

PASTOR'S PAGE: Membership Matters

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ...God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body.”

1 Corinthians 12:12, 18-20

I always conclude our new member classes with a brief Bible study on 1 Corinthians 12:12-20, which describes what congregational membership means from a biblical perspective. To be sure, membership means more than one thing. Oak Harbor Lutheran Church is a 501c3 non-profit corporation registered with the state of Washington and the Internal Revenue Service. As such, we have certain responsibilities and obligations, including maintaining accurate membership records, with membership defined by the legal language articulated in our constitution. In this way, our congregation is not unlike any number of other organizations in which one might be a member. The biblical perspective on membership, however, goes much deeper, and we could all use a reminder of this from time to time.

In 1 Corinthians 12, St. Paul describes membership in organic, relational terms rather than legal or constitutional ones. Members of a Christian congregation are more than like-minded, dues-paying people whose names appear on the same membership list. Paul teaches that we are members in the same way hands and feet and eyes and ears are members of a body. As members of a body, we are meant to be connected, attached, and interdependent in the same way these various body parts function together. Membership cannot be understood apart from connection to the body.

This connection happens at the most basic level in worship, as the Holy Spirit calls and gathers us to receive Christ's gifts together. While worship attendance should never be undertaken begrudgingly as an obligation, neither is it merely a matter of your felt needs. We gather because that is who we are as a body. We gather in-person, unless there are legitimately prohibitive extenuating circumstances, because worship is about more than consuming content. We gather because the other parts of the body depend on us, even if only for the reminder that we are not alone. We gather because we are members of a body which only truly comes to life when we are connected to one another, and there is no more powerful way for Christians to be connected to one another than when we are praying together, singing together, hearing the Word together, receiving Holy Communion together. By coming together in this way as members of the body you help give life to other members, even as Christ fills needs in your own life which

you may not have felt until they were filled.

This connection also happens as we share the gifts, talents, and interests we bring as individual members. It is always amazing to me how God assembles the body in such a way that congregational life can flourish. We have people who are good at playing instruments. We have people who are good at fixing things. We have people who are good with numbers. We have people who enjoy teaching children, or working in the kitchen, or doing landscaping. Even simple things like praying over the prayer list, which my grandmother did until the end of her life at 94 years old when she could no longer leave her home, are valuable contributions to the body. No one person has to be good at or interested in or available for everything, but when we each bring our gifts to the body, it comes to life. I am grateful for all the ways our members have so generously shared themselves with the body. Thank you!

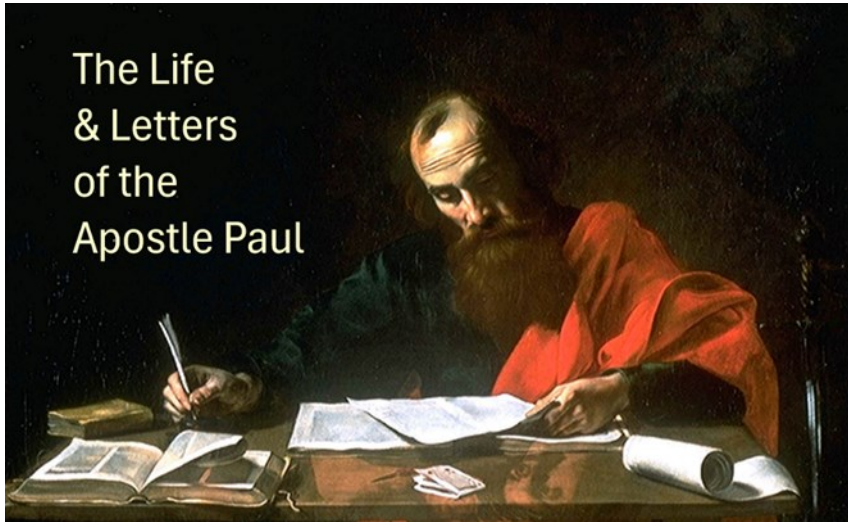
As members of a body, we sometimes let each other down. Sometimes we hurt each other. Feet step on hands. Fingers poke eyes. Even when it is unintentional it is painful. But this too is part of being the body. We should never excuse purposefully hurtful behavior, but pinches and pokes are inevitable as part of a body. Instead of trying to escape the body by withdrawing from it, this is an opportunity for real Christian discipleship. It is an opportunity to practice grace. It is an opportunity to implement that part of the Lord's Prayer where Jesus teaches us to pray, "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." To be clear, I am not saying that leaving a congregation is always bad or wrong or a failure of Christian discipleship. There are many good reasons for affiliating with one branch of the body or another. But because the body of Christ is made up entirely of sinners, there will always be crosses to bear, and it is only in bearing them that we come to receive the new life Christ brings.

