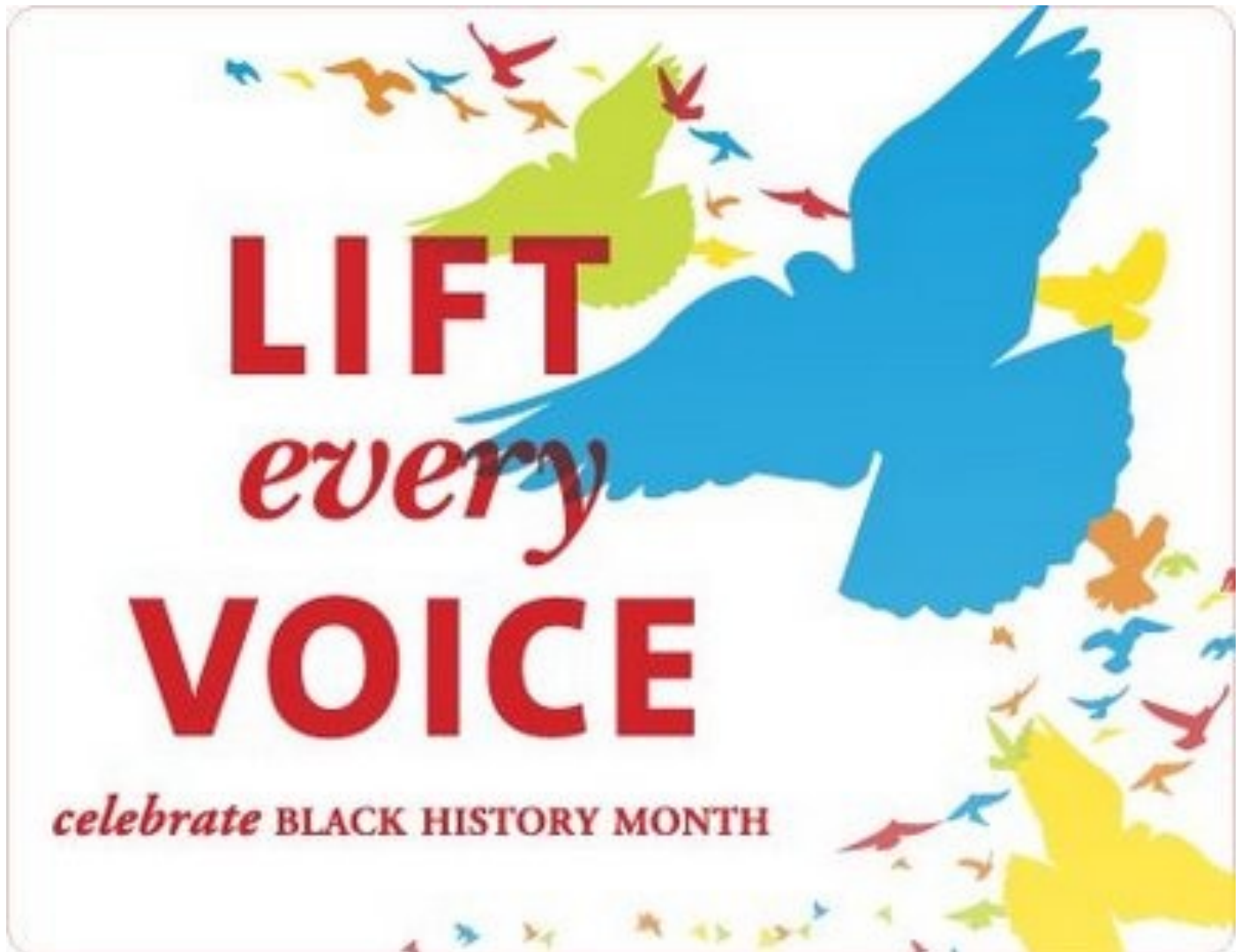


VANTAGE

February 2015



**CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF BOCA RATON**
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST





Can you imagine one day you're in the store where you're working when all of a sudden twenty Homeland Security officers storm in, filling up the whole place! You are shocked, uncertain, even afraid. They separate you from the owner, taking you into one room and the owner into another. You're questioned as to what you know about the business and the owner. Fortunately, you don't know about anything behind the scenes with the business or the owner. The owner however does.

