



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH BROOKINGS

Volume 27 Issue 2
April/May
2026

Fostering Faith. Creating Community. Loving All.

Dear Beloveds of God,

I was trying to open a jar of jelly the other day. I had already spread peanut butter on a warm piece of toast, and I wanted to add the perfect amount of sweet, gooey jelly before the peanut butter cooled too much and lost its creaminess. I went to turn the top of the jar, and it was stuck. I found a rubber tool from the drawer and gave it another try, but still, the lid stayed put. I tried and tried to no avail. Someone in my house heard my exasperation as I set the jar on the counter ready to give up. They came along, picked it up, and with one twist the cap was off. I think I must have loosened it!

When have you felt weak lately? Think back until you can remember a time that you were not strong enough to do what you were hoping to do. It's not an enjoyable feeling to reach the end of our own strength. To need help can be a defeating experience, and asking for it can bruise our pride.

This Lent we are immersing ourselves in A Love that is Stronger. God's love for us in Jesus is stronger than sin and evil. Stronger than confusion. Stronger than division. Stronger than fear or despair. Stronger than worldly might, and ultimately, stronger than the grave. God's love is strong when we are weak. In fact, even God's weakness is stronger than our strength.

Jesus came to save us. This means we cannot save ourselves. We need help. Needing Jesus' strength to save us isn't a humiliating experience, it is our source of life. We come to the end of our own strength, and we find that we didn't need to rely on it at all in the first place. Jesus walks by our exasperated form, picks up the jelly jar, and easily twists off the lid. So to speak. In more serious ways, we come to the end of our own ability and strength when we face the loss of a loved one, the death of a dream, and eventually the end of our lives.

Maybe you're like me and you can tend to be a little too stubborn to ask for help. Perhaps you like to think of yourself as self-reliant and tough. That's understandable. But thanks be to God that Jesus' love for us is stronger even than our own defenses. If it weren't so, we'd be left to our own devices and alone. Instead, we are rescued, renewed, resurrected, and knit together into the beautiful tapestry of true strength that is the Body of Christ.

May all your jelly jars twist open easily, and if they do not, may help quickly come your way. Most of all, may the love of God that is stronger than anything else guard and keep you today and always!

Peace,
Pastor Jess

PRESCHOOL NEWS

Spring News From Preschool!

The teachers and students are gearing up for all the fun year end events!

ART MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE and FUNDRAISER

You are cordially invited to our Jr Kindergarten's Art Museum, Open House, and Silent Auction Fundraiser on Wednesday, April 1 from 3:30–5:30PM. We will be converting our gymnasium into a "Museum" for the day. Our Museum and the Preschool classrooms will be open to the public. You will have the opportunity to view all the BEAUTIFUL and CREATIVE ART made by our Junior Kindergartners. You can order T-Shirts designed by our Jr K, and bid on Silent Auction Pieces, all created by our preschoolers.

You will also be able to see and bid on the Silent Auction art pieces, on Sunday, March 28 during the Palm Sunday Brunch.

Preschool Graduation Ceremony will be held on Monday, May 18 at 10:30am.

If you or anyone you know would like to register a child for the 26/27 school year, we still have some openings available. We offer preschool classes to children that are 3, 4 and 5 years old. We also offer a Junior Kindergarten class. Children must be three years old by September 1 and potty trained to attend.

If you would like more information on fall registration, or if you have any questions on any of the events, please call the Preschool Office at 605-697-2756 or email me, sueann@firstlutheranbrookings.org.

You can also check us out on our Facebook page!

It has been another wonderful and rewarding year for all the staff at First Lutheran Preschool. We appreciate all the support we receive from the church staff, and the congregation. We hope you all have a fun and safe summer.

Have a Super Spring and Summer!
SueAnn



SEEKING FT PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR/LEAD TEACHER

We're now seeking a full-time Preschool Director/Lead Teacher!
Use the QR code to see the full job listing.
Spread the word, and direct any applications or inquiries to pastorjess@firstlutheranbrookings.org.

Congratulations to SueAnn Mouw on her retirement!



