Listen up! FPC wants feedback from you

What do we do well as a congregation? What could we do better? How does our vision of where God is leading First Presbyterian Church intersect with the future direction of the city of Oak Ridge and beyond?

These are the types of questions that will be posed during congregation-wide listening sessions this month. Three sessions are scheduled:

- Sunday, Sept. 17, 12:15 p.m., in the fellowship hall immediately after Sunday school (includes pizza lunch)
- Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2:00 p.m., in the fellowship hall
- Saturday, Sept. 23, as one activity during our all-church retreat

Childcare will be provided for each session.

Five years have passed since the last round of listening sessions, which took place shortly after Sharon began as FPC's pastor in 2012. From those sessions came a number of items, including the direction for FPC's educational missions endeavor, which includes our involvement with Roane State Community College and packing food for school children each month.

The Planning committee, which is anchoring the effort, invites everyone to attend at least one of the 90-minute sessions.

Listening sessions with the larger community—for example, groups and organizations that in some way intersect with FPC through our facilities or members—will be held later this fall.

Fall retreat—fellowship, play, study

Where do food, fellowship, adventure, study, and major-league fun intersect? At the all-church retreat, which will take place Saturday, Sept. 23, at Grace Point Conference Center near Kingston (a 30-mile drive).

Activities based on the “Intersections” retreat theme are scheduled for all ages, including children and youth, who will have their own programming in the children’s activity barn at Grace Point. A nursery will be available all day.

The morning will begin with a continental breakfast at 9:00 a.m., followed by an in-depth look at our theme, which will springboard from Frederick Buechner's quote (see “From the Pastor” on page 2).

Lunch and free time during the early afternoon will afford participants the opportunity to swim in the new Grace Point pool, hike, read, sew, visit, and more.

Word has it on good authority that some friendly competition is also in the works.

Mid-afternoon will include a listening session, and the final activity will be a Communion service. We'll be heading back to Oak Ridge no later than 4:30 p.m.

Optional this year is the opportunity to stay overnight in the Grace Point Retreat House.
From your pastor

Perhaps you have witnessed or been involved in one yourself—the occasional near miss or fender bender at an intersection. If you hang around the church office long enough, you will inevitably hear horns blare, tires screech, and, sometimes, metal crunch as drivers maneuver through the nearby intersection of Lafayette Drive and the Turnpike with varying degrees of success. Common reasons cited for accidents include a distracted or aggressive driver or someone at the wheel who misjudges the distance from or speed of other vehicles.

It pays to pay attention at intersections. That holds true for other kinds of junctions, as well, from mundane to major interchanges in our lives where what has been meets up with what is or will be: a serious health diagnosis, a new school or home or job, a budding relationship or one that has ended, the birth or death of a loved one, and more. For folks in Texas and Louisiana right now, it’s Hurricane Harvey. With each intersection come questions: Which direction should I go? What are the traffic signals? Who has the right of way? Do I race on through because I don’t have time to do otherwise, or do I stop or at least slow down enough to make sure I’m not going to collide with someone else?

We are approaching intersections from a number of directions this month here at First Presbyterian Church. “Intersections” is the theme of our all-church retreat at Grace Point on Sept. 23. A popular quote by Frederick Buechner provides a great teaser: The place God calls you is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.

In addition, you will see an invitation to attend one or more FPC listening sessions later in the month. It’s a good exercise to do every five years or so as a way to discern and keep fresh in our minds and hearts the direction God appears to be leading us as a congregation.

I look forward to seeing you there!

With a grateful heart,
Sharon

For sale: six-burner, Southbend commercial-grade gas stove with little wear. If you know of a restaurant or catering business that might be interested, please contact Fred Haywood at 865-850-4013.

Photos of the sanctuary, before (right) and after (far right) the recent renovations.
FPC Spotlight: Grimes Slaughter

Each month we feature an individual, couple, or family that are part of the FPC faith community.

Grimes Slaughter, 92, was born and raised in Farmville, N.C. His father was a Methodist minister “for decades,” Grimes said. “He worked into his 90s and lived to be 102.”

Grimes’ mother worked hard in the church as “a Methodist minister’s wife, and she was head of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union organization in North Carolina.” Through education and example, the WCTU, which was founded in 1874, sought to obtain pledges from Americans to totally abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. “She was a teetotler and so am I,” said Grimes.

Grimes served in the Navy during World War II, spending time in Hong Kong and Shanghai. He holds a B.S. degree in electrical engineering and master’s and doctoral degrees in physics from Duke University. With only a B.S. degree, he was hired to teach electrical engineering at Duke for a couple years. In 1956 he moved to Oak Ridge and worked for 26 years in the Physics Division at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. From 1970 to 1982, when he retired, Grimes studied the energy levels and structures of various nuclei at the Oak Ridge Electron Linear Accelerator at ORNL. So far his retirement has lasted 35 years.

