

June
2010

the Clarion!
First Congregational UCC
Las Vegas, Nevada



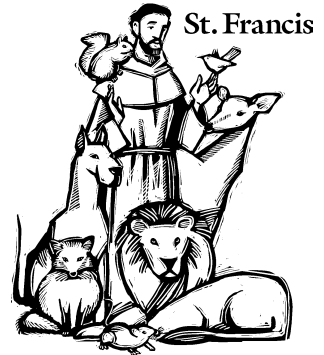
From the Pastor

And now for something completely different.....

At the request of some church members and as authorized by the Board of Spiritual and Parish Life, on Sunday, June 20, our worship will include a service of the blessing of the animals.

Primarily here we are thinking about pets – and those of you who have pets are invited to bring them with you to the service.

OK, a few ground-rules: animals should be well-socialized; any animals that bite, sting or scratch should be constrained. But for the most part we're not going to worry about barking or chirping or meowing during the service – that's all part of welcoming those who are dear to us into a spirit of worship.



Services of blessing of the animals are often thought to have originated with St. Francis of Assisi, and the sermon that day will focus on the life of St. Francis and what we can learn from him today. As the Rev. Nancy S. Taylor says, “The animals of God’s creation inhabit the skies, the earth, and the sea. They share in the fortunes of human existence and have part in human life. Today, in our urban environment we bless the relationships between humans and creatures.”

If you Google “worship service for animals”, you will find that churches across the country have been holding these kinds of services for some time. A growing number of congregations from Massachusetts to Texas to California are holding “pet-centric” services – in fact, perhaps as many as 500 congregations (including one in a Boston suburb called *Woof 'n Worship!*), according to Laura Hobgood-Oster, a religion professor at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Dr. Hobgood-Oster goes on to say, "It's the changing family structure, where pets are really central and religious communities are starting to recognize that people need various kinds of rituals that include their pets. More and more people in mainline Christianity are considering them to have some kind of soul."

God’s love includes all of God’s creatures. For many of us our pets are as important a part of our households as any other family member. A service like this “blessing of the animals” is an important way for the church to recognize this reality – and more: to celebrate it. As one pastor who has initiated such a service says, “when we love a dog and

a dog loves us, that's a part of God and God is a part of that. So we honor that."

So.....bring your pet (or, if you feel that would be unwieldy or would make you uncomfortable, bring a picture of him/her/them) on June 20 to have them blessed – and we, ourselves, will find ourselves blessed in the process.

A certificate of blessing will be given for each pet following the service.

Dave



Joined in Prayer

In our concerns:

Grace Dodd, TIA stroke, temporarily limited to eye movement only.

Norman Ebeler, son of Edie Ebeler, recovering from surgery.

Betty Neiswender, at Mission Pines Nursing Home.

Grace Schmiedel, recovering from illness.

The Rev. John Kohl, progressing in his recuperation.

In our joys:

The ordination of Rick Samples as an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, Northwest Community Church, May 16, 2010.



Spiritual & Parish Life

We began our meeting with a meditation reflecting the welcoming of Timothy into the early church even though he was of “mixed” heritage. He was St. Paul’s sidekick and two of the New Testament epistles bear his name.

We had a vigorous meeting discussing concerns about the inclusion and ongoing ministry to visitor’s and new members. There will be further discussion. The group suggested possibilities of having new member orientation. We also encourage all members to welcome and include new persons in church activities.

It was noted that the “I Wish” sheets have been getting used and we encourage all of you to communicate your concerns through the item which you find in your Sunday bulletin.

We had a further discussion about the use of name tags as a way of getting to better know each other’s names. It would also make it easier to get to know visitors. Two proposals were considered. We encourage each member to express their opinion about these possibilities – which are:

- Having a permanent plastic name tag made for each person. They would be like some which have been used in the past and would be fastened with a pin that would go through a person’s clothing.

- A second proposal would utilize vinyl covers which would be on a string or lanyard which would be draped around your neck. A simple name tag could be made for each member and it could be inserted into the cover. New ones could easily be made for visitors.