Membership matters. You are more than a member of a 501c3 non-profit corporation. You are a member of a body, and it is in connection with that body that the Christian life is lived.

- Pastor Jeffrey R. Spencer



ADULT EDUCATION IN FEBRUARY



Our adult education class continues in February with a survey of the life and letters of the Apostle Paul. We meet in the church library on Sunday mornings from 9:15am-10:15am. Bring your Bibles and join us!

Feb. 2: 1&2 Thessalonians

Feb. 9: 1&2 Corinthians

Feb. 16: Romans

Feb. 23: The Prison Letters
(Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon)

Mar. 2: The Pastoral Letters (1&2 Timothy, Titus)

LUTH YOUTH SNOWBALL FIGHT!

OHLIC's 4th annual Youth Indoor Snowball Fight will be held **Feb. 2,** at 4 PM. Pizza will follow at 5 PM. Confirmation will follow at 6 PM

Middle School and High School youth are invited to compete to claim the **Coveted** (*but not in a breaking-the-commandments kind of way*) **Snow Globe Award.**

Please **RSVP** with the church office if you plan to attend

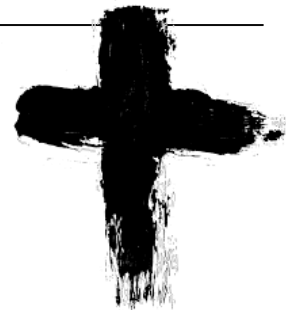


QUEST CLUB!

QUEST CLUB is open to youth of all skill levels, **ages 12 and up.** Join the Dead Sea Squirrels adventuring party in a TTRPG game based on Dungeons & Dragons rules as they travel through the lands and time of the Bible on a quest to track down the missing Magi and discover more about a mysterious prophecy. For more information contact Beth, beth@oakharborlutheran.org. **New players:** Sign-up ahead is preferred for character creation but not required.

We meet twice a month in the education wing. **This month's meetings will be: FRIDAYS, FEBRUARY 7 & 21 3:00-5:00 PM**

LOOKING AHEAD TO LENT



SAVE THE DATES!

Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday** on March 5. We will have services at **Noon and 7pm.**

Midweek Lenten services and soup suppers will begin Wednesday, **March 12.** Watch for sign-up sheets in the narthex in late February.

Youth & Family Lenten **Pretzel Night** (dinner provided) will be Sunday, **March 9, 4-6 PM.**

Don't let Lent take you by surprise! Mark your calendars for these important dates!

OHLC WELCOMES FIVE NEW MEMBERS!

Last month we were blessed to receive five new members at OHLC: Jack Beesley, Michael deAnguera, Kelly Lau, Penny Lau, and Andrew Leitz. Please make a point of welcoming these new friends to OHLC!

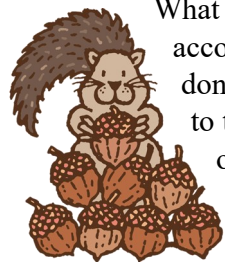


A FOND FAREWELL

We bid farewell to Rev. Jay and Trudy Decker who have relocated to Lynnwood. Their last official Sunday with us was January 19. Jay spent many years as the presiding minister for the Coupeville worship service as well as continuing with visitation duties up through even last month. Trudy has been strongly involved in Deborah Circle, handbell choir, and Lutheran World Relief along with always generously lending a hand where it is needed. We are beyond grateful for their contributions to our church community and wish them God's blessings in this next chapter.

GRATEFUL FOR YOUR GIVING!

The final numbers are in on our 2024 budget, and we had a very strong finish, with offerings exceeding expenses. Your weekly and/or monthly giving and your year-end gifts have been received with gratitude as a vote of confidence in our ministry together and are so appreciated.



What happens to that "surplus?" It remains in our checking account as a cushion for those months when our offerings don't cover our expenses, which typically happens from time to time during the fiscal year. It ensures that we can meet our financial obligations throughout the year.

Thank you so very much for your continued faithfulness and generosity in funding the ministry we share.

Giving statements for your 2024 offerings were sent out on January 16. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to give us a call.