<https://firstlutheranbrookings.org>





Main Ave. and 8th St.
Brookings, SD

FIRST LUTHERAN Preschool Registration 2026



Why Choose Us?

- Experienced and dedicated staff
- Open to children ages 3, 4 and 5
- Nurturing atmosphere
- Creative environment
- Engaging activities

Guest
Speakers!

We provide a fun Christian environment with an emphasis on Kindergarten readiness. We offer two, three, or five half day a week classes, a full day option and JR. Kindergarten.

Class Field Trips!



PLEASE visit our outstanding facility!!!

Now Enrolling for 2026!!



Link to registration:



Find us on Facebook!!

Contact us at 697-2756 or email sueann@firstlutheranbrookings.org

First Lutheran Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national or ethnic origin.



Happy Spring and Happy Easter!!

Wishing you a beautiful Easter season filled with the blessings of springtime. May the renewal that Easter brings offer you and your loved ones fresh gifts of love, hope, peace, joy and good health.

Mission Coffeehouse Mission of the Month



The New Dawn Learning Center was our Mission of the Month in January. LaDeane was able to send them a check for \$1,435.85.



The February Mission of the Month was the Brookings Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind. Debbie was pleased to present a check for \$1,574.90 to (l-r) Izzy Collazo and Terry and Jenny Kallenberger.

The coffeehouse continues to keep us busy! I am in my third year of employment, and I feel it is getting even busier. What a wonderful feeling knowing that so many love to enjoy their time with us. We offer such a welcoming atmosphere with a warm feeling. Thank you for supporting the Coffeehouse—you truly make it all possible.

Our Lenten Lunches have been successful once again. Lunches are served at 11:30 and include a sandwich, soup, a cookie and coffee. Following lunch is a short worship service led by the hosting church for the week. Thank you to all the volunteers from First Lutheran Church as well as the volunteers that come to help and represent their worshiping church. The proceeds go towards the Brookings Ministerial Association.

As always, the Mission of the Month donations continue to help monthly organizations. Thank you for contributing when you visit us whether to enjoy a meal, fresh caramel roll, coffee or specialty drink. It is greatly appreciated by Mission Coffeehouse, First Lutheran Church and the monthly organization. Giving is an expression of gratitude for our blessings. Your generosity and kindness help the monthly organization strive towards a goal.

Our coffeehouse workers are volunteers who dedicate their time continuing the success of the Mission Coffeehouse. I can't express enough how amazing it is to be working with you all!

A huge THANK YOU for all you do!!

WE APPRECIATE YOU!!

Thank you, First Lutheran Church, for your endless support.

Bring on the Spring!

LaDeane Harrison
Mission Coffeehouse Manager

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY



He is risen; he is risen indeed! Alleluia!

One of the stories that Journey will dive into soon is *The Road to Emmaus* (Luke 24:13–35). If you're not familiar with it, here's the scene: It's 3 days after Jesus died, Cleopas and another friend are traveling to Emmaus discussing what happened to Jesus, and they can't fathom it. On their travels they run into Jesus, but they don't recognize him. Once they've reached town, they invite Jesus to stay with them for the evening. As Jesus blesses and breaks the bread, their eyes are opened—they realize who he is—and in that moment, he vanishes. Cleopas and his friend rush to share the good news: Jesus is risen.

As I look around at the new season unfolding, I can't help but notice how our CYF programs are blooming as well. In Journey, we have been using the Spark Lectionary, and I've noticed that children are retaining more and becoming more active in children's message during worship. In Confirmation we have been diving into the Lenten theme 'A Love that is Stronger' and the blossoming conversations happening in small groups. And in Youth Group the community is blooming with more youth attending. Also, I see the powerful impact of both long-standing Steppingstones and new ones taking root among children, youth, and families. And none of this would be possible without our amazing volunteers!

As we step into a new season and new rhythms, I want to highlight what's ahead. In mid-May we'll wrap up the school year and our regular CYF schedule, but there is still so much to look forward to—preparing for camp, the summer trip to Camp Amnicon, VBS, and summer hangouts with youth.

I want to thank you for the continued support that all you give to our children and youth. I can't wait to accompany these children and youth further into their faith life.