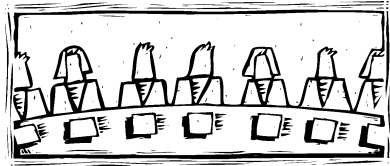
Liturgists and supply pastors were briefly discussed. If some of you might be willing to be a liturgist and feel that you are comfortable in front of church and able to read well, you are invited to talk to Pastor Dave or Don Schmiedel. You might also indicate your interest on the "I Wish" form. The chairman noted that there are three members who are ordained clergy who have passion and skill in the area of sermons.

Future Clarions will include articles about various church programs and ministries similar to the great beginning in the Pastor's article about the Tuesday breakfasts. At the conclusion of this exercise we hope that everyone will have better information about our church.

Members of the board were also reminded of their responsibility to recruit coffee hour hosts. We look forward to seeing a variety of smiling cheerful faces during our social time after church.

Next month the board will be chaired by Tom Berly since Tom Perl will be lost someplace wandering across the United States. Hope you all have a great late spring and early summer.

Rev. Thomas Perl, Chair



BOARD of TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees did not meet in May, but will move forward on the replacement of the six air conditioning units upon funding as approved at the Congregational meeting on May 9th.

The Trustees are also pleased to report the hiring of Christina Grant as Office Administrator.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for June 13, 2010. Ideas and comments are always welcome and should be emailed to Neil at mnthomsen@aol.com or sent to him via regular mail to the church.

Marty Perl, Secretary



First, I want to thank everyone for your prayers and interest in my getting well. We think most of the problem is solved and I hope to see you all soon.

Second, I would like to thank all the extra help with photographs, bulletin board displays, and a movie of the Agape Dancers West. Special thank yous go to Ann and Jim Beggs, Alice Berly, Nelson Grandjean, Don and Jane Grandjean, Jeanette Matsuura, Ann Pomeroy, and special deliveryman - Don Schmiedel.

Next time : "God's Grass"

Grace Schmiedel, Historian



Ana Garcia sends her thanks for the special recognition extended to her on May 16. She has asked for extra copies of the photo collages to give to the Vons store and its area manager. They all are very glad to see the great joy of giving that fills this mission.

Congratulations to Jason Stubrich and his principle co-walker, Christina Grant, for representing our church at the Relay for Life at Goynes Park on May 21.

After Congregators on June 6, we will bring questions we expect to be brought before the Southern California Nevada Conference. Our two representatives, Russ Smethers and Nelson Grandjean, will be able to hear our ideas and thereby be better enabled to to vote on the issues and to report back on actions.

Two issues are already formally placed in the agenda. They concern the UCC as a global church and our choices in eating as a part of Christian service. Both resolutions are available online and in our office.

We also can take this time to speak about the hot issue of immigration among ourselves. Our representatives will be entering a focal point of this issue and they should have comments from our members before their trip. Our board discussed the issue, hotly at first, but we were able to agree that our national laws are not working.

The opening question for our event will concern whether or not immigration does us any good. We will spend some time trying to talk about all the problems. However, we should spend most of the time exploring any ideas that we, as a church, can develop to improve the situation.

In our previous meeting, we moved to declare the upcoming National Gathering of the UCC Coalition for LGBT affairs a mission of the church so that any contributions which support attendance can qualify as gifts to the church. Please support our members who wish to attend.

Jim Beggs, Chair



Opportunity to Meet the New Conference Minister

On Friday, June 4, from 5:30-7:30pm, at First Christian Church (101 S. Rancho Drive) Northwest Community Church will be hosting a "meet and greet" time with the nominee for conference minister of the Southern California Nevada Conference / United Church of Christ: **the Rev. Felix Villanueva**. A biography of the Rev. Villanueva can be found on the conference's website (www.scncucc.org). This would be an excellent opportunity to meet him before his scheduled election at the Annual Gathering, June 11-12.

The Agape Dancers West

All people express themselves in movement each day. Dance is a more organized/artistic way of using movement to express praise, prayer or message of the Spirit. Anyone who wishes to use this form is welcome to be part of the Agape Dancers West. Dance training is not a requirement. Physical limitations are not a hindrance. Dance has been done from wheelchairs or by those with debilitated or missing limbs so all who wish are welcome even if rehearsal is all they want to share. Call Ann Pomeroy for more information. (702) 360-5355.

