



Reaching Out

St. John's Newsletter • June & July 2026

Office Hours

Mon - Thurs 9-3

Friday 9-12

1804 Highland Ave.

Eau Claire, WI

54701

A Message From Pastor Christine

Practicing Sabbath – “Honor the Sabbath Day and Keep it Holy”

I am going to do something I have never done before for a newsletter. I am going to share a confirmation lesson that I wrote for this year's 9th grade confirmation class, albeit spruced up a bit for adults. It's a lesson that I think is worth repeating, especially given that it is summer now. I have gotten to a point as a pastor that I worry that my members do not “Sabbath”. That is, they don't rest enough. And, I assure you, I find Sabbath taking as difficult as many others do. At our 9th grade class, I asked everyone to raise their hand if when going on vacation, they packed in even more than when they were at home, making them more tired when they returned. While as a few of the 9th graders raised their hands, almost ALL of the mentor adults raised theirs. Even when on a ‘vacation’, we tend to over accomplish. Perhaps if we spend money on something, we feel we have to! So, this lesson is a great lesson for all of us!

Sabbath – Think on these things:

- The third commandment says: “Honor the Sabbath Day and keep it holy.” Let's look at the commandments: Open your Bible on your own at home to Exodus 20:1-17 – look at verse 8-11. There's a lot of explanation there. What does Sabbath mean?
- When you hear the word Sabbath, what do you think that is?
- Form a list of activities that you enjoy which do not include the following:
 - Something you must do*
 - Something you have to do*
 - Something you should do*

Now, look at your list. Anything you must do, have to do, or should do generally is not resting or taking Sabbath time. Some people do like to mow their yard. It's meditative. That is Sabbath. But, if you do it because you must and absolutely loath it, then that is not restful and therefore, is not Sabbath taking. It is still work.

Sabbath Rest – Open your Bible:

One of the primary values of the Bible when it comes to time management is the Sabbath. Christians are different from other neighbors in how we spend our time outside of work; that is, how we rest. So what is the Sabbath about? Let's look at two Bible readings: Exodus 20:9-10 & Deuteronomy 5:12-15. One is about having balance from work. The other is about freedom.

However, Sabbath is about more than rest of the body; it is about inner rest of the soul. We need rest from “striving”, our tendency to overwork or over distracting ourselves, which is really a covered excuse to justify the way we live—to gain money, status, or the reputation we think we have to have. Avoiding overwork asks of us a Sabbath - a deep rest in Christ's finished work for your salvation (Hebrews 4:1-10). Only then will you be able to “walk away” regularly from your school work, job, obligations, sports, etc., and truly rest. So, how much Sabbath is enough? Nothing in the bible says you have to work 40 hours or 50 hours, but the Bible is specific about how much Sabbath you need to take. Look at Genesis 1:31. How long did God “rest” from work?

What counts for Sabbath Time? Ask yourself these questions and ponder:

- Is it always Sabbath (holy rest) if you are off work or when you aren't at school?
- Is Social Media a time of Sabbath? You might like it, but...
- Is time with God the purpose of Sabbath? Are there ways to enjoy 'holy play' outside of church and still be resting in a holy way? How?

Sabbath DO's:

- **Take some time for inactivity.** Every week have something unplanned or unstructured. Taking some time to STOP from work, obligations, striving, etc. What would that be for you?
- **Take some time for an AVOCATION.** An avocation is an interest that is not your work and does not include even an obligation you must attend, even when it is of interest to you. What would that be for you?
- **Worship** – yep. I know. Worship feels like a “must” for many and perhaps it needs to be until it's in your bones. The practice of worship does lead to rest, but this kind of practice for some can feel like obligation sometimes. At worship, you are in communion with the Holy One. That is Sabbath. How can you view worship differently now that you know it is meant to be a time of rest?
- **Word of advice:** Time in community and with family can be Sabbath, but don't always think it is. Family life also includes obligation, which you also need time away from each week. Unfortunately for some, family life is so all consuming in a negative way, it never is Sabbath. So, too, for friends at work, school, social groups, sports teams, etc. I hope that is not the case for any of you, but think about this when contemplating Sabbath time.