He's been buying merchandize from China snuck in without going through Customs. He was warned to stop a year or more ago. He didn't stop, and now he's arrested.

The business is gone, you're out of a job—but at least you're not going to the Big House! They say what you don't know can hurt you, which is true. Fortunately, it's not true this time. You've been spared.

I know somebody who lived this recently.

I think there's another saying we could use for us and our church: What we don't know will not help us.

What I mean is that there are things we should know that might help us as a church, and you as members and friends of our church. What I am talking about is known as United Church of Christ Firsts. These firsts are highlights of how over the past 300 or more years UCC ministry has shaped America's religious, social, and political life. And there are some goodies in here!

- **1773: First act of civil disobedience**

Five thousand angry colonists gather in the Old South Meeting House to demand repeal of an unjust tax on tea. Their protest inspires the first act of civil disobedience in U.S. history—the "Boston Tea Party."

- **1785: First ordained African American pastor**

Lemuel Haynes is the first African American ordained by a Protestant denomination. He becomes a world-renowned preacher and writer.

- **1852: First woman pastor**

Antoinette Brown is the first woman since New Testament times ordained as a Christian minister, and perhaps the first woman in history elected to serve a Christian congregation as pastor. At her ordination a friend, Methodist minister Luther Lee, defends "a woman's right to preach the Gospel." He quotes the New Testament: "There is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

- **1972: Ordination of first openly gay minister**

The UCC's Golden Gate Association ordains the first openly gay person as a minister in a mainline Protestant denomination, the Rev. William R. Johnson. In the following three decades, General Synod urges equal rights for homosexual citizens and calls on congregations to welcome people of diverse sexual orientation and identity.

The first three Firsts are unquestionable goodies. We were on the side of good and God, even if many, many, many people at the time opposed our position. Over time, the vast majority of America caught up to this vision of God's extravagant and gracious openness.

The last one may still be more difficult for some, and it certainly was in 1972. But as we can see, being a first at something doesn't mean we will be the only or last. Like the other three Firsts, America, because of people, faith and churches like ours, is coming to accept the vision of God's extravagant and gracious openness toward our gay and lesbian sisters and brothers.

Tom

THIS MONTH'S TEACHINGS

"I Hate Him!"

Two Messages on the Destructive Power of Hatred

February 1
Genesis 4:1-16
Communion

...Yes You Are.

The famous question Cain asked God after God asked him where Abel was is, "Am I my brother's keeper?" While Cain may have been rather flippant in asking this, since it doesn't actually correspond perfectly with God's initial question, the obvious reason for the question is to point us to the Great Question of our moral existence: How much responsibility do we have for others? But first, we've got to understand how quickly we move to seeing others through the lens of hatred, how often we let life turn our heads to the solution that is no solution: hating others.

February 8
1 John 3:11-17

Try Picking on People Your Own Size!

The most obvious result of building a life where feelings of anger get amplified and aggravated into hatred is that people have to find a target to fire upon—and they do. Too often it's someone who is a rather easy target, like someone smaller when we're young. And then there are the targets that societies use to vent their collective venom. This hatred has massive destructive power, as we have seen. We need to take a good look at where we are with this.

February 15
1 John 4:7-12

It's a Good Day to Love

Of course it is...but so is every day. After talking so much the last two weeks about hatred and getting rid of hatred in our lives, it's a good day to bring up the fact that God is love. The Letters of John are very clear about the focus of the Christian life—learning to love God and love others. Let's try to get that to sink in a little deeper this time...!

February 22
Nehemiah 3:1-16
Annual Meeting

The State of the Church

Since our annual meeting is this morning after worship, I want to teach on what the state of the Church is in America and of course what the state of our church is. What is happening to churches today? Who is going to church? Are churches growing today? What is happening to our church? And the most important question: How does our church grow? I promise this will be a message you will be very glad you came to hear. It will get you a lot of new information and new perspective on what is happening in our society and it will inspire you to see your faith in our church as something vital and significant.