We have been participating in worship since 2006 and have had many different members over the years. Those who have been part of this have grown in their sense of worship, physical poise and self assurance.

During the church year the Agape dancers contribute several pieces to the services of

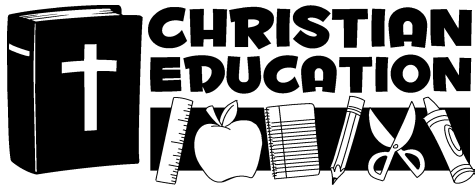
The Ministry of the Dancer By Gabe Huck

Yours is a share in the work of the Lord's Spirit
who is ever moving in our hearts and among God's people.
You gesture with your whole self
The prayer we know in our hearts:
with us and for us, you bring that prayer to living sign;
Yours is a ministry of word become flesh.
You move among us like God's own spirit,
with beauty and strength, with fire and peace, with
tenderness
and power.
In all of this you lead us in the Spirit to lift our hands and hearts
in praise of the living God.

Come to your work from your personal prayer.
Come filled with the song, the word, and the silence of your
prayer.
Let the dance of your own prayer overflow in prayer and
movement for the assembled believers.

Teach us to pray with our whole selves, and be patient with us
when we are awkward and embarrassed.
Be gentle in leading us and our prayer,
and the heart and flesh from which we pray.
Remember that your ministry is a giving of self,
and that your danced prayer is a unique giving of your whole
self in the God's service.

worship. Given that each person comes to God in his/her own way we hope that for some we facilitate the experience.



Children's Sunday School program for the Summer will be lead by Amanda Patterson in June and Jeanette Matsuura in July and August. We encourage participation filled with fun activities after the children's story time in the sanctuary.

The children, youth and young adult worship service on May 23rd was well done, thanks to the leadership of our pastor. It was very encouraging to see our young members confident and willing to participate. Jason Stubrich gave a powerful sermon, Christina Grant took charge of The Call to Worship as well as offering and dedication prayer, Madelaine Farago and Kira Smethers conducted the "adult time" , Donny Patterson did the Invocation and Lord's Prayer time, and Samantha and Amanda Patterson read from Scriptures. Recognitions were also given to our Sunday School teachers, adult study group leaders, and our pastor for his weekly children's time during the worship service.

Next campership luncheon is on June 13th which will be hot dogs hosted by Jane Grandjean. Please support them financially as well as with letters while they're at camp. We're excited to send 8 this summer - Donny Grandjean, Amanda Patterson, Samantha Patterson, Madelaine Farago, Harry Frink,Jr., Carrie, Casey and Caitlin Orozco.

Jeanette Matsuura, Chair

Laypersons of the Year: Ann and Jim Beggs

It was 37 years ago when Ann and Jim Beggs joined First Congregational and started to become involved in a spate of activities that has never let up and now runs to three pages in Grace Schmiedel's history of the church.

Let me begin with Ann. Those of you who have come here lately know her primarily as our Office Administrator – the pleasant and helpful voice at the other end of the telephone who knows everything there is to know about what goes on in this church. You also probably know her as the Treasurer – just completing that three year term at our Annual Meeting, although she has been support to many treasurers over the years – and as a member of the choir. But there's a whole lot more to her.

She was moderator of the church three times: 82-84, 96-98, and 2000-02 (the church knew a good thing when they experienced it and kept re-electing her). She has been on the Nominating Committee a number of times, as well as the Bylaws Committee, a Pastoral Search Committee in 1997, the Ministerial Liaison Committee. She has served on all four of our Boards at various times – most recently a five-year stint on Spiritual and Parish Life. She was our Stewardship Director in 1980-81, and was Financial Secretary 1992-94. Whew! Essentially, there isn't any job in the church she hasn't done at one time or another; she has been our Office Administrator for the

past eight years. The other Ann would, of course, like me to mention that she was one of the first to leap at the chance (pun fully intended) to become a part of the Agape Dancers West. And Grace would like me to note that she has been an especially helpful assistant to the historian.

The other aspect of Ann – and this goes for Jim, as well – that I especially appreciate is her involvement in the larger church – attending association, conference, and General Synod meetings – and even holding offices in the Eastern Association – despite the geographical distances that made attending meetings hard.