In 1990 he married Ruth Slusher, who worked in mathematics and computer programming at ORNL. Both were 65 years old. They enjoyed spending time at Grimes’ cabin on Watts Bar Lake. Ruth, who was a member of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, died in 2014.

Grimes has been attending First Presbyterian Church for more than 50 years. He still sings tenor in the choir, including solos and duets. He set up and updated FPC’s first website.

As a former licensed pilot, he has owned and flown three small airplanes, including a Twin Comanche that had a 1200-mile range. He sometimes flew it between Florida and the Virgin Islands. He also played tennis for decades, from the time he was in college until recently when he injured his shoulder.

Grimes has traveled to Alaska, Hawaii, Canada, several European countries, Australia, New Zealand, and Ecuador’s Galapagos Islands. He said he was recently moved emotionally when the congregation sang “Happy birthday” to him.

Holy Chow groups gathering for lunch after church
From Chris: Welcome Baby Sydney!

Julie and I were ecstatic to welcome Sydney Paxton Black into the world on Aug. 4 at 9:19 p.m. She measured 21.5 inches long and weighed 7.6 pounds. Since her birth we have been enjoying her immensely, and learning what it means to parent a newborn. It has been the most fun activity in the world and we are loving every minute of it.

We are so thankful for your continued prayers and support. It is a real blessing to be a part of such a wonderful community of faith during this great time in our lives. We look forward to introducing Sydney to the whole church family very soon.

Thankfully,

Chris

Welcome Ada Margaret!

Ada Margaret Billings arrived at 12:02 a.m. on Aug. 9, born to first-time parents Jay Billings and Paige Landry. She weighed in at 7 lbs. 4 oz., 20.5 inches long. Congratulations Jay and Paige!
Christian education

Midweek Bible study
The Wednesday Bible study meets regularly at 5:45 p.m. in the parlor. This month we'll be taking a look at the Letter to Colossians in the New Testament. Childcare is available.

Waking Up White—topic of special CE series
In her book Waking Up White, and Finding Myself in the Story of Race, author Debby Irving describes her struggle to understand racial tension in her personal and professional relationships. Although the book was published in 2014, its lessons seem particularly relevant today in light of recent conflicts in our state and nation. A four-week study of the book, which is available on Amazon.com, will begin on Sunday, Sept. 10, at 11:15 a.m. in room 102, Activities building. We encourage all adults interested in this topic to consider attending.

The Early Birds, which meet at 9:00 a.m. in room 6, Sanctuary building, before Sunday worship, are studying the Book of Exodus. The Seekers, which meet at 11:15 a.m. in room 6, are studying the Gospel of Luke.

High school Bible study
Our weekly high school youth Bible study resumes meeting on Sunday, Sept. 10, at 7:00 p.m., for food, fellowship, and in-depth discussion of what the Bible says about questions regarding society, politics, culture, and faith. If you know of any students grades 9-12 who might be interested, please invite them!
If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call or e-mail Chris at the church office.

FPC offers Alpha course at MCRRC
FPC will offer The Alpha Course at Morgan County Residential Recovery Center on Sunday evenings, beginning Sept. 10. Alpha is a 12-week course on the basics of Christianity, emphasizing small group discussion following each DVD presentation. As in the previous Alpha Course, MCRRC residents will lead the discussions and serve as fellowship hosts.
On Saturday, Oct. 21, FPC will host a daylong retreat, the topic of which will be the Holy Spirit. Many congregational volunteers will be needed to prepare meals, bring snacks, and attend worship. If you would like to participate in the course, please contact Rosalyn McKeown-Ice at rosalynmckeown@hotmail.com or 482-6535.

New nursery staff—
Here is a little bit about one of our new nursery workers, Brittany Overbay. Please welcome her to our church family if you haven’t done so already.

Hi! My name is Brittany Overbay and I currently work full-time at Early Headstart with Anderson County schools, serving children ages six weeks to four years old. I have prior experience with children of all ages. I am also a part-time student at Roane State Community College working on my CDA (child development associate) certification.
I hope to go on to get my associates degree in early childhood education. My husband and I have a son who will be two this December.

Parents, see page 10 for the worship volunteer schedule, including acolytes and First Steps leaders.

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The Banner

PC(USA) response to Hurricane Harvey

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is in touch with presbyteries in affected areas of Texas to offer assistance. We are standing by with resources and National Response Team members ready to deploy upon invitation and when it is safe to do so.