Remember what the Sabbath is for: It's not for GOD, it's for YOU! It is a gift.

Here is a great quote to remind you:

“The purpose of Sabbath is not simply to rejuvenate yourself in order to do more production, nor is it the pursuit of pleasure. The purpose of Sabbath is to enjoy your God, life in general, what you have accomplished in the world through his help, and the freedom you have in the gospel—the freedom from slavery to any material object or human expectation. The Sabbath is a sign of the hope that we have in the world to come.” –Tim Keller

Have a restful summer!
Pastor Christine

Diner's Club

Tuesday, June 16th, diners will meet at 5:30 at Hallie Golf course.

Tuesday, July 21st, diners will meet at 5:30 at Azul Tequila.

Call or RSVP the Monday prior to Louise Alt at 715-834-1693 or altlk@charter.net

Trivia Corner

What was the first miracle performed by Christ?

Hint: Mazel Tov!

St. John's History...Moving towards our 160th*Mary Spryer*

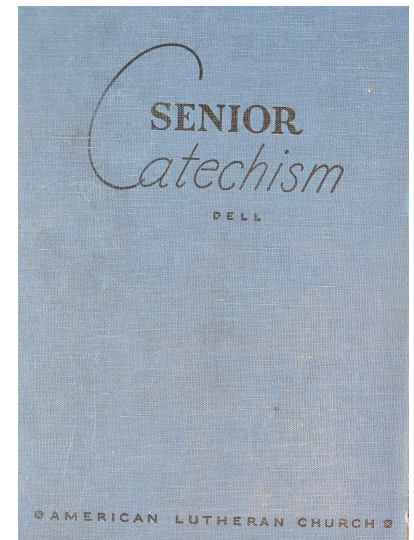
It's been just over 18 months since our 150th Anniversary in October of 2024. In the meantime, some new items have been donated to our St. John's Archives and Collections.

Thanks to:

Allen Christopherson for a newspaper clipping from 1975 announcing Pastor Schmeichel's impending retirement from St. John's.

Mary Arkin for an enlarged, copy of the St. John's chancel from 1979 WITH the hymn boards, but WITHOUT the Jesus statue.

Cheryl Stage for her Senior Catechism (Confirmation) book. Cheryl was confirmed at St. John's in 1963.

**We are still looking for:**

- Any pictures of the sanctuary with the Hammond organ (That would be a picture from BEFORE 1964)
- Any pictures of the stained glass windows that were removed from what is now the gathering area
- Any pictures of rooms in their original condition from 1955 (before they were consolidated, or changed)
- Any pictures of functions that are no longer happening at St. John's (baseball teams, dartball teams, plays, musicals, holiday decorations in the sanctuary, bulletins or programs from events, etc.)
- Stories (funny or informative) about St. John's Lutheran
- Bonus credit if you know the date the photo was taken, when the event happened, and/or who is in the picture!

If you come across any pictures or items you think should find a place in our church archives, or in any future anniversary celebration, please contact:
Mary Spryer 925-876-3520 or maryspryer@gmail.com

GriefShare 2026

August 16th – November 8th

2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

GriefShare is a 13-week program that provides weekly support for those grieving the loss of loved ones. The program incorporates elements of faith, a weekly video, and conversations among group members to find support. The GriefShare program will begin on Sunday, August 16th, ending with the last session on November 8th. The sessions will be held from 2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M. in the St. John's conference room/Library.

There is no cost to participants, as the GriefShare books, journals, and treats are being provided by St. John's Helen Brougham Fund, SJ's Fountain of Life Fund, and St. John's Caring Ministry. There is a limit to the number of participants, so please sign-up for this fall 2026 session on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area, or check the GriefShare website (griefshare.org) to pre-register or to check for other days and locations in the Chippewa Valley.