And as noted Jim most often accompanied Ann to these meetings – in fact I remember running into him at the General Synod in 2005 in Atlanta – the famous Synod at which the same-sex marriage resolution was passed. His commitment to the wider church also sent him to be on the Conference’s Board of Directors in 1997. He has attended the last four General Synod meetings.

Most of you know Jim for four things: chair of the Mission and Action Board (which he did for most of the “ought’s” as well as for a time in the late 90’s), editor of *The Clarion*, webmaster of our website, and, of course, as the man most visitors first see handing out a bulletin and hymnal as they walk through the door on Sunday morning. But along with these things you know him for so well he has been a Church School teacher of Junior and Senior Highs (in the 70’s and 80’s), a youth group advisor, a current

member of the adult study class (Jim’s active mind always has him searching for new information and topics for discussion). He served on several Bylaws committees and chaired three of them, and served many times on Nominating Committees and as Stewardship Chair. Like Ann he also has been on the Trustees and Spiritual and Parish Life, and served one year as moderator in 1990. Both Jim and Ann have been worship leaders and involved in aspects of the worship service many times.

Then, of course, there is the bread run. Jim has been a driver on that service to the community for the past six years. His commitment to this and other outreach programs – like making sure our church participates in the UCC’s “Five for Five” mission offerings every year – is absolute. He has been an active helper in the food pantry and the Thrift Shop.

It is going to be next to impossible to think about this church without Ann and Jim Beggs being a part of it – but there will be another occasion to think about that. For now we celebrate the two of them for their long history of involvement and say that it is a great honor to present to you our 2009-2010 **Laypersons of the Year: ANN AND JIM BEGGS.**

May 17, 2010

We thank the Spirits (S&PL) for their kind consideration, but, most importantly, we thank all the members of the congregation who have made these years so enjoyable.

Ann and Jim

How Redgrave's Spirit Blessed Our Lives

It was June 26, 2007, a Tuesday. I stood at the foot of the stage in the XL Center, tears streaming down my face. Before me — and about 7,000 other people — stood a remarkable woman telling us her story of her journey with breast cancer and her discovery of her faith. As she spoke, the giant screen behind her showed photos her daughter had taken of her throughout her treatment, photos that were stunning in their starkness, their tenderness and their forthrightness.

I dare say all of us were captivated by Lynn Redgrave's authentic and compelling presence with us that day at the United Church of Christ General Synod in Hartford. Little did I know then that just 13 months later I would also be diagnosed with breast cancer, and, inspired by Lynn, choose to be open about the experience.

My tears that day were shed in part because of her struggle against the cancer, but in large measure because she recounted for us her moving to Kent a few years earlier and there finding a church home, a place that let her simply be Lynn, not the famous actress. It was a place that nurtured in her a depth of faith to carry her through.

She was introduced that morning by her minister, who spoke of Lynn's persistence and openness, her character and her readiness to explore her spiritual depths. Our tears came at the end as Lynn read the 23rd Psalm in her classical voice, and those

familiar lines gathered new meaning: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

How often as a minister I had read those words at a bedside when death was imminent, or at a funeral. Yet in that moment, and I can still hear Lynn's voice reading, the words hit me like a thunderbolt, realizing how many people walk through that valley of the shadow of death and come out on the other side as she had.

The tears so many of us shared that day were tears of recognition, of joy at her finding a spiritual home, of sheer gratitude for the force of her testimony. For those listening, Lynn Redgrave transformed our journeys and prepared us to endure whatever we had to encounter in life with grace, humility and fearlessness.

Shortly before she went on stage, I had the great honor of presenting Lynn with a beautiful white prayer shawl, knit by someone in one of our churches. We had given one to every presenter at the synod as a sign of our continuing care and affection for them. She received it with joy that lit up her face, and later wrote to thank us, saying that she wore it every day as she read or wrote.

In that brief conversation, I encountered the real Lynn Redgrave: gracious, full of delight, passionate about her caring for the world. When I was hit by my cancer and began my treatment, she heard about it, and we talked and e-mailed every now and then. Her generous spirit reached out to me and gave me hope and fortitude for my struggle.