For those who wish to support PDA’s emergency response and recovery efforts, gifts can be designated to DR000169-Harvey. We need your help. Please give generously.

If you prefer to mail a check, you may send it to:
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
PO Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

You may also call us Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (EST), at 800-872-3283 and donate by phone. For updates, please go to pda.pcusa.org.

Please join us in praying for courage for those who are suffering; for wisdom and diligence among agencies and individuals assessing damage and directing relief efforts; and for generosity to flow as powerfully as rivers and streams, as we respond to the deep human needs left in the wake of the storm.

Rev. Dr. Laurie Ann Kraus
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Confessional banners

A continuation from the August newsletter on the history of FPC’s confessional banners.

The Confessional Banners of the Presbyterian church symbolize nine creeds and confessions from the early Christian era to the twentieth century. These historic statements of faith represent our Christian heritage from the Roman Empire to the Reformation, including contemporary reflections of faith in our own time.

On Oct. 29, Reformation Sunday, our congregation will dedicate an FPC-made banner that commemorates the Confession of Belhar, the 10th creed and confession that promotes peace and reconciliation and that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved in 2016. In this issue of The Banner, the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth creeds and confessions are reviewed below and on page 7.

2nd Helvetic Confession (Switzerland, 1566)

Written in 1561 by Heinrich Bullinger, minister of the church in Zurich, this confession became public when used to defend Frederick the Elector in his heresy trial in Germany. Because the Lutherans in Germany deemed the Heidelberg Catechism too Reformed, this confession used more moderate language in exonerating Frederick. In 1566, Switzerland adopted the Second Helvetic as its confession of faith.

Blue and white are the heraldic colors of ancient Switzerland. The cross represents the discussion of salvation in the confession. The hand and burning heart traditionally symbolize John Calvin, father of Presbyterianism in the Swiss homeland. The lamp is a symbol for knowledge and discipline. The shepherd’s crook and the pasture represent the pastoral ministry and the flock’s care for its own members. And the chalice and the waves symbolize Holy Communion and Baptism.
Theological Declaration of Barmen

Written in 1934 by a group of church leaders in Germany in defense of the Lordship of Christ over and against the tyranny of the state and its co-opting of the church, this declaration challenged the union of Christianity, nationalism, and militarism most German Christians took for granted. One hundred thirty-nine delegates comprising ordained ministers, church members, and university professors met in Gemarke Church, Barmen, in the city of Wupperthal.

The declaration proclaims boldly the church’s freedom in Jesus Christ, who is Lord of every area of life, thereby condemning the German Christian accommodation to the Nazi regime. The signers of this statement of faith did so at great risk to their reputations and lives.

The crossed-out swastika and the rising cross represent a protest and witness against Nazi tyranny and any effort to take the role of God and control of the church; and the fire, the suffering and death that follow from defense of the faith against tyranny, as was the case for some of the Barmen signers. But the cross survives such persecution and crisis of war, rising out of the flames.

Confession of 1967

In response to the turbulent decade of the 1960s, the United Presbyterian Church in the USA (UPCUSA) produced this statement of faith, a revision to the Westminster Confession, using contemporary language and expressions of faith.

Following several years of amendments, additions, and changes, 90% of the presbyteries voted to approve the Confession of 1967 at the 179th General Assembly in 1967. The key Scripture of this confession is “In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself . . .” (2 Corinthians 5:19), which thematically proclaims the church’s faithful and active witness to the modern world.

The blue, red, and gold colors represent the official seal of UPCUSA; the golden hand reaching down (top center, repeated from the Nicene Banner), God relating to God’s world; the crown, God’s rule (repeated from the Westminster Banner); the nail-scarred hand, the death and victory of Christ as he reconciles the world; the four hands of different colors, the clasped hands, and the green circle at the foot of the cross, the reconciled world because God’s act of reconciliation is the starting point and theme of the Confession of 1967; and the stars and planets on the blue background, the Space Age setting of this Confession.
Session approved

- the Property and Maintenance committee’s proposal to replace the fellowship hall kitchen range with a Kitchen Aid dual-fuel, six-burner residential stove for $5600 (including the installation cost), with the source of funding to be determined by the Finance committee. The replacement addresses ongoing safety concerns about the current stove, which include the hazard of open-flame pilot lights, as well as the difficulty of lighting them.
- the Worship committee request to direct the treasurer to move the remaining money from the Choir Robes fund into the Special Music fund.

Session news: new stove for fellowship hall, fund consolidation

Coming on Oct. 8: A season of Fearless Generosity

Now to God who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20)

Stewardship season for FPC begins on Oct. 8!
The theme is “Fearless Generosity.”

