COMMUNION

“Spiritually Alive, Joyfully Inclusive, Committed to Justice.”

Sunday Morning

February 25
9 am Java & Jesus
10 am Winton Boyd preaching
ORUCC Choir

March 4
9 am Java & Jesus
10 am Tammy Martens preaching
ORUCC Choir

March 11
9 am Java & Jesus
10 am Winton Boyd preaching
Handbell Choir

March 18
9 am Java & Jesus
10 am Helene Nelson preaching
ORUCC Choir

In a time in our culture when we in the progressive church are trying to celebrate and honor the experiences and voices of women, we have decided to focus on what it means to encounter the Divine in our lives, in the lives of others and in the movements of the world. Through music, word, symbol and images we will hear from, listen to, learn from and cherish the way women historically and in our midst are teaching us about our faith.

Through music, word, symbol and images we will hear from, listen to, learn from and cherish the way women historically and in our midst are teaching us about our faith. At times, we'll rewrite the text for emphasis. We'll also listen to women from the congregation reflect on their lives. We'll respond with creative readings and good music given to us by women. Our series has been organized by a group of women from the congregation who cherish the way the Divine Feminine and the Father God work in all of our lives. Our website has the full schedule of themes and preaching.

The Christ in Me Greets the Christ in You: We’ve created a devotional of short prayers and photos designed to illuminate the ancient faith greeting, “The Christ in Me Greets the Christ in You.” A small group of us created 40 ways praying and living with that ancient mantra that we hope will be life-giving. This is available at church. We are also posting the daily offerings online on the church Facebook Page.

Newsletters:

March 6 & 19

Articles due the Monday before
Information to be included in the newsletter is due the Monday before the above dates by 9:00 a.m. Email items to office@orucc.org, or drop them off at the office.

Church Emails
Debbie Bauerkerper
office@orucc.org
Tammy Martens
tmartens@orucc.org
Ken Pennings
ken@orucc.org
Winton Boyd
winton@orucc.org

Continued Pledge Drive to Support Heart Room.
If you are planning a financial pledge to Heart Room, would you please submit your pledge card before March 4? Heart Room, ORUCC’s initiative to help families find and keep stable housing, builds on our church commitment to faith in our neighborhood. We have invested our time, our prayers and our money in fostering opportunity for all our neighbors to thrive. Heart Room will help six families with young children find and keep stable housing as a pathway to long term well-being. Housing stability is especially critical for young children to grow up safe, healthy, happy and successful in school. We appreciate ORUCC’s long-time commitment to live our faith and “love our neighbors” in important and practical ways. If you are able to support this new ORUCC initiative, please put a pledge card in the offering plate or mail it to the church office.
Sanctuary Volunteer Training

To date, we have about 60 folks signed up as volunteers for the Sanctuary work here at ORUCC. We’d love to have 100 people in our database. If you HAVE NOT YET SIGNED UP, please see the table in the Crossroads for a paper form that can be turned into the office. You can also go to www.orucc.org - look for the large Sanctuary Movement picture on top and click!

We have scheduled additional trainings for Dane Sanctuary volunteers who have agreed to provide in-person volunteer assistance with anyone who goes into sanctuary. While we do not yet have anyone in sanctuary, that could happen at any time and anyone who will provide this volunteer assistance needs to be trained.

The upcoming training schedules are as follows:
Feb. 25th 11:30 AM-1 PM (possibly until 1:30 for questions)
Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ, 1501 Gilbert Rd., Madison, RSVP office@orucc.org or 608-271-7212

March 4th Noon -1:30 (possibly until 2 PM for questions)
Madison Christian Community, 7118 Old Sauk Rd, Madison, RSVP to mcc@chorus.net

March 14th 5:30 PM-7 PM (possibly until 7:30 for questions)
Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ, 1501 Gilbert Rd., Madison, RSVP office@orucc.org or 608-271-7212

Please try to make it to one of these sessions so that you are eligible to provide in-person volunteer assistance if we host someone in sanctuary. After we complete these sessions, we will review our volunteer list to see whether or not additional training sessions are necessary, but for now, these are the sessions we are offering.