Church News

Welcome New Members

On January 18 we welcomed several new members into the family of Congregational Church of Boca Raton.



Noreen Buss

An Illinois native, Noreen moved here from Connecticut with her husband two years ago because they were tired of shoveling snow.



Nancy Clarke

Although originally from Connecticut, Nancy has lived in south Florida for 39 years. Nancy works for Food for the Poor, and sings in our Chancel Choir.



Sue and James Sullivan

Recently retired from teaching, Sue and James left Maine to be closer to their daughter and granddaughter.



Wendy and Jeremy Hinshaw

The Hinshaws moved here from Ohio four years ago. They are the proud parents of three beautiful children, Hannah, Amelia, and baby Jack.

The Annual Rummage Sale Was a Success!



Thank you everyone who helped make this year's rummage sale a success. We raised over \$2800 this year. The Rummage Sale is

only a success because of the hard work and dedication of our wonderful volunteers! It's the people who cleaned out their homes and brought in items to be sold; the people who organized, set up, and priced each item; and the people who spent their weekend working at the sale that make this annual event one to remember. Thank you, everyone!

Thank you, Volunteer Workers!

We hope we included everyone who helped. It was a great group effort!

Valerie Ary, Betsey Beasley, Larry Breakell, Noreen Buss, Alan and Mary Jane Christman, Nancy Clarke, Charlotte Codo, Elizabeth Ehlers, John Fenner, Brian Fisher, Lorraine Folino, Phyllis and Newt Fuller, Helen and Jack Goldberg, Doris and Rich Harnist, Sarah Hugus, Nest Jones, Sandi Kilbride, Barbara and Larry Lacey, Nancy and Jerry Lockwood, Audrey Michele, Nancy and John Miller, Mary and Lee Rivollier, Carla and Jim Robb, Sabrina and Kris Seeds, Roberta and Jack Stetson, Sue Sullivan, Judy and Larry Williams, Joan and Tony Witkiewicz, Nick Wurster

Church News

February Vision Ministry *February 15*



Vision Ministry

On February 15 the Vision Ministry/Leadership Team will meet. We will be considering various budget requests as we create a realistic 2015

budget. All team members need to think of how you want your team to minister, and the funds you want to request to make your ministry successful.

Our Vision Statement



Congregational Church of Boca Raton exists to equip people, from all walks of life, to reach their God-given potential and fulfill God's plans for their lives.

Payable To



If you are writing a check for your church contribution, please make the check payable to: Congregational Church of Boca Raton. You can also

abbreviate the name as: CCBR. Unfortunately, checks made payable to any other variation are not accepted by the bank.

Online Contributions

Online giving is now available! Just go to our website www.churchofboca.org and click on the "Online Giving" tab to get to the Donate button. All major credits cards, as well as paypal accounts, are accepted.

Stewardship Update

2015 Contribution Pledges to Date

We have received 54 pledges so far for a total of \$120,695. Last year's final figures were 69 pledges for a total of \$174,280.

2015 Pledges are still being received.

Pledge cards are to be found in the back of the Sanctuary and in the Rosser room.

2015 Annual Meeting *February 22*

Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on Sunday, Feb. 22 at 11:15 a.m. Please mark your calendar for this important church event. This is one of many ways your voice can be heard in our church.

Likely items for action include:

- By-law changes
- 2015 operating budget
- Reports of teams and staff
- Approval of nominees for church officers and team leaders
- Elizabeth Ehlers Award presentation

Prayer Requests

Prayer request forms are in the pews and in the prayer box located on the column in the Rosser room. Please feel free to fill one out if you have a special prayer you would like the pastor to know about.



Facebook

Be sure to like us on Facebook to get the latest news and pictures!



And while you're online, check out our website at www.churchofboca.org. You'll find copies of recent sermons, newsletter, and bulletin, as well as our church calendar and more!