We will learn how to become more faithful stewards as we explore what it means to practice fearless living, fearless service, fearless sowing, and fearless giving. God is able to do far more abundantly than anything we are able to ask or even think about asking for. And God chooses to work through us to accomplish more than we can imagine!

—Tiffany Murray, chair, Stewardship committee

Hunger knows no season

The fall Hunger Fund offering will be received on Sept. 24. Your gifts help us purchase certificates from Aldi’s and Zaxby’s to assist those who request food through the church office. In addition, a small emergency food box is available in the fellowship hall pantry for those needing food on the weekend. The Hunger Fund also supports Aid to Distressed Families of Appalachian Counties (ADFAC)’s food vouchers for its clients, Second Harvest food distribution center, and four local food bank ministries.

Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church with "Hunger Fund" on the memo line or use the QR code (on page 6) to contribute online. Thank you for helping to feed the hungry in every season.

—Janet Swift, chair, Social Concerns committee

Thanks to Paul Akers, Chuck Hadden, Mike Hilliard, Dave Mullins, Matt Stone (pictured), and Dan Terpstra for helping to make the pews safe and secure in their new positions.
**Bits ‘n’ pieces**

**FPC Women’s lunch**  
On Monday, Sept. 11, FPC women will gather for lunch at 12:30 p.m. at The Soup Kitchen at Jackson Square, one of several local restaurants that donates a portion of their profits each second Monday to ADFAC.

**Dear Friends,**  
Words alone are not enough to express our gratitude for the love and support we received from our FPC family during our daughter Kate’s lymphoma treatment. Your prayers for her and your support for us were beyond measure. Kate is now in remission! God hears and answers our prayers.  
With Love, Janet Swift and Don Spong

**September Birthdays…**

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<tr>
<td>9/1</td>
<td>Colin Colverson</td>
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<td>Kate Swift-Spong</td>
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<td>9/10</td>
<td>Connie Book</td>
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<td>9/16</td>
<td>Peggy Hinkle</td>
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<td>Walt Porter</td>
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<td>Bill Bostick</td>
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<td>Peggy Hilliard</td>
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<td>9/22</td>
<td>Bob Cantrell</td>
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<td>9/24</td>
<td>Martina Ward</td>
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<td>9/26</td>
<td>Fred Haywood</td>
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<td>9/27</td>
<td>Jim Campbell</td>
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**… and anniversaries**

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>9/2</td>
<td>Ryan &amp; Wesley Tilley</td>
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<td>9/26</td>
<td>Brian &amp; Gretchen Drane</td>
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**Congratulations!**

**Wednesday Night Dinner**

The dinners begin on Oct. 4 and last for six weeks. We invite you to come share a meal with your church family. We serve dinner from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. The cost is still a bargain at $4 per person and $12 per family; children six years and under can eat for free. There is always room at the table for those who cannot pay. Feel free to come help us prepare food and fellowship. The Chop ‘n’ Chat team cooks from 9 to 11 a.m. and from 2:30 to 5 p.m. All are welcome! See you there! — Sandy Rohwer and Susan Sharp,

**Bridges out of Poverty training**

FPC is hosting a United Way training session on Thursday, Sept. 21, from noon to 2:00 p.m. in room 102, Activities building. The goal of the training is to help church staff and all “front-line” workers and volunteers better understand the plights of those living in poverty so as to offer the most appropriate assistance and support. Those who help in the church office, whether regularly or occasionally, are invited to attend, as well as anyone else at the church who might be interested. Please call Adrienne in the church office if you plan to attend.

**Food 4 Kids**

Food 4 Kids workdays coming up—September 11 and 12 at First United Methodist Church, Oak Ridge. Food 4 Kids is an outreach of the Oak Ridge City Schools, providing food for children and youth in our community who are hungry. Meet at FUMC at 1:30 p.m. on Monday to pack backpacks. On Tuesday, meet at 8:30 a.m. to deliver the backpacks to local schools. Contact Gretchen Drane at 483-1472 with questions, or just show up at FUMC.

**Thank You!**

**BOOK CLUB POTLUCK**

All are invited to a special book club meeting on Saturday, Sept. 9, 11:30 a.m., in the fellowship hall. Maria Cornelius, author of This Final Season, The Perseverance of Pat Summitt will be our guest speaker. Invite your Lady Vols and Pat Summitt fans, and please bring a dish to share for the potluck lunch before the talk.

Dear Friends,

Words alone are not enough to express our gratitude for the love and support we received from our FPC family during our daughter Kate’s lymphoma treatment. Your prayers for her and your support for us were beyond measure. Kate is now in remission! God hears and answers our prayers.