Tekla is a Madison native with extensive knowledge of and experience with immigrant issues. Her husband is an immigrant, and Tekla is the owner and operator of a home cleaning company that employs immigrants.

Sanctuary Mission Team

The Sanctuary Mission Team has scheduled two programs to help us further understand immigrants in Dane County and beyond.

The first program is March 4th @ 9:00 - 9:45am and will feature Fabiola Hamdan. She will be talking about the immigrant community in Dane County and her work with undocumented people. Baxter Richardson will facilitate.

Fabiola Hamdan is a bilingual, bi-cultural Senior Social Worker with the Dane County Department of Human Services. She is the first Immigration Affairs Specialist. Fabiola immigrated from Bolivia 32 years ago. She went to UW Madison and got her masters degree in social work. For 18 years, Fabiola has facilitated the Darbo Worthington Joining Forces for Families team comprised of 8 to 12 police, school, public health, and other human service professionals. The team provides collaborative service to specific families and implements community projects designed to improve quality of life in this neighborhood.

The Green Corner—Care of Creation

Keeping your carbon footprint to a minimum means putting less carbon into the atmosphere, which equals lowering your contribution to global warming.

Here’s one way you can help: If you order from Amazon Prime and choose free no rush shipping (5 business days) or free standard shipping (3-5 business days) you will leave a carbon footprint that is smaller than if you drove to the store to purchase the item.

But if you opt for free two day shipping your carbon footprint will actually be greater than if you had driven to the store yourself. Here’s why: Your item gets picked off the shelf in the warehouse and placed on an airplane to quickly take it across the country. Then it’s put on a truck -- but because you selected the quicker shipping option, it’s likely to be put on a truck that’s only half-full in order to meet the deadline, and half-filled trucks mean more gas consumption for delivery vehicles. So if you’re not in dire need of a two day delivery, consider one of the other options. Small changes like this can make a big difference, so spread the word!
Almost every week, outside groups use this building for their caring work in the world. They range from people supporting the differently abled to LGBTQ high school students learning about leadership to small theater groups writing and performing their own plays to piano lessons to small neighborhood groups planning for ways to support those in need. Without fail, there is a collective sigh of appreciation and comfort when participants in these groups see the labyrinth in our Friendship Hall carpet. Some know what it is and find it encouraging that an ancient prayer practice is still honored in our space. Others don’t know what it is but find the pattern compelling and mesmerizing. When they find out what it means, they are even more intrigued.

I cherish these conversations because so often there is an element of surprise. People expect to see a sanctuary or worship space in a church building. Because they usually know how involved we are in community and world events, this prayer-filled carpet in our busiest room catches them off guard. It gives them pause. I love experiencing their reactions and the joy that so often surfaces without prompting. It is, in the words of a mentor of mine from decades ago, a “ministry of place.” For this reason, I’m deeply indebted to the small team (Barb Hummel, Chris Thomas, Betty Day and Elaine Pasinski-Thomas) that continues to offer opportunities for walking the labyrinth each month.

I love the way that floor embodies the spirit of prayerful action in the world. Just this week we will have a community meeting sponsored by a city alder as he seeks to help service providers collaborate with each other. We will host WAVE (Wisconsin Anti-Violence Effort). They’ve been meeting monthly for a couple of years, but their work is heightened again by a school shooting in Florida on Valentines Day. We will provide meeting space for the Mellowhood Foundation as its Board plans for youth employment and neighborhood empowerment. In the midst, a baby shower and young parent game night and Sanctuary volunteer training and a medical screening day will be held. This building is central to our ministry of presence and place in the world, and integral to all these efforts is our commitment to prayer and action, prayerful action and practical prayer.

You need not be versed in the specifics of the labyrinth to benefit from its presence in our common life. Much as the cross or the bread and wine remind us, by their very presence, of God’s love in the world; so also can the labyrinth remind us of the power of invoking God’s spirit in all our work to bring about the realm of God in our time.