Announcements and Articles *February 20*

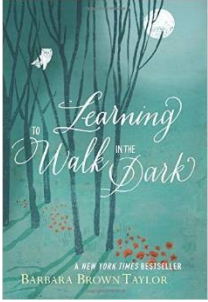
If you have an article or picture for the March Vantage, please email it to Sandi at office@churchofboca.org before Friday, February 20th.



Sunday Bulletin announcements are due by **Tuesday** each week. Please email your articles, announcements and pictures for church events to office@churchofboca.org anytime before that date.

Church Events

Adult Study Group *Tuesdays*



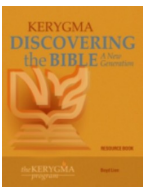
“Darkness is shorthand for anything that scares me— either because I am sure that I do not have the resources to survive it or because I do not want to find out. ... I have learned things in the dark that I could never have learned in the light, things that have

saved my life over and over again, so that there is really only one logical conclusion. I need darkness as much as I need light.”

Barbara Brown Taylor

Join our adult study group on Tuesday afternoons, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., as we explore the darkness and its affect on our own lives using Barbara Brown Taylor’s book, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*. (Copies of the book are available at local bookstores and online at Amazon.com.) For more information, please call Pastor Tom at 561-395-9255.

Adult Study Group *Wednesdays*



You are invited to join the Wednesday evening Adult Study Group as we continue to explore the Bible from the beginning. The Adult Study Group meets on Wednesday evenings, from 6:00

p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Our study is based on the *Kerygma program: Discovering the Bible*. For more information, please call Pastor Tom at 561-395-9255.

Adult Fellowship Luncheon *February 4*



Adult Fellowship

Adult Fellowship will meet on Wednesday, February 4 at noon for our monthly luncheon meeting. Our “Get to Know Your Neighbor” speaker is our

pastor, Tom Lacey. There will be a lunch available for \$5.00. Be sure to sign up in the Rosser room, or call the church office. For more information, please contact Audrey Michele 561-218-4927.

Morning Communion Service *Wednesdays*

Start your morning in communion with God as you join us for a midweek worship service every Wednesday morning at 8:30 am.



Lunch Bunch *Wednesdays*

Singles, Couples, Men, Ladies... are you bored eating lunch by yourselves? Bring a sandwich to the church at noon on Wednesdays; we serve beverage and dessert. For those who want to remain after the meal for some fellowship, we have games of Mahjonn and Skip-Bo. No need to sign up, just show up.



Boca Christians Eating Out *Thursdays*

The B.C.E.O. meets every Thursday at 6:30 p.m. for dinner and conversation. Please sign up in the Rosser Room if you are planning to join us so that we may reserve a table for the appropriate number of friends. Call the church office anytime before Thursday if you decide you to join us.



Prayer Fellowship *Fridays*

Friday Prayer Fellowship and Bible Study meets at 10:00 am in the Upper Room. Please come and join us; it is a wonderful time for fellowship and sharing our faith.

We use the *Upper Room* daily devotional as our guide. Please call John Bird at (561) 400-5604 if you have any questions.



Valentines Day Concert *February 15* Songs of Life, Love and Laughter

Juan and Stephanie Mansilla will have a concert for Valentines Day on February 15 right after the service. This will be a celebration of life, love and laughter. They have a very special program prepared for this occasion. This time they have some wonderful musical surprises. Save the date, come and enjoy this amazing recital open to all ages.

Mini Survey - Mission Projects for 2015

During our 50th anniversary year of 2014 we tried out a number of different Good Deeds, with good participation and support of many people!

Your support is needed again to help decide which mission projects to continue. Or we can do some new ones. What do **you** think our church should do as we reach out to others? What would you **support** with your planning time and/or participation? How do you feel we can best help others? What are the best projects to do?

Place X beside the "best" projects – CIRCLE ones you would like to help on!