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING RECAP & ELECTION RESULTS

Thanks to all who attended our semi-annual meeting on January 19. Here's a recap of the business we conducted:

- + Our **2025 budget** was approved.
- + Bruce Holroyd and Rev. Jay and Trudy Decker were presented with the **Servus Dei (Servant of God) award** for their many valuable contributions to the life and ministry of Oak Harbor Lutheran Church.
- + Kathy Holroyd and Karol Pulliam were elected as our **Josephine** representatives.
- + Donna Aspery and Mike Dilley were elected as our **Lutherwood** representatives.
- + Mike Dilley, Fran Leukhardt, and Gaye Rodriguey were elected as **voting members to the NWWA Synod Assembly**. *(Our allotment established by the synod this year consisted of two females and one male. At the next assembly we will send two males and one female.)*

Thanks to all who attended, all our candidates, to our council for their hard work this past year, and to our council president, Paul Senness, for ably chairing our meeting.



OHLC 2024 STATISTICS

We didn't include the following information in our January 2024 semi-annual meeting reports. This was something we got out of the habit of doing during the Covid years. We will start doing it again in 2025. In the meantime, here is the statistical information some of you have requested:

Deaths (3):

Karola Cornelius	02/22/24
Kyle Tomlin	05/23/24
Roger Anglum	11/05/24

Transferred Membership/Moved (3):

Dale Zimmerman
Katie Zimmerman
Cheryl Mensler

Baptisms (8):

Emelyn Payne	01/08/24
Brynlee Donwen	03/31/24
Zachary Badaouie	09/02/24
Madeline Hart	11/10/24
Alisandra Claycomb	11/24/24
Joshua Claycomb	11/24/24
Annabelle Claycomb	11/24/24
Benjamin Claycomb	11/24/24

Average Worship Attendance:

8:00 AM service:	47
10:30 AM service:	90
Total during program year:	137
9:00 AM summer service:	123

New Members (15):

Theresa Butz
Bruce Gayhart
Lori Gayhart
John Hermandorfer
Zona Raelson
John Ryan
Tammy Snyder
Bruno Bechthold
Kyleigh Butz
Betty Jo Shaddy-Brown
David Russell
Marti Russell
Christopher Arndt
Gretchen Arndt
Karol Pulliam

Members Confirmed (2):

Dylan Totten
Don Lesetmoe

We had a net gain of 17 members in 2024. Thanks be to God!

OHLC WOMEN

Opportunities for Fellowship, Study & Service



BLANKET WORKSHOP:

You're invited to join, **Tuesday & Wednesday, Feb. 4 & 5, 9:30 AM** in the fellowship hall. Sewing experience isn't a requirement, and new helpers are always appreciated.

CIRCLES IN FEBRUARY

Deborah Circle meets each Thursday at 1PM in the Library. All are welcome! Questions? Contact Gaye Rodriguey at gaye@tobysuds.com

Feb 6 "Faithfulness," Session one, page 16, "Faith where you are: Ruth and Naomi," Jan/Feb 2025 **Gather** magazine.

Feb 13 **Grateful Gatherings**, "Make Space for Love".

Feb 20 "Faithfulness," Session one, page 18, Jan/Feb 2025 **Gather** magazine,

Feb 27 "Faithfulness," Session one, page 20, Jan/Feb 2025 **Gather** magazine,

Lydia Circle meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 5:30 PM in the Prayer Room. We will continue with *Women of the New Testament* (LifeGuide Bible Series) by Phyllis J. Le Peau. In March we will begin a new book in the series; *Psalms: Prayers of the Heart* by Eugene H. Peterson. All are welcome! Contact Peg Fosnaugh at 360-929-1653 if you have any questions.

Feb 4 Chapter 9, Euodia and Syntyche
Feb 18 Chapter 10, Priscilla

HIS KIDS PRESCHOOL

A Ministry of Oak Harbor Lutheran Church

Welcome back from Christmas Break and onto a new year, 2025! This January we started many new exciting topics, including our Special Student of the Week and lessons on community helpers!

This month's special students were Karter S. and Hannah H., both return students who are getting ready to enter Kindergarten next year! The Special Student program involves bringing in a poster sharing fun details about the student and their family, they bring in show and tell, they are the designated line leader for the week, and many other fun and memorable responsibilities! We love highlighting each of our students, and teaching them how important it is to know and care for their peers around them.



Community helpers this month included learning about doctors, dentists, firefighters, and the police; to name a few. January 15th, we had a classroom visit from the Oak Harbor Police Dept., who taught students about stranger danger, calling 911, showed them their tools and vehicles that help them do their jobs, and explained that they don't just "lock up bad guys" they contribute in many ways to the safety and health of our community. We so appreciate their visit during such a busy season and their humor in the creative questions preschoolers come up with.