With Love, Janet Swift and Don Spong

**Fall soccer**

The FPC soccer field will be occupied by youngsters from the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings this fall, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

**Holy Chow—out to dinner**
Worship Volunteers

Sunday, September 3
Liturgist: Dave Mullins
Acolytes: Andre Darko, River Tilley
Time with Children: Sharon Youngs
First Steps: Anne Backus, Chris Black
Sound Guild: Carolyn Krause
Ushers: Team IV, led by Dennis Strickler
Counters: Fred Haywood, Gail King
Flowers: Linda Fall
Fellowship Hosts: Frances & John Drake
Opening/Closing: Mike Hilliard, Dave Mullins

Sunday, September 10
Liturgist: Andrew Brittain
Acolytes: Bert Everitt, Jarred Julien
Time with Children: Chris Black
First Steps: Chris Black
Sound Guild: Dale Hadden
Ushers: Team I, led by Irene Darko
Counters: Gene Ice, Bonnie Murray
Flowers: Dan & Peggy Terpstra
Fellowship Hosts: Eric & Wendy Myers
Opening/Closing: Mike Hilliard, Dave Mullins

Sunday, September 17
Liturgist: Colin Colverson
Acolytes: Rebecca Davenport, Nathan Myers
Time with Children: Mike Hilliard
First Steps: Chris Black
Sound Guild: Don Spong
Ushers: Team II, led by George Darko
Counters: Lou Dunlap, Bonnie Murray
Flowers: Bonnie & Syd Murray
Fellowship Hosts: Lewis & Phyllis Phillips
Opening/Closing: Lewis & Phyllis Phillips

Sunday, September 24
Liturgist: Frances Drake
Acolytes: Megan Stone, TBA
Time with Children: Gene Ice
First Steps: Chris Black
Sound Guild: Sydney Murray
Ushers: Team III, led by Joe Gray
Counters: Matt Lindsey, TBA
Flowers: Fred & Sally Haywood
Fellowship Hosts: Gail & Phillip King
Opening/Closing: Mike Hilliard, Dave Mullins

10 Things
From the HR committee: We continue our series of lesser-known facts about our wonderful staff, this month featuring Peggy Hinkle, our organist. Some may surprise you, others may make you laugh, and still others may reveal unexpected connections.

10 things you might not know about me:
1. I grew up in Halls and have lived in East Tennessee all of my life.
2. I graduated from Lee University where I was the first student to have a double major in piano and organ.
3. I have worked at Pellissippi State Community College for 28 years, and I STILL love my job!
4. My favorite color is purple. (You should see my office!)
5. My favorite food is any type of berry—strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries. Throw in a little pomegranate and I am in heaven.
6. I have three children: Jarrod, 25, who works for the City of Gatlinburg and is a computer genius; Madison, 21, a tree hugger who is pursuing her degree in forestry at the University of Tennessee, and Josiah, 18, a senior at Hardin Valley Academy who enjoys sports and computers.
7. My father, who recently passed away, worked at ORNL for 58 years. For 25 of those years, he was pastor at a church in Knoxville that he actually built.
8. I am the oldest of three children. My brother and sister both live in the area.
9. I have two cats and one dog.
10. And last, but definitely not least, Rob Lloyd, my partner of almost six years, and I met at a faculty lecture at Pellissippi State. He was producing an event at which I performed Chopin’s Revolutionary Etude. He attends FPC’s worship services when I am there playing piano and organ.
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<td>9 am Early classes</td>
<td>9:30 Coffee chat</td>
<td>10 am staff mtg</td>
<td>11:30 Al Anon</td>
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<td>7 pm Chinese Bible study</td>
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<td>10 am Worship</td>
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<td>11:15 Sun. school</td>
<td>4 pm HR mtg</td>
<td>12:15 Centering Prayer</td>
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<td>12:15 Congregation listening session</td>
<td>6 pm Social concerns mtg</td>
<td>5:30 P&amp;M mtg</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 pm MCRC</td>
<td>6 pm Boy Scouts</td>
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<td>9 am Early classes</td>
<td>12 pm Men’s lunch</td>
<td>10 am staff mtg</td>
<td>11:30 Al Anon</td>
<td>12 pm United Way training</td>
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<td>All-Church Retreat</td>
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<td>10 am Worship</td>
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<td>10 am Book forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 am Early classes</td>
<td>9:30 Coffee chat</td>
<td>10 am staff mtg</td>
<td>11:30 Al Anon</td>
<td>1 pm ORICL book club</td>
<td>9 am “Uncensored”</td>
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