Blessings, Rose Baerenwald
CYF Ministry Director



Rose, Peyton Bryant, Kate Gaynes and Breydan Quinn attended "Faith Fest" at Augustana in February - a gathering of confirmation aged students in our area focused on service and connection.



SPECIAL THANK YOUS

Thank you to all the volunteers that help out with all things CYF things!

Journey Volunteers

Darian Bush
Ashley Becker
Brooke Carsrud
Taya Twedt
Joelle Winters
Jayden Almos
Andrea Morlock
Matthew Morlock
Amber Overby
Cheryl Melby
Eva Hanson
Lizzy Milton
Hannah Holmquist
LeeAnn Diericks
Ellen Sandager
Chaundra Hilleson-Gayne
Courtney Nash-Keller
Megan Madsen

Confirmation Mentors

Alysha Haman
Brendon Jacobson
Cyndi Johnson
Kelsey Lovseth
Josh Lovseth

Youth Group Mentors

Diane Almos
Emily Johnson

April 2026

Wednesday April 1st - NO programs - Holy Week

Sunday April 5th - NO Journey- Easter Sunday

Wednesday April 8th - 2nd Grade Steppingstone- Learning the Lord's Prayer class #1; 11th Grade Steppingstone- Life of Service

Wednesday April 15th - 2nd Grade Steppingstone- Learning the Lord's Prayer class #2

Sunday April 19th - 2nd Grade Blessing - both services

Wednesday April 29th - 9th Grade Night with Parents

May 2026

Wednesday May 6th - 12th Grade Steppingstone- Graduation

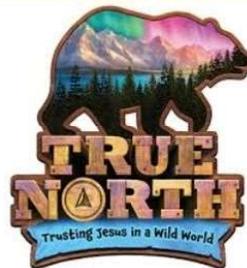
Sunday May 10th - 12th Grade Blessing at 10:30am service

Wednesday May 13th - 5th Grade Steppingstone- Welcome to Confirmation; Last Wednesday Activities (Journey, Confirmation, Youth Group)

Sunday May 17th - 5th Grade Blessing at both services; Last Sunday Journey

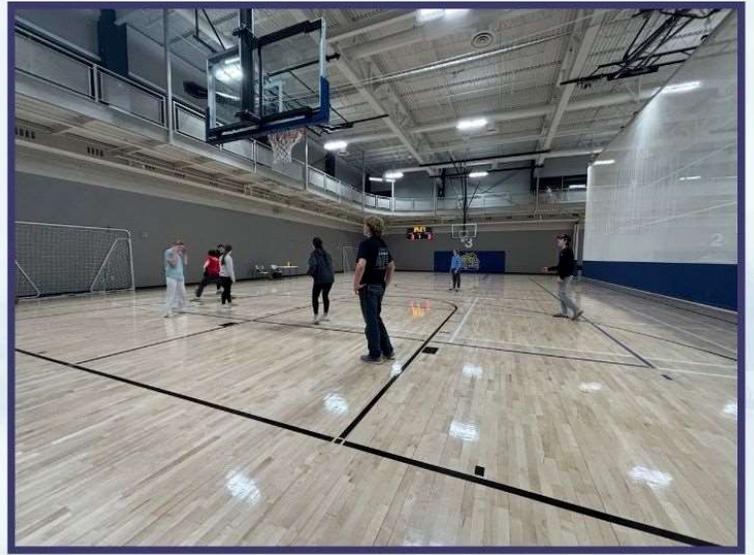
Attention 12th Graders

Don't forget to send a senior photo, baby photo, and your 12th grader's favorite bible verse to Cyndi at office@firstlutheranbrookings.org by April 15th.