Our field trip this month took us to the Fire Station to get a tour of the station and a presentation on all the tools and vehicles they use for their jobs. This is always a highlight for the school year; larger-than-life trucks, heavy equipment and clothing, and the fast-paced need for response in this job catch kids' attention. They learn again about calling 911, creating a safety plan and meeting spot in case of a fire, and what steps to take to stay safe if there is ever a fire and smoke. Lessons like this give students an age-appropriate toolbox of information to stay safe in emergencies.

Students also spent time learning about winter-related topics: the North Pole, polar bears, penguins, snow, and stars. Their crafts following these topics line the classroom and create a sparkly winter setting. We also begin lessons on the 5 senses; with more to learn in February about how our senses help us navigate the world.

Here's how our students completed the sentence, "If I were a snowflake floating in the sky, I would like to land on..."

Maren: on a fuzzy cat's fur	Colten: on a turtle
Liam: on the ground	Everett: on the snow
Abby: on my house	Lennox: on a roof of a house made of candy
Karter: in the desert	Rylan: on a stone
Wren: on the snow	Dallas: in a puddle
Branch: on a river	Sadie: on a house
Theo: on a goose and then a lamb	Harper: on the ground so Michael can make a snowman
Mylo: in the playground at preschool	



Thank you for your support this January as His Kids was Ministry of the Month. I look forward to being able to update you year after year.

Wishing you all a happy and blessed 2025,
Ms. Jasmine, Ms. Elva, Ms. Michelle, and Ms. Debbie

TAKE NOTE IN FEBRUARY



- * **Included in this newsletter** are *Prayer Ventures* and *The Spirit* for February.
- * OHLC's card makers, the **Church Mice Stampers**, meet on Tuesdays, **Feb. 11 & 25**, starting at 10:00 AM in the library.
- * **The Brotherhood of St. Bernard**, OHLC's men's Bible study fellowship, meets Tuesdays, **Feb. 11 & 25**, at noon in the fellowship hall.
- * **The One Thing Book Group** meets at 6:30 PM on Tuesday, **Feb. 11**, to consider *A Dog's Devotion*, by Suzanne Elshult.
- * **Stephen Ministry** will meet on Thursday, **Feb. 13** at 4pm in the Library. The group will be discussing Part 1, Chapters 1-5, from the new Ministry book, *Caring Assertiveness* by Kenneth C. Haugk, Joel P. Bretscher, and Robert A. Musser.
- * **Munchy Monday** will not meet on Monday, **Feb. 17**.
- * **The deadline for articles** for the March 2025 newsletter is Monday, **Feb. 17**.

COMPASSION MINISTRY



MINISTRY OF THE MONTH:

One Bellingham Lutheran pastor's search in 1946 for an adequate place to hold a summer youth outing and the discovery of Captain Alexander Roy's fishing resort on Lake Samish began what today is known as Lutherwood Camp and Retreat Center. In partnership with western Washington Lutheran congregations (including OHLC!), Lutherwood has grown into a year-round outdoor ministry, renewing all in the Holy Spirit through education, adventure, service, and prayer.

A Place to Experience Grace



Whether you love tubing on Lake Samish, sleeping under the stars, or have never been to camp before, they have something for everyone (including adults)!



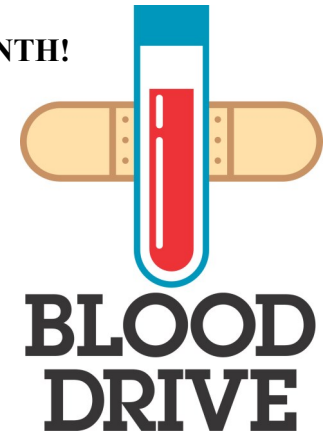
Applications now open for all positions, including a new opportunity for recent high school graduates! Lutherwood needs counselors, lifeguards, program staff, and behind-the-scenes folks like resource staff and kitchen staff.

COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE THIS MONTH!

Bloodworks Northwest offers blood donation clinics at OHLC on Feb. 6&7 and 13&14.

Donations are by appointment only; spaces are available!

To schedule an appt., visit <https://www.Bloodworksnw.org/giveblood> or call 800-398-7888.



LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR



LOVE AS IF...