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> pop tab collection | <input type="checkbox"/> pill bottle collection |
| <input type="checkbox"/> food collection | <input type="checkbox"/> sew/stuff comfort dolls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> knit/crochet hats and blankets for preemies | <input type="checkbox"/> pick fruits & veggies (Gleaning) for C.R.O.S. food pantries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat for Humanity—help build and rehab homes | <input type="checkbox"/> Boca Helping Hands—work days to prepare and serve meals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pride Fest presence | <input type="checkbox"/> Souper Bowl of Caring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PJ's & Books donation | <input type="checkbox"/> Food for the Poor toiletries donation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Starfish Project (Food for the Poor) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweet Tomatoes dinner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BINGO fundraiser (OCWM or other Benefit) | <input type="checkbox"/> Military Families' and/or Veterans' Collections |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alex's Lemonade stand | <input type="checkbox"/> Bake Sale for Family Promise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Promise volunteers | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet supply donations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorial Day at Nat'l Cemetery | <input type="checkbox"/> Giving Tree (Christmas) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UNICEF/Trick or Treat | <input type="checkbox"/> Wreaths Across America |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dictionary donations | <input type="checkbox"/> AVDA baby donations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boca Holiday Parade human float | <input type="checkbox"/> School supply drive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jack the Bike Man | <input type="checkbox"/> Tomorrow's Rainbow |

Comments _____

Name _____

Return to CCBR - in the offering plate, by mail, or in person.

Adult Fellowship

“Get to Know Your Neighbor” at the February meeting of the Adult Fellowship. Our pastor Tam Lacey will talk about his journey. Join us on February 4th at noon. As always, lunch will be available for \$5.00. Be sure to sign up in the Rosser room and indicate if you want to purchase a lunch.

Plan to attend our March meeting as well, when our “Neighbor” will be our church administrator, Sandi Kilbride.

Our Fashion Show will again be presented by Boutiques on Wheels and will be held March 14th. This year we will have the show in the morning, and a light brunch will be served. We need volunteers to be our models. No experience is necessary; all ages and sizes are needed. Please see Audrey Michele if you can help us with this event.

On the Wednesdays when the Fellowship does not have a regular meeting, many of us get together for “Lunch Bunch.” We gather at the church at noon with our lunch; beverages and dessert are served. Several of us enjoy playing Mah Jongg (free lessons available), but there are other games and suggestions are always welcome.

Our thanks to everyone who supported our fund raisers this past December. Eleanor Magee will give us a short treasurer’s report at our February meeting. We continue to try to make our kitchen more “user friendly” and our goal is to use less plastic and paper. Our next plan is to purchase pots and pans so we can continue to have social events that offer fellowship and food.

We are still making Comfort Dolls. This is a worthwhile project which relies on many of us to help. If you can sew, Eleanor Magee can use your help. And if you can’t sew you can always stuff the doll bodies. We also appreciate donations of fabric or wool as well as contributions toward materials we have to purchase.

Since re-naming our group “Adult Fellowship” we have been pleased to have several of our gentlemen friends join us for our monthly meetings, and for our Wednesday Lunch Bunch get togethers. We hope all members of our church family will join us when possible. We continue to try to make our programs interesting to everyone, regardless of age or gender.



Adult Fellowship



In January the Adult Fellowship focused on “Health and Wellness.” The guest speaker was Reiki Master Rey Lourdes. In addition to presenting a brief history and the benefits of Reiki, Ms Lourdes conducted a short healing circle.

Audrey Michele, President

Home phone: 561-218 4927

Cell phone: 772-215 0078

Email: audom4494@comcast.net

Models Needed

If you can be available on Saturday, March 14th to help by being a model at our annual Fashion Show, please contact Audrey Michele. We have clothes for all sizes, so please do not hesitate to participate whether you are a Small, Medium, Large or Extra Large. We need a variety and we welcome you all!

Music Ministry

Dear Members of the Congregational Church of Boca Raton,

I wanted to take some time and thank you all for the wonderful welcome you gave me as I stepped in as the Music Ministry Director. It has been a great beginning while we transitioned, and now in this new year I have some great and exciting plans to share.

After the success of The Messiah, I had to stop and think of what we should do next, and this is what I came across...

We need to create our signature—our sound, our own voice to worship. As many of you know, my idea every Sunday is to deliver a message and worship through music. The music shouldn't stop where the conductor stands, it should always reach every member of the congregation and bring an extra element to the worship service.