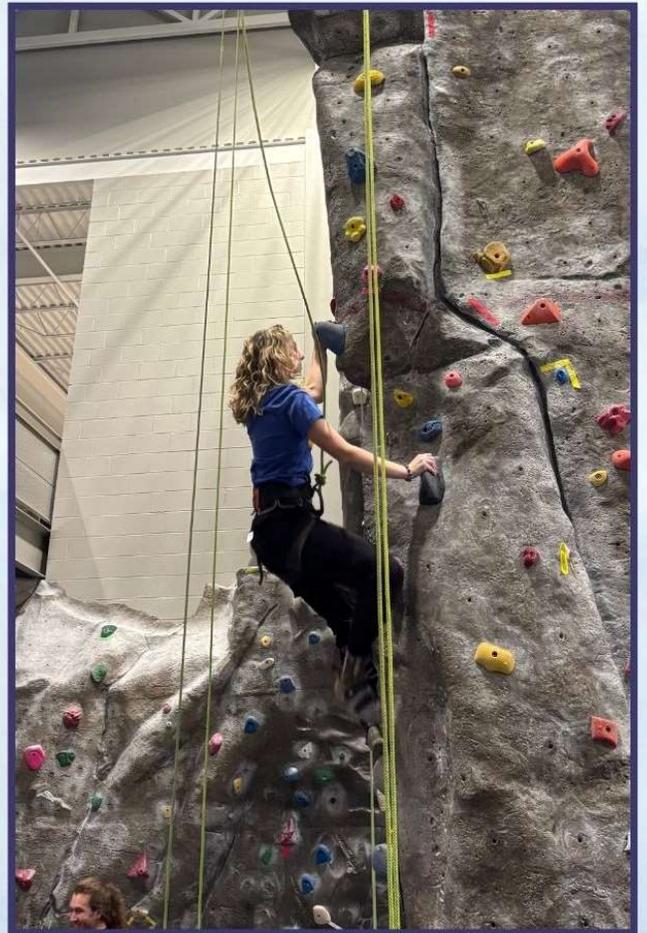
**SAVE
THE DATE**

FLC VBS
True North
July 20th-23rd
Registration for VBS will be out soon, as well as volunteer sign up!



YOUTH GROUP VISITS THE MAC

Members of the youth group got to visit the Athletic Complex on the SDSU campus one night in February. They learned how your body is a gift from God and why it is important to take care of it. They also got to try out some of the different activities offered such as rock climbing, pickleball, basketball, lifting weights and table tennis.



Palm Sunday Brunch CYF Fundraiser

**Sunday, March 29
9:30 - 12:30**

**Egg Bake - Pastries
Donuts - Juice - Coffee
Fellowship and more**

**Donations to go to Support CYF Events
throughout the Summer!**

Easter Photo Opp!

Lauren Doyle, with
Jae & Juniper Photography,
will be setting up a lovely
backdrop photo area! This
will be in the usual location
next to the Office Outpost in
the Mission Coffee House. She
will be available for free
photos, or feel free to take
your own!!

donations needed!



Scan the QR Code above or
stop down at the Office
Outpost and sign up to help
with the Palm Sunday Brunch!
We are in need of: Egg Bakes,
Donuts, Orange Juice, Pastries,
Set Up, Serving, and Clean Up.

Thank You!!



The Membership Records of First Lutheran Church for February & March 2026

New Members:
Barbara M Thompson

Baptisms:
Vivian Greenough, daughter of Seth & Morgan Greenough

Deaths:
Jerry Johnson, David Gullickson, Rev. George Gehant III,
Glen Bren and Ed Higgins

Gifts given in memory of: Jerry Johnson, Rick Stoebner, David Gullickson

Siblings in Christ,

We are thrilled to invite you to participate in our upcoming mission partnership with Laundry with Love, a vital ministry of Church on the Street, scheduled for May 26, 2026! This is an opportunity to live out our mission of fostering faith, creating community through service, and loving all of God's people within and beyond our walls. We need 12 volunteers to help prepare a hearty meal, welcome guests, serve the meal, build healthy relationships, and distribute donations. Volunteers sign up begins on April 7, 2026, and ends on May 22, 2026. We will also collect perishable and non-perishable food items.

Look for more information in the bulletin announcement.

Blessings, Vicar Hannah



"...Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another..." (John 13:34-5).

MUSIC DEPARTMENT UPDATE

"Up from the grave He arose, with a mighty triumph o'er His foes; He arose a victor from the dark domain, and He lives forever, with His saints to reign.

He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!"

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Such glorious plants and music for our Easter services. Thank you to all who contributed.

