would love to have you say hello when you see them at church.

#### **New Member Joining**

Rev. Debra will be holding a member joining ceremony at the service December 4th. Anyone who is interested can contact her to learn what is involved in becoming a member of Beacon. Come to the service to meet and welcome our newest members.

#### **Circle Dinners**

Our last circle dinner for the fall will be held Saturday, December 3. Join us for potluck meals and good conversation in the warmth of Beacon members' homes. Contact Donna Hamilton donna-h@telus.net for more information and to sign up if you haven't already done so.

The Night Tree party will be the same night, a time when the children gather to create edible ornaments for neighbourhood wildlife (see page 7 for more details).

—Joan Morris, on behalf of the Connections Committee: Jean Donaldson, Susan Tarras, Joyce Gudaitis, Phil Campbell, Rev. Debra Thorne and Donna Hamilton (Circle Dinners)

## An Update from the Settlement team for the Al Rbaai family

The Al Rbaais continue to express their gratitude to Beacon for helping them settle in Canada. It is a big learning curve for everyone involved. Lots has become familiar and easier for the family since they arrived on June 20th.

Raneem is now going to middle school on her own, taking public transit or walking. Several Beacon volunteers are offering ELL help within the school hours. We are excited to see Raneem's growth in English; she has even sent some of us little texts from her phone.

Mohammad is gradually transitioning into school. His parents are appreciative of the support they are receiving from the teacher to help him settle. He travels by city bus to school with his father and they usually walk home.

The settlement team is helping with scheduling and driving to all medical and dental appointments for the family. The team has also been busy getting government benefits in place for the family and helping with banking and bills; Nader and Taghreed have noticed Canada has lots of paperwork!

The settlement team is still dependent on volunteer translators for important information but we are enjoying our every day conversations directly with the family. Taghreed is receiving help with basic English from Beacon volunteers and Meghan (North Shore Unitarians). Nader is planning to attend English classes once Mohammad is settled into a longer school day.

The Al Rbaai family and Settlement team are all learning a lot and also laughing easily along the way. Also we have enjoyed some delicious Syrian food!

Submitted by Carol Woodworth on behalf of the Settlement team



## **Religious Exploration Program for December**

Welcome to

December! Oh

how the time flies!

We have success-

fully been making

our way through

two wonderful

RE programs.

The Children's



Ashley Cole

Community has been learning about concepts such as being brave, being fair, and keeping balance. The Seekers have been learning about the power of things like roots, growth, presence and stillness. Groups have participated in various activities including hosting a 'minimalist party', making prayer flags and decorating pumpkins for Halloween. But now as December approaches, we will put aside these lessons to focus on our Winter Pageant that will take place on December 18th during the Sunday service. The pageant is called 'A Common Light' and we will be using most of our time downstairs to prepare for it.

In other news, *The Beacon Treats* & *Eats Cookbook* will continue to be on sale through to the end of December. A big THANK YOU to Bette Good who has been cooking different recipes from the cookbook for us all to enjoy. Buy a cookbook for yourself or get one for the perfect stocking stuffer for the holidays which are just around the corner. All cookbooks are by donation and available on Sunday mornings during coffee hours. Funds raised will be used towards a social action project.

Speaking of holiday gifts... *Multi-Faith Calendars* are available for sale!! These calendars feature stunning art work by many artists and approximately 430 different events from 14 different religions. If interested please speak with Laura Redmond.

#### **Upcoming R.E. Events:**

On **December 3rd** we will have our annual Night Tree Party at the Lunderville's beginning at 5:30 pm. This is a special potluck evening in which the story 'Night Tree' will be read and families will be invited to create edible ornaments including stringing cranberries and popcorn together or adding peanut butter and seeds to pine cones. Families will then be invited outside to decorate a tree and sing carols in the moonlight. Please bring your own flashlight and dress for the weather.

**Dec 18th**: Will be our winter pageant. We will have a dress rehearsal the week before so look out for more details on that.

**Dec 24th:** There will be a Christmas Eve service, during which there will not be any RE classes. Families are more than welcome to attend the service!

