



The Franciscan



April 2022

• Diocesan Bishop •

John Harvey Taylor

• Our Vicar •

The Rev. Sarah Kitch

stfrancis.simi@gmail.com

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FROM OUR VICAR

Holy Week invites us into a world full of betrayal, abandonment, mockery, violence, and ultimately death. The Triduum, those three sacred days which constitute one unfolding liturgy, call us to experience communion, loss, and the border spaces of unknowing. Holy Saturday is an invitation to make a conscious passage through the liminal realm of in-between.



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DOK Women's Retreat Photo Courtesy of Rev. Sarah Kitch

PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEEK & EASTER

Breakdown of all services and service times – *Let's Celebrate Together!*

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Published monthly by St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church

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From Our Vicar...

*Don't surrender your loneliness so quickly.
Let it cut more deep.
Let it ferment and season you as few human
or even divine ingredients can.
Something missing in my heart tonight
Has made my eyes so soft,
My voice so tender,
My need of God
Absolutely clear.*

-Hafiz

Holy Week invites us into a world full of betrayal, abandonment, mockery, violence, and ultimately death. The Triduum, those three sacred days which constitute one unfolding liturgy, call us to experience communion, loss, and the border spaces of unknowing. Holy Saturday is an invitation to make a conscious passage through the liminal realm of in-between.

I love the wide space of Holy Saturday which lingers between the suffering and death of Jesus on Friday and the vigil Saturday night proclaiming the return of the Easter fire. For me Holy Saturday evokes much about the human condition -- the ways we are called to let go of things or people, identities or securities and then wonder what will rise up out of the ashes of our lives. The suffering that we experience because of pain or grief or great sorrow and we don't know if we will ever grasp joy again. Much of our lives rest in that space between loss and hope. Our lives are full of Holy Saturday experiences.

In their book *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem*, Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan write:

"Easter completes the archetypal pattern at the center of the Christian life: death and resurrection, crucifixion and vindication. Both parts of this pattern are essential: death and resurrection, crucifixion and vindication. When one is emphasized over the other distortion is the result. The two must be affirmed equally."

Before we rush to resurrection we must dwell fully in the space of unknowing, of holding death and life in tension with each other, to experience that liminal place so that we become familiar with its landscape and one day might accompany others who find themselves there and similarly disoriented. The wisdom of the Triduum is that we must be fully present to both the starkness of Friday and to the Saturday space between before we can really experience the resurrection. We must know the terrible experience of loss wrought again and again in our world so that when the promise of new life dawns we can let it enter into us fully in the space carved by loss. As the great poet of Hafiz reminds us, we must let our loneliness "cut more deep" and "season" us, so that we are reminded of our absolute dependence on the Source of all.



*Rev. Sarah pictured on right at Vernal Equinox drumming circle
drawing the largest drumming circle crowd to date on March 20th.
Next drumming circle will be Summer Solstice on Tuesday, June 21st*



“Why do you look for the living among the dead?”

This is the poignant question the “men in dazzling clothes” ask the women who have come to Jesus’s tomb with their spices. It is a question well worth asking ourselves. Why do we look for the living among the dead? The women didn’t even find the dead in the tomb — it was empty.

The emptiness encountered by the women at the tomb strikes deeper than death. To death, one can respond with tears and wailing, with anointing and spices, with funeral processions and eulogies. To emptiness there is no response. When emptiness takes over, the core of one’s humanness disintegrates.

One is no longer capable of despair, for despair implies the presence of enough hope to feel its loss. Emptiness is the ultimate threat to religious faith. Each of us has within ourselves a tomb into which we have placed something that perhaps originally was most dear to us but now, as far as we are concerned, is dead. Maybe it’s a failed marriage, a broken friendship, an emotionally distant child or parent. Maybe it is our own tomb, in which lodges something we want to be dead, a sense of shame, or greed, or self-centeredness. Or perhaps it is, in fact, Jesus’s tomb and we’ve placed him in it because, deep in our minds, we really don’t know what to make of the Christian story, and so we bury Jesus in this tomb and seal the opening shut with a huge stone and try to continue our lives, pretending everything is fine, thank you very much.