-by Vinita Hampton Wright

- LOVE* as if loving is the first thing on your to-do list.
- LOVE* as if you have no other plan but to love.
- LOVE* as if you are confident that love makes good things happen.
- LOVE* as if this is your first opportunity to love.
- LOVE* as if this is your last opportunity to love.
- LOVE* as if loving can heal all wounds.
- LOVE* as if loving is your first purpose on earth.
- LOVE* as if loving is your favorite choice.
- LOVE* as if you have that kind of power.
- LOVE* as if it will keep the earth spinning in vast, beautiful space.

Vinita Hampton Wright is a veteran editor and writer of books and articles on Ignatian spirituality. She leads workshops and retreats on writing, creative process, and prayer. Vinita and her husband, Jim Wright, live in Chicago.

<http://www.loyolapress.com/authors/vinita-hampton-wright>

Help Me Love Another, Lord, As You Love Me



There's a heart, waiting and wanting;
There's a heart filled with despair.
There's a heart, lonely and frightened
With need for one to care.
There's a heart, lost and forgotten
With a yearning for a friend.
There's a heart crying for healing, Lord,
That only you can send.

Help me love another, Lord, as you love me.
Help me touch a hurting heart so caringly.
And when I look into their eyes of pain or questioning,
Lord, may I see you looking back at me.

There's a soul that needs forgiveness;
There's a soul searching for peace.
There's a soul that's deeply hurting
And it cries for pain to cease.
There's a soul looking to me, Lord,
For my care, my listening.

There's a soul searching for wholeness;
Lord, please reach that soul through me.

Please help me love another, Lord, as you love me.
Help me touch a troubled heart so patiently.
Now when I look into their eyes, awakened by your grace,
I know I'm seeing you, Lord, face to face.

Marty, Stephen Minister | Birmingham, Michigan

FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP SERVICES



Continuing heartfelt thanks to everyone for sponsoring our chancel flowers and the occasional bouquets on the organ console. We are blessed to enjoy fresh flowers during our worship services. You may take them home after the 10:30 service for your own enjoyment or give to a friend, or leave them in the church office to brighten the coming week.

Please check the flower chart outside Pastor Jeff's office door and find a Sunday you'd be willing to sponsor. I'll contact you regarding your choice of colors and the wording you'd like listed in the bulletin.

-Peg Fosnaugh

LIBRARY NEWS

We so appreciate your generous donations, in the past, to our library! But we, unfortunately, CANNOT accept any more materials at this time, as we do not have the room.

If you have materials to donate, may we suggest thrift stores, adult care homes, or trading books with friends.

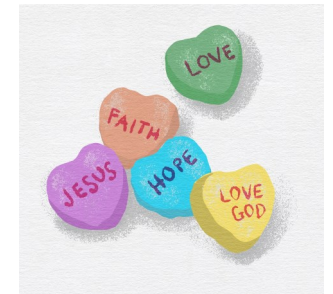


Thank you!
Your Library Team,
Kathy Holroyd, Colleen Pedlar, Carol Reafs

BEYOND CANDY HEARTS AND ROSES

The first half of February seems dominated by pink and red, cards and candy. But people not in a loving romantic relationship can sometimes feel left out of the festivities. Of course, all people need love — and certainly love is not limited to the romantic kind. Author Leo Buscaglia, who became known as “Dr. Love” for writing about the topic, said, “Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

Jesus taught that loving one another is second only in importance to loving God (Matthew 22:37-40), and that when we love one another, God lives in us (1 John 4:12). There are so many ways to do that — beyond candy hearts and roses! But Valentine's Day is as good a reminder as any.



ChurchArtPro, February 2022



WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

February 2 Presentation of Our Lord

8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Tom Piper Acolyte: Abby Gray Healing Prayer: M. Stroud, M. Nowicki	Computer: Donna Aspery Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Moira Bartrand Communion Asst.: Bobbi Miller Healing Prayer: C. Reafs, T. Piper	Computer: Ted Smith Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud

February 9

8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Mike Dilley Acolyte: Anna Richards	Computer: Emma Norman Organ/Piano: Verna Morgan
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Jan Heideger Communion Asst.: Rita Cline	Computer: Totten Organ/Piano: Verna Morgan

February 16

8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Jeff Margraf Acolyte.: Matthew Richards	Computer: Lisa Margraf Organ/Piano: Verna Morgan
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Carol Fitzgerald Communion Asst.: Rita Carter	Computer: Ted Smith Organ/Piano: Verna Morgan

February 23

8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Marty Leukhardt Acolyte.: Elizabeth Richards	Computer: Lucas Stone Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Rita Cline Communion Asst.: Louis Bartrand	Computer: Totten Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud

Little Lutheran bags in February: Donna Aspery

Thank you to Kerri Totten for January!