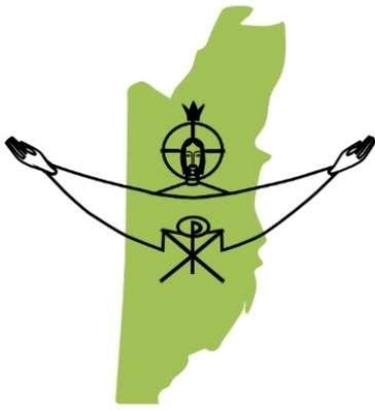
Easter will continue to be celebrated for seven more Sundays in our church year!

As we look forward to the rest of April and May, the handbells will be ringing April 12th and May 3rd.

As I am having knee replacement in April, there will be special music after Easter and through May.

Thank you to all the dedicated musicians who sang in the choir, played instruments, and/or lead songs on Sunday morning. Your willingness to be actively involved in the music program at FLC is truly appreciated and enhances the worship services. We have been proclaiming God's love through music.

Pat Anderson, Music Coordinator for the 8:30 service



belize

Celebrating FLC Connections in Belize

**COME
and SEE!**

Belize Business: Come and See!
Spring 2026

Spring brings plans for our annual mission trip to Belize with 14 FLC members and friends travelling for around 10 days. This year's trip in the third week in March finds us busy planning and excited about spending time with Dee and students at Alvin L. Young high school. We are again packing extra suitcases that are filled with sewing supplies and instructional materials. This is the only way to get needed items down to Dee for her sewing class.

Members of our group have also been working on creating a Sunday School lesson that we will deliver in Succotz. Noah's ark activities and more lesson materials for students at Victorious elementary school are bulging out of several suitcases. We plan to have a lot of fun -- and we also pray for energy to keep up with the children.

Mr. Bay, the principal, also plans to keep us busy: teaching cooking classes as we help launch the school's newest classroom focused on food and nutrition. This building project and the new appliances received funding from FLC. We're bringing arts and crafts instruction.

Back on the homefront: Thank you for continuing to donate gently used purses, jewelry and Christmas décor. These items can be left at the FLC Welcome Desk or let us know if we can pick up donations. The fundraising plans are in the works! Volunteers are always most welcome.

And – most importantly, please support our work through your prayers, that we may be faithful workers and servants in sharing the Good News of Jesus through our words and deeds.

We are One in Mission; thanks be to God!



Bound for Belize, suitcases and team t-shirts will accompany the March FLC mission team.

Watch for mission trip updates on FB with team member Dawn Foiles hosting some photos on her personal page as time allows.



JOIN US FOR AN FLC DAY
OF SERVICE MAKING
QUILTS FOR LUTHERAN
WORLD RELIEF AND LOCAL
AGENCIES. ALL TALENTS
AND SKILLS ARE WELCOME.

Tie One On

Goal: 100 Lutheran World Relief Quilts

SATURDAY JUNE 20, 2026

Join us any time between 9:00am and 3:00pm

First Lutheran Church

Fellowship Hall (basement)

337 8th St, Brookings, SD 57006

**Accepting donations of fabric, sheets, cash, gift cards*

*Please register to ensure an accurate
count for coffee breaks & sandwich lunch*



Contact: Julie Phinney

(507) 201-7155

Mjphinney@msn.com

Medary Conference

Women of the ELCA

Theme: "I Am Worthy"

Saturday, April 11,

2026 10 am – 3:30 pm

First Lutheran Church

337 8th St Brookings SD

Spring Gathering

Registration – 9:00 am Coffee/caramel rolls

Cost - \$13.00 (includes lunch)

Offering: ½ Conference Projects

½ SD Synodical Organization

Bible Study led by Vicar Hannah Fleming

Speakers: Pastor Laura Phillips- St Dymas and LSS Representative

Silent Auction:

Proceeds to St Dymas ReEntry, LSS

The Shepherd Shop
Bookstore on site to
purchase books/gifts



**FIRST
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CHURCH**
BROOKINGS

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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If you have an article or information for the June/July newsletter, please have it to the church office no later than 5:00pm on May 7th

If you would like information put in the Sunday announcements, please have it in the church office by noon the Monday before. Thank you!