We are supported and even encouraged to guard our tombs by our own society and culture. We have developed incredible resurrection resistance. We have a kind of Easter evasion in our culture. We can handle it ourselves. We don’t need help. We can take care of life on our own terms. We have gotten used to our “un-freedoms” — the ways in which our tombs actually bind us — and their attendant pain has become our friend. So we lose sight of what is possible in our lives. We lose sight of the fact that persons, places, and things can bind us. Instead we choose to live with brokenness and loneliness. We lose sight of the potential that is ours. How do we move from this stuck place? How do we begin to claim the good news of Jesus’s resurrection? Claiming the good news, claiming the resurrection, making the resurrection ours as well as Jesus’s means that we go on a journey to our own tombs, not knowing exactly what we will find. In Mark’s Gospel, on their way to the tomb the women ask, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?” They knew they couldn’t do it themselves, but that didn’t stop them from going to the tomb to anoint Jesus’s body. They went anyway. They kept asking. They kept walking. They had a problem they could not solve, a stone they could not move, and yet they continued on their journey.

We have a partnership with God. God is with us. We need to trust that partnership, claim that relationship, and continue walking toward the tomb. To walk willingly to the tomb, acknowledging the stones, acknowledging our brokenness with God and others, is to walk toward health.

We go to the tomb knowing that what it holds represents death — or, even worse, emptiness. We go to that tomb because things sometimes have to die in order for us to live more fully. We have to let go of certain things so that their binding power over us can be released.

In all of the gospels, when the women arrived at the tomb that morning, God had already acted.

The stone was already rolled back and Jesus had already risen and stepped forward with all of the light, life, love, and power of God. And the stone was not moved so that the Risen Jesus could get out. The stone was moved so that those women, and each of us, can step in and see that Jesus is not there, that Jesus has risen.

Now, therefore, we can live without worry, fight without surrender, suffer without despair, love without limits, and die without fear, knowing that there is no stone in us or outside of us that can stop us from rising with Christ and living through the resurrection power of our God. And that, as they say, is certainly good news!

Written by Bishop Mary Glasspool

The Common Cup

We are celebrating returning to the Common Cup, or the wine in the Chalice for all to drink, as of Palm Sunday. It is a joy to bless you with this offering and returning to the unity this represents for all who believe.

In Presiding Michael Curry's Book, *THE WAY OF LOVE*, he shares what the Common Cup means to his family. *His father was an Episcopal priest in Buffalo, New York, and his father came from a long line of Baptist preachers. When Curry's mother and father were dating, Curry's mother took his father to an Episcopal church in Chicago. When they visited, there were only a few Black parishioners in the pews. Curry writes that when it came time to come forward for communion, his father was both amazed and dubious. There was only one chalice on the altar, and this was the 1940s.*

So, Curry's father hung back as his mother went forward wondering if the priest would really offer her the same cup that everyone else was using. "He held his breath as my mother sipped. And as the cup was passed, the next person did drink. And the next. And the next. And the next." Curry continues in quoting his father, "Any church in which Blacks and Whites drink out of the same cup knows something about the Gospel that I want to be a part of."

The chalice is a powerful thing. Prior to Covid, I often would hear how one of the defining reasons people have found such a home at St Francis is through the invitation to communion. At St Francis, we recite a prayer from the Christian community in Iona, Scotland as an invitation to communion. It is as follows:

"This is the table of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and for those who want to love him more. So come, you who have much faith and you who have little, you who have been here often, and you who have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you, like me, who have failed. Come, because it is the Lord who invites us. It is his will that we should meet him here."

The power of the chalice binds us together and in liturgical traditions, a symbol of our unity as believers. The invitation to participate in communion is the most welcoming act we can offer at St. Francis. All are welcome and we say and mean it with conviction. We unabashedly practice open communion.

Question for Self-Reflection: How does Communion or the Holy Eucharist nourish your life and faith?