But how do we do that? We do it with practice and through great, varied, and very emotional music. But the more the merrier, right? Why not sing and share with us? It is not a matter of knowing how to sing...We all learn in the process. Now I have some questions for you:

Can you carry a tune?

Do you like to sing in the car, in the shower, at home?

Would you like to be part of a wonderful group at the church?

Yes? Then please join us for rehearsal on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm and Sundays at 9:15 am before service and help us create a beautiful sound! I know you may be wondering what we are doing. For February we will be singing Spirituals, beautiful traditional songs with wonderful meanings and stories. We will also start preparing a very special service for Easter which is around the corner.

I hope you say "Yes" and we see you soon.

In the name of music,
Blessings.

Juan Mansilla M.A.

Music Ministry Director

Celebration of our 50 Good Deed Leaders



Our Children

Lion Country Safari *March 1*



Florida's only drive-through safari and walk-through amusement park invites you to spend the day on safari with over 900 animals. With animal displays and encounters, animal feeding experiences, 9 rides, water sprayground, food, shopping and more, you are sure to have a memorable experience at Lion Country Safari. We will get the great group rate of \$9.00/person (tax free). That price is for adults and children and includes the drive-through safari and the walk-through park. The regular admission price is (not including tax) \$31.50/adults, \$28.50/seniors over 65 and \$23.00/children 3-9. Parking is \$7.00. Please sign up by March 1st! Call Marit Lacey [954-682-9292](tel:954-682-9292) for information. Let us know if you need a ride with somebody from church.

Prime Time! *February 11 and 25*



Dinner is served at 6:00 pm. Followed by band practice and Drama Club.

Sign up for Spring! The spring session will meet on the following Wednesdays: February 11 and 25; March 11 and 25; April 15 and 29; and May 13.

The cost to cover some of the expenses for dinners and materials for the spring session will be \$25 for one child and \$35 for more than one! Contact Marit Lacey at [954-682-9292](tel:954-682-9292) for more information.

Peace River Canoe Trip *March 6-8*



Peace River Canoe Trip

Our annual Peace River canoe trip in Arcardia for middle school and high school youth is March 6, 7, and 8. Registration and fees are due by February 20th. (Assistance may be

available.) Please sign up in the Rosser room if you are interested in attending this wonderful weekend. Adult volunteers willing to canoe and sleep in a tent are needed!

Valentine's Celebration *February 15*

There will be love in the air when the children's worship band *Prime Time!* and the children's choir perform in celebration of Valentine's Day.



New Sunday School Teacher!

We are so excited to welcome a new Sunday school teacher to our family of teachers! A warm welcome and thank you to Betsy Beasley who will teach Preschool. The Sunday school children, parents, and our church are truly grateful to you.



We are still in need of Sunday school teachers. If anybody would like to find out about this rewarding ministry, please contact Marit Lacey at marit@churchofboca.org or call [954-682-9292](tel:954-682-9292).

Sunday School Teaching Schedule

Feb. 1	Preschool/K.....	Danielle Peterson
	1-3	Debbie Garland
	4-5	Rachel and Tony Borchers
	Middle/High.....	Family Worship
Feb. 8	Preschool/K:.....	Wendy Hinshaw
	1-3	Nest Jones
	4-5	Jenny Damas
	Middle/High:.....	Javier Valverde
	Acolyte.....	Linnea Lacey
Feb. 15	Preschool/K:.....	Marit Lacey
	1-3	Leanne Guilfu
	4-5	Rachel and Tony Borchers
	Middle/High:.....	Jennifer Schmuhl
	Acolyte:.....	Naomi Borchers
Feb. 22	Preschool/K:.....	Betsy Beasley
	1-3	Sarah Hugus
	4-5	Juliet Carl
	Middle/High.....	Jennifer Schmuhl
	Acolyte.....	Chloe Heynen



February 2015 Calendar of Events



Anniversaries and Birthdays

Birthdays

- 2 Laura Huntington
- 3 Betsy Beasley
Nicholas Wurster
- 7 Noah Peterson
- 16 Phyllis Fuller
Erica Ortiz
- 18 Jamie Ehlers
- 19 Caiden Hornsby
- 21 Henry Adkins
- 22 Sophia Monzani
- 23 Shirlee Madden
- 26 Courtney Vass
- 28 Gary Martin