This month's decorative font is : **CHORUS GIRL**

FINANCIAL REPORT

DECEMBER

	<i>December</i>	<i>Year to date</i>
Income	\$ 70,602	\$ 452,685
Outgo	<u>36,328</u>	<u>420,486</u>
	\$ <u>34,234</u>	\$ <u>32,199</u>

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

JANUARY

Date	8:00 AM	10:30 AM
Dec 29	35	82
Jan 5	46	91
Jan 12	58	103
Jan 19	51	95
Jan 26	43	80 101
Avg. Att.	47	90

Average Sunday attendance: 137

Christmas Eve worship, Dec. 24, 2024

4:00 PM - 120
7:00 PM - 150
10:00 PM - 78

Christmas Day worship, Dec. 25, 2024

10:00 AM - 27



LESSER FESTIVALS & COMMEMORATIONS

FEBRUARY

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 The Presentation of our Lord | 18 Martin Luther, renewer of the Church, 1546 |
| 3 Ansgar, Bishop of Hamburg, missionary to Denmark & Sweden, 865 | 23 Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr, 156 |
| 5 The Martyrs of Japan, 1597 | 25 Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess, 1921 |
| 14 Cyril, monk, 869; Methodius, bishop 855; missionaries to the Slavs | |

February



2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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I will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever;

Psalm 89

2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Worship 8:00 Sunday School 9:15 Adult Ed. 9:15 Worship 10:30 Youth Indoor Snowball Fight/pizza/ 4:00 Confirmation following Girl Scouts 46518 4:00 CA/library 7:30	12:30 M.M. set-up 1:30 Munchy Monday 3:00 Grief group, library 6:00 WIYS, till 9 PM 6:00 North Whidbey NA/ Library	9:30 Blanket Workshop 5:30 Lydia Circle 5:30 Al Anon	9:30 Blanket Workshop 11:30 OHLC Staff 4:00 Chancel Choir	Bloodworks NW 10 AM – 4 PM fellowship hall 1:00 Deborah Circle 3:00 <i>She Sharps</i> 7:00 Compassion Team 7:00 NA	Bloodworks NW 10 AM – 4 PM fellowship hall 3:00 QUEST CLUB	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Worship 8:00 Sunday School 9:15 Adult Ed. 9:15 Worship 10:30 CA/library 7:30	12:30 M.M. set-up 1:30 Munchy Monday 3:00 Grief group, library 6:00 WIYS, till 9 PM 6:00 North Whidbey NA/ library	10:00 Church Mice Stampers 12:00 Brotherhood of St. Bernard 3:00 SPiN B.O.D. 5:30 Al Anon	11:30 OHLC Staff 4:00 Chancel Choir	Bloodworks NW 10 AM – 4 PM fellowship hall 1:00 Deborah Circle 3:00 <i>She Sharps</i> 4:00 Stephen Ministry 6:00 Council 7:00 NA/education wing	Bloodworks NW 10 AM – 4 PM fellowship hall	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Worship 8:00 Sunday School 9:15 Adult Ed. 9:15 Worship 10:30 Girl Scouts 46518 4:00 CA/library 7:30	President's Day Church Office Closed <i>No Munchy Monday</i> 3:00 Grief group, library 6:00 private tutoring 6:30 WIYS 7:00 North Whidbey NA/ library	5:30 Lydia Circle 5:30 Al Anon	11:30 OHLC Staff 4:00 Chancel Choir	1:00 Deborah Circle 3:00 <i>She Sharps</i> 7:00 NA	3:00 QUEST CLUB	
23	24	25	26	27	28	HIS KIDS PRESCHOOL M,T,W,TH, F 9:00 AM – 12:15 PM No School Feb 17
Worship 8:00 Sunday School 9:15 Adult Ed. 9:15 Worship 10:30 CA/library 7:30	12:30 M.M. set-up 1:30 Munchy Monday 3:00 Grief group, library 6:00 private tutoring 6:30 WIYS 7:00 North Whidbey NA/ library	10:00 Church Mice Stampers 12:00 Brotherhood of St. Bernard 5:30 Al Anon	9:00 newsletter assembly 11:30 OHLC Staff 4:00 Chancel Choir	1:00 Deborah Circle 3:00 <i>She Sharps</i> 7:00 NA	1:00 Library Team	