**Dec 25th**: There is no church service this day and therefore no children's program either.

January 8th will be our first Sunday back and we will be having a 'post New Years party' and fill backpacks with supplies that will be distributed to youth in need in the New Westminster area.

That is it for now. Wishing you all a warm and happy December!

Ashley Cole



Halloween Festivities, October 30



## Beacon welcomes new members on December 4th

#### **Regina Ogmundson**



I was raised Catholic and stayed with that religion until college. Through education and travel I explored different ways to

live according to my own values.

My Dad's death in 1986 propelled me towards a search for answers. I visited different faith communities and by 1989 I was a regular member at the Vancouver Unitarian congregation. Years later, I joined South Fraser Unitarian Congregation while living in Surrey. For the last several years I've resided in New Westminster. Due to health issues I am unable to work full time, but keep myself busy with courses, volunteering, yoga class and a scrabble club.

I feel welcome at Beacon and happy to become a member among my peers.

#### **Janet Pivnick**



Janet moved to the Vancouver area in 2014 to take on a position as an Educational Consultant at Simon Fraser University. She is

delighted to have found a home in Beacon, having first developed Unitarian roots (and wings) at the Unitarian Church of Calgary in 2001.

#### **Michael Scales**



Michael grew up as a Unitarian in San Francisco. In 1968 he demonstrated his opposition to the Vietnam War by moving to

Edmonton where he first met Judy Villett. He moved to BC to be a teacher, and eventually became a school psychologist. Currently, he works at Douglas College, and lives in New Westminster with his wife Judy.

#### **Judy Villett**



Judy's family roots are deep in a ranch in the Southern Alberta foothills. She has a life time of artistic expression in textile arts, and

currently has a studio at 100 Braid Street. When Judy rekindled an old relationship with Michael Scales in 2004, she joined the Unitarian community in Honolulu and has continued that involvement with the UCV and now Beacon.

Beacon also welcomes new members **Gail Thompson, Lisa Girardi** and her daughter **Sophia Girardi.** Their bio's will appear in the January newsletter.

## Beacon Celebrates...



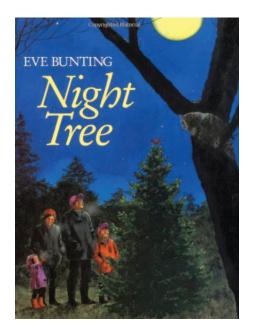
Potluck lunch and making the advent wreath in November.



Visit from Nelson Unitarian Spiritual Center members during the pledge drive in October.

## Night Tree Party

## Christmas gifts for our feathered and furry friends



"Night Tree" is a story by Eve Bunting that tells of a family's annual Christmas tradition of making edible ornaments for neighbourhood wildlife, and using them to decorate a tree in the forest. At our party, you can string cranberries and popcorn on thread, or add peanut butter and seeds to pinecones. Later we'll go outside and hang our ornaments on a tree and sing carols in the moonlight.

Date: Saturday, December 3, 2016

Time: 5:30-8:00 pm

**Place:** Home of Peggy Lunderville (Close to Gaglardi exit on Hwy. 1)

Phone: 604-522-3001

**Bring:** Warm clothing, a flashlight and a contribution of food to eat & share.

Who: All welcome, all ages.

**RSVP:** Ashley Cole, sundayschool@ beaconunitarian.org. If you forget to RSVP, please come anyhow!

## Youth Group Social Action Project We Need Your Help



We are about to tackle a huge project... filling 40 backpacks for the homeless youths in our community. These backpacks will be handed out just after the Christmas season and we are hoping we can call on all of you for help. We are looking for anything that would help our young people living on the streets in their everyday lives.

Below is a list of items that we think would be helpful but if you have other ideas please touch base with me (lisa.m.girardi@gmail.com). Some items (eg. soaps,

Lisa Girardi

shampoos & feminine products) have already been donated.

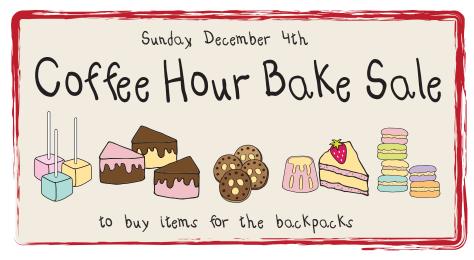
I will have a basket for collection at the greeters table each Sunday until Christmas. In addition, cash or cheques (made out to Beacon) are most welcome!