Years ago, while on sabbatical, I had a chance to walk an outdoor labyrinth in Germany in an apple orchard behind an old monastery that had been turned into a retreat center. In addition to being an orchard, it was also a pasture where sheep grazed. Sure enough, to complete the labyrinth, you had to step over sheep dung more than once. Prayer and life sharing space. It was a beautiful image. In the same way, our Friendship Hall is a well-used, well-loved and, at times, a bit dirty space. Of course, this is where prayer should happen. This is where activism meets meditation; community meets the cries of the marginalized.

It’s my hope that we never take for granted the power of our space, and that we never slack in our appreciation for how prayer and activism shape us into God’s hands and feet in the world. We don’t have to fully understand it. It isn’t always neat and tidy. But it is the way of faith and compassion.
Compassion offering for February will be Thea’s Table:
The offering will benefit Thea’s Table, a program of the Food For Thought Initiative that provides weekend food for homeless families with elementary school children. Families are referred to Thea’s Table by school social workers. Every Thursday, each participating family receives shelf-stable food for 6 meals, two snacks and one treat.

Thea’s Table is named in honor of 94 year-old Thea Aschkenase, who as a teenager survived imprisonment at Auschwitz concentration camp. She never forgot what it was like to be starving and has worked tirelessly throughout her life to reduce food insecurity for school children. Her daughter Lea Aschkenase is the founder of Food for Thought, an all-volunteer, non-profit organization founded to help children succeed and learn in school by helping reduce hunger.

How will your donation be used? Thea’s Table is currently funded by a grant from the Goodman Foundation to serve 30 families per week. There are currently over 700 children in the Madison school district who are classified as homeless. Contributions from ORUCC will provide the means to expand this program to serve more children.

For credit on your church statement, on your check write the ministry in the memo line. While this will not count toward your annual pledge, we will acknowledge the contribution on your statement.

Prayers of Concern:
For Marcia Beckett’s father with some serious health concerns.

For the families of the 17 people killed two weeks ago at a Florida high school; for the perpetrator of this horrible crime.

For Zee Lemke Oliver who is 3 months pregnant, and has low blood pressure and light-headedness.

For Bonnie Augusta, whose sister, Kathy, passed away unexpectedly last week.

Prayers of Joy:
For the launch of our Lenten worship series, TO SEE AND BE SEEN: TO KNOW AND BE KNOWN – EXPERIENCING THE HOLY THROUGH THE VOICES AND EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN.

For team of women who has been planning our Lenten worship series.

For the release of our Lenten journal, The Christ in Me Greets the Christ in You.

For the birth of Sara Hagen’s nephew Louie.

For the initiative of WAVE (Wisconsin Anti-Violence Effort).

For those who have put together trainings for Sanctuary volunteers (next training after worship on Feb. 25).

Family Game Night!
Join us for Family Game Night! Bring your family, your favorite games, and a snack to share. We’ll meet at the church in Friendship Hall. Mark your calendars for March 2, April 6, May 4, and June 1 (first Fridays). Drop in anytime between 6-8 pm. Contact Rachael Lancor (rachael.anderman@gmail.com) for details.

Panera Eat Out—February 27, 2018
Please help our youth get to Greensboro, North Carolina for their mission trip this summer by eating at Panera (Mineral Point Road) on Tuesday, February 27 between 4:00 and 8:00 p.m. You need to show a flyer when you make your order and those flyers are on the table in the Crossroads. Or you can show an electronic version of the flyer and you can access that via the All Church Email. Hope to see you at Panera!

Women’s Book Group:
On Thursday, March 1, Women’s Book Group will meet in the Alfred Swan Room, adjacent to Friendship Hall, from 1:30-3:30. We will discuss “LaRose” by Louise Erdrich.

LaROSE is a contemporary novel featuring two families related by blood who live on either side of a boundary between a reservation and U.S. land. At the very beginning of this novel there’s a tragedy. It involves both families and the title character named LaRose, along with a culturally traditional way in which an attempt is made to assuage deep grief. There’s the great blessing of a happy community at the end. Erdrich is well-qualified to create this story, as critics generally consider her to be one of the outstanding living American writers. Erdrich’s mother was an Ojibwe woman, and her father had a German heritage.

All women who like to read and discuss books are welcome.