Notice From The Bishop's Office: "While receiving in one kind only (the consecrated Bread) continues to be an option in the Diocese of Los Angeles, effective on Palm Sunday (April 10, 2022), Bishop Taylor, acting on our recommendation, has approved the option of returning to the prayer book-preferred option of receiving both the consecrated Bread and Wine."

This means at St Francis: Chalice return to the Eucharistic service beginning Palm Sunday (Hosanna!).
Individual wine cups will continue to be offered. Intinction by communicants in the common cup is not yet permitted.

GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE EVENING SERVICE 6PM

The word *Tenebrae* is Latin for "shadows" or "darkness." It can also be translated as "night" or "death." The Tenebrae service is an ancient tradition in Christian history that took place on one of the last three days of Holy Week: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, or Holy Saturday. The purpose of this service was to remember the somber events that occurred in Jesus' life from the exuberant entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday through the night of Jesus' burial on Good Friday.

The most distinctive aspect of the service is several lit candles. The flames of these candles are extinguished one by one as Scripture readings are shared to tell the story of Holy Week. This gradual descent into gloom is a representation of Jesus' increasing sorrow as the events of Passion Week unfolded. After the last verse is read, the last candle is put out, and the room is plunged into darkness.

There will be musical reflections after each reading and a flame is extinguished.

In his Easter Letter to the church a couple of years ago, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said:

Jesus didn't just happen to be in Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday. Jesus was in Jerusalem on purpose... Jesus came to show us there is another way. The way of unselfish, sacrificial love. That's why he entered Jerusalem. That's why he went to the cross. It was the power of that love poured out from the throne of God that even after the horror of the crucifixion would raise him from death to life. He didn't just happen to be in Jerusalem on that Palm Sunday. He went to Jerusalem for a reason. To send a message. That not even the titanic powers of death can stop the love of God.

This is our message as Easter People, that not even death can stop the Love of God. We have been given the gift of relationship restored with God, through Jesus, and we are a New People with a song of New Life! Jesus' mission has been fulfilled and we are a Resurrection People that now shout "Alleluia!!!"

Stay Connected With Us!

- Pastoral Care through the church office (805)526-5141
- Pastoral Care via email Stfrancis.simi@gmail.com
- Keep up through the St. Francis Website <https://www.stfrancischurchofsimi.org/>
- Sunday Worship In-Person 10:15 AM & Live Streamed - link in the St. Francis Weekly
 - Remember to keep in touch with each other through the Phone Tree
 - Stay connected through weekly services and activities made available

Please remember St. Francis with your donations and pledge.
Secure online Giving available through PayPal:

<https://www.stfrancischurchofsimi.org/donate>

Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter

Palm Sunday – *Outside/Inside: 10am April 10th with Potluck Luncheon after service*

Catholic and Protestant communities celebrate Palm Sunday. (The Orthodox Christian community celebrates later as they follow the Julian calendar – a week later.) This marks the beginning of Holy Week, historically the most sacred time of year for Christians.

Palm Sunday recalls an event in the Christian Scripture (The New Testament) of Jesus entering into Jerusalem and being greeted by the people waving palm branches. (Matthew 21:1-9, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-38, John 12:12-19)

The service on Palm Sunday also includes a reading of the Passion, that is, the story of the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus' death is seen by Christians as salvation and as a reminder of how prophets are often killed when they stand for justice and peace.

Holy Week

Holy Thursday (sometimes referred to as Maundy Thursday after the Latin mandatum or command to love one another) is a day when Christians commemorate the Last Supper of Jesus. (*Matthew 26: 17-35, Mark 14: 12-31, Luke 22: 7-23, John 13: 21-30*). In some traditions, there is the washing of the feet of various members of the community to recall a gesture of Christ at the Last Supper when he washed the feet of his disciples. – **Agape Feast and Maundy Thursday Service at 7 pm April 14th Inside**

Good Friday April 15th is a solemn day on which Christians recall the death of Jesus and its promise of hope and new life. (*Matthew 27: 32-56, Mark 15: 21-41, Luke 23:26-49, John 19: 17-30*).