Anniversaries

- 3 Mayra & Michael
Filmer
- 13 Bradley & Alena
Hawkins
- 14 John & Janet Milshaw

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4th Sunday after Epiphany 10:00 am Worship Service Communion 10:15 am Church School 11:00 am Fellowship Time	2	3 2:00 pm Adult Study 6:30 pm AA	4 8:30 am Communion 12 noon Adult Fellowship Luncheon 6:00 pm Adult Study 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal	5 6:30 pm BCEO 7:00 pm AA	6 10:00 am Prayer Group Bible Study	7
5th Sunday after Epiphany 10:00 am Worship Service 10:15 am Church School 11:00 am Fellowship Time	9	10 2:00 pm Adult Study 6:30 pm AA	11 8:30 am Communion 12 noon Lunch Bunch 6:00 pm Prime Time! 6:00 pm Adult Study 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal	12 6:30 pm BCEO 7:00 pm AA	13 10:00 am Prayer Group	14
Transfiguration 10:00 am Worship Service Valentine Service 10:15 am Church School 11:00 am Fellowship Time 11:15 am Vision Ministry 11:15 am Valentine's Day Concert	16	17 2:00 pm Adult Study 6:30 pm AA	18 Ash Wednesday 12:00 noon Worship 6:00 pm Adult Study 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal	19 7:00 pm BCEO 7:00 pm AA	20 VANTAGE DEADLINE 10:00 am Prayer Group Bible Study	21
1st Sunday in Lent 10:00 am Worship Service 10:15 am Church School 11:00 am Fellowship Time 11:15 am Annual Meeting of the Congregation	23	24 2:00 pm Adult Study 6:30 pm AA	25 8:30 am Communion 12 noon Lunch Bunch 6:00 pm Prime Time! 6:00 pm Adult Study 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal	26 7:00 pm BCEO 7:00 pm AA	27 10:00 am Prayer Group	28

Congregational Church of Boca Raton

Address: 251 SW 4th Avenue
Boca Raton, Florida 33432
Phone: (561) 395-9255

e-mail: office@churchofboca.org
Fax: (561) 395-6409
Web site: www.churchofboca.org

Pastor: Tom Lacey *Home: (561) 381-5222 *Cell: (561) 306-5208
Church Moderator: John Fenner *Home: (561) 750-5044

Staff

Administrator:

Sandi Kilbride

Children's Ministry Director:

Marit Hasmats-Lacey

Music Ministry Director:

Juan Mansilla

Organist:

Nicholas R. Wurster

Section Leaders:

Lindsey Novitske, Alto

Linda Siers, Soprano

Jorge Valls, Tenor

Sexton:

Nicholas Wurster

Sound:

Wendell Jackson

Volunteers

Music

Chancel Choir Members

Children's Choir:

Marit Lacey

Youth Choir:

Nest Jones-Teixeira

Office

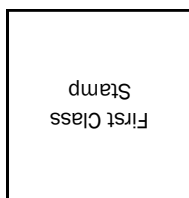
Office Helpers: Lucille Bruno, Grayce Esposito, Loren Eyrich, Barbara Lacey, Audrey Michele, George Sinclair, Carol Vass, and Diana Willard

Newsletter: Lucille Bruno, Grayce Esposito, Eleanor Magee, Audrey Michele

Photographer: Marit Lacey

Sunday School Teachers

Ingrid Barrios, Betsy Beasley, Carla Borchers, Tony Borchers, Jenny Damas, Debbie Garland, Leanne Guilfu, Wendy Hinshaw, Sarah Hugus, Nest Jones, Patti Jourdin, Juliet Heynen, Marit Lacey, Danielle Peterson, Katherine Ramos, Kris Seeds, Javier Valverde, Teresa Van Eps



BOCA RATON FL 33432
251 SW FOURTH AVE
(UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BOCA RATON