Progressive Christianity Discussion Group:
We meet the second Wednesday of the month, next session March 14 at the church 11 a.m. to 12:00 pm. Bringing a bag lunch is optional. We are reading Marcus Borg’s book Convictions. Questions contact Ken Pennings at ken@orucc.org.

Women’s Breakfast:
We meet at the Pancake Café at 728 S. Gammon Rd. (near Watts Rd) at 8:30 on the first Friday of the month. This is an informal gathering to chat on many subjects and interests. Join Jeanne Garnett and others for a delicious breakfast and great conversation.

Many men have also been joining in at their “guys” table and are welcome as well.
ORUCC Men’s Group:
The Orchard Ridge UCC men’s group meets in the Oscar Romero Gathering Room on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month at 7:15 pm. FMI—contact Dave Myers at 274-0381 or 547_5698@msn.com.

Weekly Meditation Group:
Thursday mornings, from 8:30 to 9:30 am, for a shared time of silent meditation and reflections on our spiritual journeys. Contact Dave Myers at 274-0381 or 47_5698@msn.com or Helene Nelson 259-2546 or helenemargaret@gmail.com for more information.

Knitting & Crafts Group:
The group will meet on the first Monday of the month at 1:30 pm at the church. All are welcome to bring some handwork and join us! Questions, please call Sandra Dyar at 271-2409.

NOTE: As you plan your knitting and crocheting projects that include prayer shawls, please plan most of your shawls to be rectangles. Think in terms of 16 to 20 inches wide and 60 to 72 inches long. These are the most used shawls and would be most helpful.

Church Email Lists:
ORUCC has a few email lists that you may or may not know about. If you would like to be added to or removed from any of these, please send your email to Ken@orucc.org or winston@orucc.org.

Weekly Epost which shares the events of the upcoming weekend

Bi-Monthly Newsletter (The Communion)
Bi-monthly Eprayer list which reminds us of prayers within the congregation

Weekly Java and Jesus email that includes reading for discussion on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. Many receive without coming to the events of the upcoming weekend

LGBTQ and allies list which is used periodically to highlight community events or issues.

OVER 55:
The next gathering will be Tuesday, March 13th. Our topic will be something near and dear to many of us - that would be COFFEE. Steve Yaezel, co-owner of True Coffee (the kind we drink at church) will be our speaker. We will certainly learn lots about coffee growing and roasting from the Singing Roaster. As usual, we will gather at 11:30 and begin to eat at 11:45. A delicious meal will be prepared for us by our Food Ministry at a cost of $7.00. The program will follow. Even if you have never been to Over 55 before, we invite everyone to come and join us for an enjoyable afternoon.

Coffee Fund for Sunday Mornings and all Other Church Events:
Many of us enjoy a good cup of Fair Trade coffee after worship on Sunday mornings. If you can help out by donating to the coffee fund, that would be appreciated.

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RISING

Spirit, Voice, Stirrings in the Movement for Justice

Performance & Conversation with Regina M. Laroche
Saturday, March 17, 2018

A LENTEN OFFERING
By Orchard Ridge UCC & Good Shepherd Lutheran Churches

At Orchard Ridge UCC, 1501 Gilbert Road, Madison, WI
8:30 am - 12:30 pm
$20

For registration, more info, or scholarship request contact:

RISING is an invitation into encounters:
Encounter the potential & torment of a country built at once upon a beautiful dream, as well as devastating injustice.
Encounter narratives & strength of marginalized communities.
Encounter society's trauma untended wounds injustices, inequities, & divisions.
Encounter complexities within ourselves.
Encounter the power of connections, intersections; and the risks & gifts of relationship.
Encounter the possibilities for the deep work of healing & change.
~ Story, song, dance and media excerpts
~ Embodied community building for sacred conversation and connection
~ Shared conversation and story for healing and action
Easter Flower Order Form

We will be decorating our sanctuary with many different kinds of flowers again this year. We invite you to donate to this in honor or memory of a loved one.

Name_________________________________________________________

# of plants______at $15 each  Total enclosed______

In Honor________________________________________________________

In Memory_______________________________________________________

Check one:

___I will collect my plant after worship on Easter Sunday.

___My plant may be given away.

Please return form to the church office no later than Sunday, March 18