#### Suggestions for Backpacks:

Socks Gloves, Toques, Scarves Brushes & Combs, Hair Accessories Toilet Paper Small Towels Underwear (unisex) Toothbrush Toothpaste Deodorant Razors, Shaving Cream Gum Dog Bones Granola Bars

Pull-tab ready to serve soups (Chunky) Mr Cup of Noodles or anything you can add boiling water to (eg. hot chocolate) Nuts Chips Juice Boxes Gatorade Plastic Spoons/Forks Pens Notebooks Batteries Can openers

We are also having a bake sale on Dec 4th. so bring your sweet tooth and help support our youths! Thank You!



## **Beacon Events**

## We invite you to explore these great ways to connect to the Beacon community and yourself!

**Soul Matters Groups** delve into the monthly sermon themes— "Expectation" for December. Part personal sharing, part spiritual deepening, the groups meet monthly either at 1 pm or 7 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month (except for December which has been moved to the 14th). Contact Rev. Debra Thorne: minister@beaconunitarian.org.

#### Humanist Discussion Group meets

the last Sunday of the month at 7:30 pm at *The Astoria Retirement Home* (2245 Kelly Avenue, Port Coquitlam) to discuss a wide range of current topics.

**Sunday, November 27:** Al Sather will lead a discussion on *Evolution Misbehaving*. Menopause is limited to humans and toothed whales. In all other mammals, death follows at the end of their reproductive life. This appears to be a case of evolution misbehaving. Or, is it?

The group will meet next at the end of January (no December meeting). Contact Marilyn Medén for more information: m.j.meden@telus.net or 604-469-6797.

Join the Beacon Choir for musical fun and skill development. Rehearsals are every Tuesday at 7:30 pm at Miller Park School in Coquitlam (but not Dec. 20th and 27th). Contact Charlene Dubrule, choir director, at 604-464-3992 or char4myc@shaw.ca.

**Lunch Bunch** meets every Thursday at noon, year-round. Bring your own lunch and share in lively and topical conversation. Contact John Hagen 604-521-1335. **Book Club** meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm (except for December, which has been moved to the 5th Thursday). For location details contact Donna Hamilton (donna-h@telus.net). Book Line-up: December 29: *Snow Falling on Cedars* by David Guterson January 26: *Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver

**Beacon Writers' Group** meets the third Saturday of each month from 1–3 pm. For more information and location, please contact Janet Pivnick at janpivnick@gmail.com or Marilyn Medén at m.j.meden@telus.net or 604-469-5697. See sidebar for more information.

Saturday, December 3rd: Attend a Circle Dinner and connect with other Beaconites in a relaxed setting. For more information contact Joan Morris, joanmorris@telus.net.

#### Attend a 'Getting to Know U' session to meet other newcomers

and deepen your knowledge of how Beacon functions and what Unitarianism is. Please contact Joan Morris (joanmorris@telus.net) or Rev. Debra (minister@beaconunitarian.org) if you are interested in attending the next meeting.

Youth Group: The youth group (ages 13–18 yrs) is open to new members! Contact Lisa Girardi at lisa.m.girardi@gmail.com.

Help out on Sunday mornings as a Coffee Host (contact Glenn Wootton, woottongg@gmail.com), or sign-up as a Sunday Morning Greeter (contact Susan Tarras: starras@telus.net). Congregational Budget Meeting & Soup Lunch & Bake Sale Sunday, December 4th, after the service.

## Speakers' Workshop on January 22

**TED Talk Tips and the Mic** On January 22, after church, Sita Sahasrabudhe, TED talk graduate, will share speaking tips from the extensive tutoring TED talk speakers are given. This opportunity is for you if you do, or aspire to do, any public speaking. We will also have the use of the mic for an extra hour, so there will be a chance to become familiar with our Beacon mic. You can find Sita's talk on You Tube at "tedx Sita".