Other people make the **Stations of the Cross 2:30 pm service** a devotion that recalls the journey of Jesus on the Via Dolorosa (Way of Sorrows) in Jerusalem to Calvary where he was crucified. (In Jerusalem the place of Christ's death and resurrection is commemorated inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.) **7pm Tenebrae Service with Live Music. Easter Vigil will be streamed online only.**

Easter -10:15am Outside Service followed by Egg Hunt and Easter Brunch

Easter Sunday is the greatest feast in the Christian calendar. While our society puts a major emphasis on Christmas, no other day is traditionally as sacred for the Christian community as Easter. This is the day Christians commemorate the resurrection of Christ. (*Matthew 28:1-15, Mark 1: 1-8, Luke 24:1-12, John 20: 1-10*).

In some traditions, the services begin the night before with the lighting of a new fire and the blessing of a large Easter candle. Water is blessed and many are baptized. But for all Christians, this is a day to renew one's faith.

Easter usually ends with festive celebrations with special foods and Easter delicacies.

Coming Up:

- Palm Sunday and Potluck Luncheon
- Holy Week : Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil
- Easter Sunday, Egg Hunt and Easter Brunch
- Line Dancing Continues *Wednesdays 4:30-5:30pm*
- Music Festival May 22nd @ 6 PM



Parish Prayer Needs:

Healing: Barbara, Sylvia, Brody, Avalon, Shantel, Lee, Michael, Megan, Jean, Braydon, Hank, Fr. Steve, Al, Mary, Yvonne, Dee, Jeff, Jim, Bill & Leslie, Jan, David, Lee, Trish, Sue, Tony, Mark, Michele, Eric, Louise, Bob & family, Edith, Howard, Mary, Donna, J.D., Frances, Patrick, Margaret, Beverly, Margie, Alan and Alan's family, Kevin, Eve, Amy, Judy, Bernadette.

Go to smile.amazon.com/ch/95-2558848 and Amazon donates to **St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church every time you order through Amazon.**



Thank you to all who donated to the ECW Toy Drive for Hillsides! Special Thanks to Sylvia Moya for coordinating and overseeing the drive. Toys gathered during the drive will be given to Hillsides and used in celebration of birthdays and other special occasions throughout the year.

SAVE THE DATE:

Music Festival

Sunday May 22nd @6:00 PM

On the Patio-Live Music & FOOD!



St. Francis Book Club

We are forming a new book club!
Anyone who would like to join us should contact me:
Chris M at 805.276.4971

*Realities spring
From faith and hope invested
In our boldest dreams.*

-Haiku by Diantha Ain

BABY CLOSET

Don't forget the needs of the Baby Closet that is an ongoing need. The Baby Closet is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12noon -1pm and is collecting DIAPERS SIZE 5,6,7 and has a HUGE need for BABY WIPES and Size 6&7 diapers.

Healing Service Continues to meet weekly on Wednesdays in the Sanctuary.

All are welcome to attend this casual mid-week service with Eucharist at **10:00 am on Wednesdays.**



Line Dancing Continues Wednesdays On the Patio 4:30- 5:30 pm

BOGOTA KIDS MISSION

Lloyd and Anita Mix THE BRIDGE March 2022



FLOORED AT THE BRIDGE!

Come visit us! Climb up the steps to the third floor. Catch your breath as you meet our smallest students from Pre K through third grade. They'll be busy with homework assignments or special activities geared towards strengthening their general academic skills.

You'll meet Sebastian. He arrived when he was 4 years old, unwilling to work, concentrate or do what he was told. Within two months of our structured program, he was doing his homework, following the rules and was loving the devotional time. Now that he is 7, his teacher at The Bridge will tell you,

“He's really intelligent, comes to do his homework, is confident and gives me great joy. I see God's response, that what is sown at the foundation is bearing fruit. To see him arrive each day, happy to be here... I feel that he sees that he has a place not only to do his homework but to also learn about the love of God. Thank you for all the support you give. It's a great blessing for the children and us as teachers.”