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter via email, please call the church office at 605-692-6251 or email office@firstlutheranbrookings.org



x

x

x

Apr-26

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
<p>Only church activities are included on this calendar. Check the on-line calendar for outside meetings and events scheduled. (Calendar subject to change.)</p> <p>HC = Holy Communion SS = SteppingStone</p>			<p>NO WEDNESDAY NIGHT PROGRAMMING</p>	<p>Preschool Closed 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Worship Service</p>	<p>Preschool Closed 7:00pm Good Friday Worship Service</p>	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<p>EASTER NO JOURNEY 7:00am Worship Service w/HC 8:30am Worship Service w/HC 10:30am Worship Service w/HC</p>	<p>CHURCH OFFICES AND MISSION COFFEE HOUSE CLOSED</p>	<p>8:30am Quilters 9:30am Staff Meeting 2:00pm Bible Study</p>	<p>5:00pm Meal 5:45 Bell Choir 6:00pm Journey; 2nd grade SS #1 7:00pm 11th grade SS; Youth Group and Confirmation; NO Sanctuary Choir</p>			<p>WELCA - Medary Conference Meeting Registratio @ 9:00am</p>
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<p>8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Journey; Conversations with Council 10:30am Contemporary Worship</p>	<p>9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What</p>	<p>8:30am Quilters 2:00pm Bible Study</p>	<p>5:00pm Meal 5:30pm Conv. with Council 5:45 Bell Choir 6:00pm Journey; 2nd grade SS #2 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir, Youth Group and Confirmation</p>	<p>10:00am WELCA bible study</p>		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<p>2ND GRADE STEPPINGSTONE RECOGNITION @ BOTH SERVICES 8:30am Traditional Worship w/HC 9:30am Journey 10:30am Contemporary Worship w/HC 3:30pm Charcuterie & Connection</p>	<p>9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What</p>	<p>8:30am Quilters 2:00pm Bible Study</p>	<p>5:00pm Meal 5:45 Bell Choir 6:00pm Journey 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir, Youth Group and Confirmation</p>			
26	27	28	29	30		
<p>8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Journey 10:30am Contemporary Worship</p>	<p>9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What</p>	<p>8:30am Quilters 2:00pm Bible Study</p>	<p>5:00pm Meal 5:45 Bell Choir 6:00pm Journey 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir, Youth Group, 9th Grade SS w/parents, and Confirmation</p>			

May-26

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
<p>Only church activities are included on this calendar. Check the on-line calendar for outside meetings and events scheduled. (Calendar subject to change.)</p> <p>HC = Holy Communion SS = SteppingStone</p>						
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9TH GRADE STEPPINGSTONE RECOGNITION @ BOTH SERVICES 8:30am Traditional Worship Service w/HC 9:30am Journey 10:30am Contemporary Worship Service w/HC	9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What	8:30am Quilters 2:00pm Bible Study	5:00pm Meal 6:00pm Journey 7:00pm Youth Group, Confirmation, 12th Grade SS w/parents			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
SENIOR RECOGNITION SUNDAY @ 10:30 SERVICE 8:30am Traditional Worship Service 9:30am Journey 10:30am Contemporary Worship Service 11:30am Reception for Seniors	9:30am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Sew What	8:30am Quilters 2:00pm Bible Study	5:00pm Meal 6:00pm Last Journey; 5th Grade SS 7:00pm Last Youth Grp & Confirmation			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
5TH GRADE STEPPINGSTONE RECOGNITION @ BOTH SERVICES 8:30am Traditional Worship Service w/HC 9:30am Last Journey 10:30am Contemporary Worship Service w/HC	9:30am Staff Meeting 10:30am Preschool Graduation 5:30pm Sew What	LAST DAY OF PRESCHOOL 8:30am Quilters 2:00pm Bible Study		10:00am WELCA Bible Study		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE STARTS 9:00am Worship Service	CHURCH OFFICES AND MISSION COFFEE HOUSE CLOSED	8:30am Quilters 9:30am Staff Meeting 2:00pm Bible Study	BLOOD DRIVE			
31						
9:00am Worship Service						