## Beacon Writers' Group, December 17

We meet the third Saturday of the month, and share what is meaningful for us, on the theme of the month, which for December is Expectation, or on a topic which is on our mind. Newcomers are welcome. Bring writing to share, possibly from the theme. You are also invited to bring writing prompts for our January theme – Radical Inclusiveness. Contact Marilyn Medén or Janet Pivnick for more details. m.j.meden@telus. net 604 469 6797 or janpivnick@ gmail.com

## The Forte Theatre Society presents Christmas Art Talent (Free!)

Starring Sue Sparlin as Mrs. Morton, playing at the Burnaby Village Museum, Nov. 19, 20, 26, 27, Dec. 3, 4, 10, 11

n Saturday and Sunday, three shows a day, through December 11th at Burnaby Village Museum's Heritage Christmas. Gate admission is FREE for the whole family. Rides on the Carousel are less than \$3. Our play is FREE. There's lots of stuff to see, and wandering carol singers and all sorts of stuff. Come with your kids. Burnaby Village Museum is located near Canada Way and Sperling in Burnaby. "Christmas Art Talent" is the story of a struggling family who is saved by the drawing skills of the youngest child. Sue Sparlin plays the wealthy art collector Mrs. Morton.



#### 2017 Hungary/Transylvania Choir Tour and Unitarian Pilgrimage

n 2010, twenty-five Unitarians (including 16 singers and choir director Alison Nixon from the North Shore Unitarian church) enjoyed a truly life-affirming trip to Hungary and Transylvania, the birthplace of Unitarianism. It's time for another trip!

The dates for the next tour are Friday, May 26 to Monday, June 5, 2017. The itinerary includes Debrecen, Eger, Kolosvar (Cluj), Torocko (Rimetea), Hodmezovasarhely, and Deva. Costs are not yet finalized but expect to be in the range of **US** \$1,300 to \$1,500 for the basic tour with all transportation, accommodation and most meals included on arrival in Budapest. Return airfare from Vancouver is additional.

Please contact Brian Welwood (604-988-1135) or Alison Nixon (604-947-0120) about this tour.

Unique Christmas Cards for Sale



Franci Louann's contour drawing, "Mr & Mrs Santa #3" (in blue), was chosen by the City of New Westminster for its holiday card for Parks and Recreation use. The "Santa Series" (six drawings) will be part of Franci's first solo show at the NW library this December. Christmas art cards are \$2 or 10 for \$15. You may see these at Century House Artists' Fair on December 3rd. Visit www. francilouann.com.

# Notice Board

#### TIRES FOR SALE!

Set of four summer tires (only one season's wear). Perelli 195/60R15. Purchased new for \$340+tax. Open to offers. Please call John Hagen, 604-521-1335.

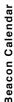
#### 2ND HAND CAR WANTED

Please call John Hagen, 604-521-1335.



Beacon Calendar: December 2016

Note: Calendar entries are truncated—view the complete entries on the Beacon web site calendar page.



Dec 2016 (Pacific Time - Vancouver)	Sat	5:30pm - Night Tree	6 pm - Circle Dinner	10	2		1 pm - Beacon Writer's	24	7 pm - Christmas Eve	σ
Dec 2016 (Pacit	Fri	7		6	۵ ۲	0		23		00
i	Thu	1 12pm - Lunch Bunch		σ	12pm - Lunch Bunch		12pm - Lunch Bunch 1pm - Connecting and	22	12pm - Lunch Bunch 7pm - Book Club	12 pm - Lunch Bunch
	Wed	30		2	1 pm - Worship		1pm - Soul Matters 7pm - Soul Matters	51		0
,	Tue	29 7:30pm - Choir practice		Q	7:30pm - Choir practice	13	7:30 pm - Choir practice	20		27
	Mon	28		a	7 pm - Spirit of Life			19		20
Beacon Calendar	Sun	10:30am - Worship	6:30pm - The Glove 7:30pm - Humanist	4	Theme: Expectation 10:30am - Worship 11:30am - Bake Sale 11:30am - Soup Lunch 12pm - Budget Meeting		10:30am - Worship 1 pm - Board meeting	18	10:30am - Pageant 10:30am - Worship	No Service