Wait! Don't leave before you've met Anguie. She's 7 and a little shy at first. Born with facial structure deformation, she thanks God every day for the foundation. She'll let you know that she is happy (here) and, by the way, her schoolwork is excellent.

Danixon, a Venezuelan child, will be singing and dancing as he does his homework. He started last year in our homeschool program and is now enrolled in public school. You might overhear him telling one of our teachers how happy he is that he is not discriminated against at The Bridge for the colour of his skin. He will claim he feels safe and loved in a way he has never experienced before.

Okay, let's hit the 1st floor now ... Down two flights of stairs and here we are. These are our 4th through 9th grade kids. Some of these children have been at The Bridge since we began seven years ago.

You'll notice these kids make themselves at home. They're busy at work but will also toss out lots of tough questions. Anything to get the teachers talking about spiritual topics! These kids don't want class to end or the weekend to come. Many are getting their first term evaluations as March draws to a close. The majority are receiving the highest scores possible! Above all, they thank God that they can be here and learn about Him as we read the Bible together. We, in turn, acknowledge that God is using you to truly make that possible as our numbers continue to grow.

That's Tania across the room. She has been with us for years and has always struggled academically. This year to compensate for those difficulties, her teacher at school has been laying on extra homework that would discourage

most children. But she's working faithfully as we help her wade through those extra requirements. The other day she called out to Anita to come look at her workbook as she proudly pointed out all the good grades her teacher is finally giving her! Tania and her cousin Dana, (She's the one over there that won't sit still.) encourage their families to pray even though they are teased by some of the family for doing so. On a daily basis they read the storybook Bibles they received from you and The Bridge last Christmas.

Here comes Adriana, our new 1-floor teacher. She is anxious to tell you,

“At The Bridge I have seen the transformation in the hearts of the children because they experience God's perfect love. Each of us, as a teacher, is a bridge – a tool - but is it His love that causes the transformation which is reflected in the kids' learning and behaviour. This same love gives the kids security and self confidence that enables them to confront life's challenges. The child is definitely not the same as when they arrived.”



Tania

Let's climb back up to the second floor. This is where our homeschool program takes place. These children are not in school because there are not enough openings available. Many are Venezuelan refugees. Some have never attended school or have been out of the educational system for a significant period of time. Our goal is to get them caught up and ready for when a spot in the public school system becomes available.

Lloyd at work on the 2nd floor



Luz



In this program we focus on a child's reading and comprehension competency as well as math and analytical skills. Because this is the only education that the child is currently receiving, we flesh out our program with art, English and physical activities.

Some children are in this program for several years, while others are located into a school fairly quickly. It is not unusual for a child that has been in this program to be placed in an advanced level when they enter into the public school system. Once a child enters public school, we seek to transition them into our homework assistance program on the 1st or 3rd floor, which keeps us involved with their lives and academic development.

Meet Luz, one of the newest additions to our staff. “I have been working with The Bridge for almost two months. What impacts me most is the difference between the children that have been at The Bridge a while and those that have just started. Their behaviour and attitude towards others is admirable... (This program) is far more than just developing skills in mathematics, grammar and other subjects; the children become little ones who know God's Word.”

That's it for the tour. But feel free to spend as much time with the kids as you wish. Be ready for lots of smiles, laughter and hugs. They'll love getting to know you since they've heard so much about you. They are thankful for all you give ... as are we.

\$25.00 a month provides a child with everything The Bridge offers. Gifts of support may be made

through the following organizations. Receipts will be issued for tax purposes. bogotakidsmissiondonations@gmail.com (E transfer)