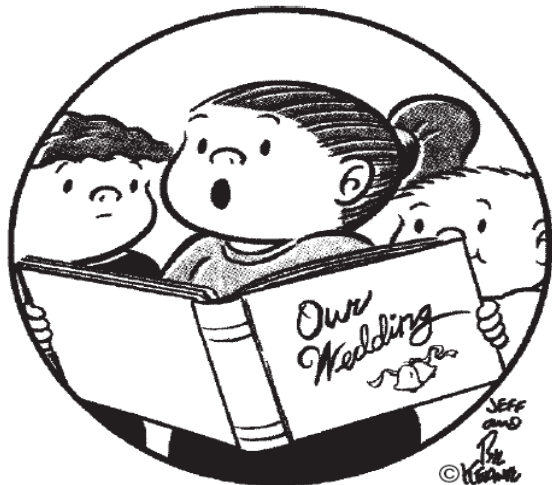
So when I learned of her death this week from the very cancer of which she had spoken, I knew she had no evil to fear. The first thing I did was to grab my cellphone and go to voice mail, where I had stored the message I received from her when I invited her to address the general synod: "Hello, Davida, it's Lynn Redgrave calling ..."

And though she has died, I know that her struggle and her testimony were not in vain, her life was radiant with love and her spirit filled with hope. She gave herself fully to life and living, so in her dying, she continues to touch and to transform.

•The Rev. Davida Foy Crabtree is conference minister of the Connecticut Conference United Church of Christ

From The Hartford Courant, May 8, 2010

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Where were we while all this was goin' on?"

from *JoyfulNoiseletter.com*
Reprinted with permission of Bil Keane

"YARD SALE"

We had a yard sale on May 1st. As is generally our luck, a protest march & a walk for Cancer decided to have thier activities on the same day. In addition, the weatherman ordered another day of wind to top off our sale.

In spite of all the hazards thrown our way, we perservered & ended up with a total sale amount of \$222.74.

Our thanks go out to our wonderful willing hands who showed up to help. Ardell Zobrist, J & TC Hartman, Cherrette Rameriz, Suzanne & Marvin Rayno, Ruth Dickman, Don Schmiedel, Don & Nelson Grandjean, Agripina Perez, Betsy Stone & Anita Stark. What a great turnout!!!! Seemed like more workers than patrons.

We will make another attempt in the Fall. In the meantime, we have a lot of Spring & Summer clothes & oodles of odds & ends that have been donated. I would dearly love to see more of our congregation support our Thrift Shop. We who do all the work would certainly feel that our efforts were appreciated more, since the pay is really ROTTEN.

*Anita Stark
Thrift Shop Manager*

Outdoor signs seen at churches in England:

"We are the SOUL agents in this area."

"Let us help you study for your final exams!"

"Speak well of your enemies; after all, you made them."

June Weekly Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00 AM FCC Adult Education, 10:30 AM FCC Services 10:50 AM FCC Youth Education 11:30 AM FCC Coffee Hour 12:30 PM Samoan 3:00 PM Iglesia 7:00 PM Romanian	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM FCC Office 6:00 PM Samoan (sanc) 6:30 PM Children & Youth Worship	9:00 AM – 11:00 AM Thrift Shop 9:30 AM Bread 6:30 PM Amer. Samoan (Hall) 6:30 PM Iglesia	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM FCC Office 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Iglesia	9:00 AM – 11:00 AM Thrift Shop 9:30 AM Bread 7:00 PM FCC Choir 8:00 PM Romanian (Hall)	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM FCC Office 7:00 PM- 9:00 PM Iglesia	10:00 AM Amer. Samoan (hall) 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM CEN (hall) 2:00 PM FCC Cleaning

June Special Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 23	May 24	May 25	May 26	May 27	May 28	May 29
Pentecost						
Strengthen the Church						
May 30	May 31	1	2	3	4	5
					7:00 PM Pinochle	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11:30 AM					SCNC Annual Gathering	SCNC Annual Gathering
Congregators						
11:45 AM Christian Ed.						
12:00 Mission Forum						
1:00 PM Mission & Action						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
11:45 AM Trustees					10:00 AM Food Pantry	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Blessing of the Animals			12:00 PM Council		<i>Clarion Deadline</i>	
11:45 AM Spiritual & Parish Life						
27	28	29	30	Jul 1	Jul 2	Jul 3
					7:00 PM Pinochle	