In U.S.A. St. Francis Episcopal Church 280 Royal Avenue Simi Valley, CA 93065

Go therefore and make disciples ... Matt. 28: 19

welcome APRIL

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | | | 1 8 pm AA PH | 2 |
| 3 David Kitch Preaching Eucharist with Music 6:30 Men's AA PH | 4 8 pm Men's AA | 5 6:30 pm Women AA 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women AA | 6 9am-1 pm Office Hrs. 10 am Healing & Eucharist 6:00pm Final Taizé Service 7:30 pm AA PH | 7 | 8 8 pm AA PH | 9 |
| 10 PALM SUNDAY Rev. Sarah Kitch, Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music 6:30 Men's AA PH | 11 8 pm Men's AA | 12 6:30 pm Women AA 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women AA | 13 Office Closed 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service 6 pm W.R. HOA 7:30 pm AA PH | 14 MAUNDY THURSDAY 7:00pm Agape Feast and Service 6 pm H.H. HOA | 15 GOOD FRIDAY 2:30pm Stations 7:00 pm Tenebrae Service w/ live music 8 pm AA PH | 16 Easter Vigil <i>Livestream only</i> |
| 17 EASTER David Kitch, Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music Easter Brunch and Egg Hunt after Service 6:30 Men's AA PH | 18 8 pm Men's AA | 19 6:30 pm Women AA 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women AA | 20 9am-1 pm Office Hr. 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service 7:30 pm AA PH | 21 | 22 8 pm AA PH | 23 |
| 24 Rev. Sarah Kitch Preaching 10:15 am Eucharist with Music 6:30 Men's AA PH | 25 8 pm Men's AA | 26 6:30 pm Women AA 7 pm AA Clare Rm 8 pm Women AA | 27 9am-1 pm Office Hrs. 10 am Healing & Eucharist Service 7:30 pm AA PH | 28 | 29 | 30 |

RECYCLING AT ST FRANCIS

Please bring in your Recycling on the **last Sunday of the month** – we'll put those cans and bottles to good use!

COFFEE HOUR SIGN-UPS RETURN IN MAY!

Contact the Church office if you are interested in Hosting: 805.526.5141

April 2022 Schedule for Holy Ministry

| | April 3 | April 10 Palm Sunday | April 17 Easter | April 24 | May 1 |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Lector (O.T./Psalm) | Kerri-Jo H. | Eden S. | Bernadette | Peggy S. | Kerri-Jo H. |
| Lector (Epistle/P.O.P) | Gerri H. | Reuben A. | Susan S. | Tony F. | Gerri H. |
| LEM | Lisa N. | Tracy H. Lisa N. | Chrissy B. Tracy H. | Rob W. Kristin W. | Lisa N. |
| Usher / Greeter | Tony F. | Rebecca S. Joe Z. | Reuben A. Tony F. | Joe Z. | Tony F. |
| Altar Guild | Cathy G. | Chris M. | Chrissy B. | Gerri H. | Cathy G. |
| Preaching | David K. | Rev. Sarah | David K. | Rev. Sarah | David K. |

May 2022 Schedule for Holy Ministry

| | May 1 | May 8 | May 15 | May 22 | May 29 |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Lector (O.T./Psalm) | Kerri-Jo H. | Eden S. | Bernadette | Peggy S. | Susan S. |
| Lector (Epistle/P.O.P) | Gerri H. | Reuben A. | Susan S. | Tony F. | Kerri-Jo H. |
| LEM | Lisa N. | Tracy H. | Chrissy B. | Rob W. Kristin W. | Tracy H. |
| Usher / Greeter | Tony F. | Rebecca S. | Reuben A. | Joe Z. | Reuben A. |
| Altar Guild | Cathy G. | Chrissy B. | Chris M. | Gerri H. | Chris M. |
| Preaching | David K. | Rev. Sarah | David K. | Rev. Sarah | David K. |

The Franciscan

Newsletter – April 2022

St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church
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TO:



Sunday Service:

10:15 am

Wednesday:

10 am Healing Service

6 pm Lenten Taizé Service (4/6)

Holy Week Schedule-

Palm Sunday:

10 am Outside & Inside Service

Pot-luck Luncheon on the Patio after Service

Maundy Thursday:

7:00 pm Agape Feast and Service

Good Friday:

2:30 pm Stations of the Cross

7:00 pm Tenebrae Service

Easter Vigil via Livestream Good Friday into Sat.

Easter Sunday:

10:15 am Service Outside

Egg Hunt and Easter Brunch after Service