- 1 Bill Thomas
- 5 Pat Manning
- 6 Casey Ann Orozco
- 9 Gordon Root
- 13 Kira Smethers
- 13 Ruth Hammond
- 19 Anita Stark

June Liturgists

- 6 Al Horkay
- 13 Don Schmiedel
- 20 Anita Stark
- 23 Jeanette Matsuura

Tuesday 9:00am Breakfasts

- 1 Denny's on Charleston at CSN
- 8 Silver Nugget on LV Blvd North
- 15 Arizona Charlie's Decatur
- 22 Arizona Charlie's Boulder Hghwy
- 29 Cannery on Craig Rd



Finances

	April	2010
Contributions:	\$5,610.16	\$19,487.55
Building Usage:	\$3,525.00	\$13,347.50
Other:	\$0.00	\$60.99
Total Income:	\$9,135.16	\$32,896.04
Ministry:	\$760.22	\$2,139.38
Ops & Admin:	\$454.38	\$1,580.68
Utilities	\$1,130.09	\$3,994.72
Building & Grounds	\$368.12	\$2,928.49
Salaries:	\$6,306.37	\$23,042.79
Total Expense:	\$9,019.18	\$33,686.06
Net:	\$115.98	-\$790.02

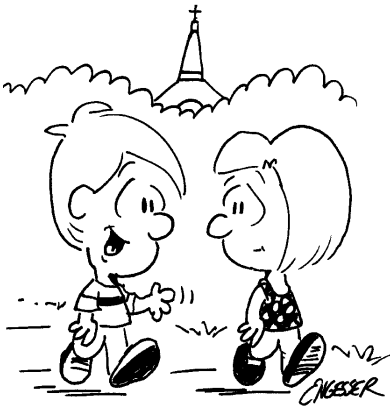


17 Carolyn & Jeff Patterson

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 9am to Noon

Also --- Contact us by email or phone

Dave Pomeroy	Pastor	davepomeroy@ucclasvegas.org	360-5355
Marjorie Branch	Moderator	moderator@ucclasvegas.org	263-2373
Christina Grant	Office Administrator	church@ucclasvegas.org	642-2220
Jim Beggs	Tech editor	clarion@ucclasvegas.org	382-9812



"If we're all God's children, just think of all the cards he gets on Father's Day."

Feedback: Names, Birthdays, and Comments are welcome. Please clip and send.

Name: _____ New

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Birthday, Anniversary: _____

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
1200 North Eastern Avenue Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

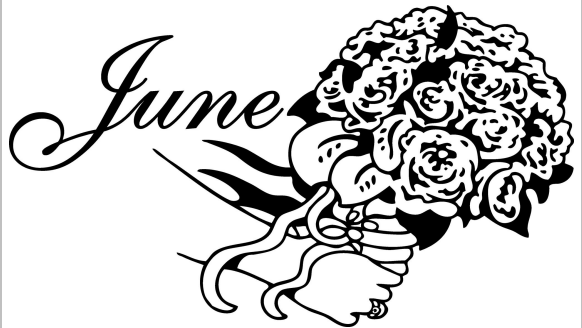
Rev Dave Pomeroy, Minister
Phone: 702 642-2220 FAX: 702 642-3642
E-mail: church@ucclasvegas.org Web: www.uccclasvegas.org

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June 2010 Issue
Return Service Requested.

**NON-PROFIT ORG.
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Adult Education~~~~~9:00 AM
Sunday Service~~~~~10:30 AM
Youth, Nursery~~~~~10:50 AM
Coffee & Fellowship~ 11:30 AM

Men's & Women's Breakfast
9:00 am every Tuesday



Pinochle~~~~~June 5
Congregators~~~~~June 7
Annual Gathering~~~June 11,12
Food Pantry ~~~~~June 18
Blessing of the Animals~~~~~
~~~~~June 20
Pinochle~~~~~July 2
Congregators~~~~~July 4

Special dates

- Flag Day June 14
- Father's Day June 20
- First Day of Summer June 21