If you would like to speak with someone about the program, call the church office 715-834-9571 and leave a message for: Jean OR Mary

GriefShare
SUPPORT GROUP

Memorials & Honorariums

General Operations

General Operations: IHO Ron Mastin's 90th birthday by Gary & Cora Klawiter
 General Operations: IMO Leslie Hunt by Scott Olsen
 General Operations: IMO husband Roger & son Alan Dahl by Janet Dahl
 General Operations: IMO Herb & Irene Horlacher by Ronald Horlacher
 General Operations: IMO Elaine Krause by friends & family

Caring Ministry

Caring Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by friends & family

TV Ministry

TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Dean & Colette Cline
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Marlys Livermore
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Mary & William Hanafin
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Luther Strasburg
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Lucille Webinger
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Marlene & Warren Schultz
 TV Ministry: IMO Harold & Elaine Krause by Cindy & David Rasmussen
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Linda & Nate Aaseng
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Mary Siedling
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Carole Veness
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by Dauneen & Curt Amundson
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by friends & family
 TV Ministry: IMO Elaine Krause by friends & family
 TV Ministry: IMO Florence Berseth by Mary Reppe
 TV Ministry: IMO Deb Freeland's mother, Florence Berseth, by friends



Cemetery Roads

Cemetery Roads: IMO Beverly Odegaard by her husband, Henry

Capital Program

Capital Program: IMO Elaine Krause by friends & family

Preschool

Preschool Scholarship: IMO Mary Hanson by Larry & LaVonne Krause
 Preschool Operations: IMO Greg Brandt's mother, Wilma Brandt, by Marlo & Bev Orth

Youth

Summer Stretch: IHO great grandsons Wyatt, Lucas & Hunter Hedlund by Janet Dahl

JuBellation

JuBellation: IHO Ron Mastin's 90th birthday by Eric Nielsen

Monthly Giving Envelopes

June: ELCA World Hunger, Neighbor to Neighbor

July: Lutheran World Relief, Capital Program

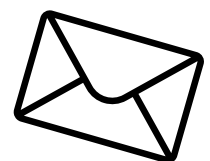
August: ELCA Global Mission

September: Preschool, Capital Program

October: Tanzania Tuition, TV Ministry

November: Caring Ministry, Capital Program, Good Samaritan, Thanksgiving

December: Christmas Eve, Holy Christmas



Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who came out and supported our Youth Brat Stand and Yard Sale!

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thrivent Choice Dollars allows eligible members to direct Thrivent Financial's charitable dollars to St. John's Lutheran Church. To be a benefit member with Thrivent Financial, you must own one of the following Thrivent products: life insurance, health insurance, disability insurance or annuities, and based on your premium and cash value, your Thrivent Choice dollars will be calculated. Letters or emails are sent annually to these members indicating the amount of charitable dollars available to them. If you believe that you qualify and have not received a letter, please contact your Thrivent Financial representative.

For the period September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026, St. John's is designating the Thrivent Choice contributions to our general operations fund to help support our ministries, programs and maintain our day to day operations. When you are contacted by Thrivent Financial, please prayerfully consider directing these charitable dollars to St. John's.

The Thrivent Financial members who directed their "Choice Dollars" to St. John's Lutheran Church for May were Emily Ernster, Kathy Freitag and Mike McCarty.

St. John's thanks you for doing this.

WELCA Bible Study*Spirit Lutheran*

The summer Bible Study retreat for women of St. John's and Spirit Lutheran will be on Wednesday, Aug. 12 at Spirit Lutheran. There will be coffee and treats from 8:30-9:00. The study will be from 9:00 - 12:00 led by Pastor Jon Paul. The Bible study is from the Summer 2026 issue of Gather magazine and titled "I Am Worthy." The study reminds us that we are God's beloved children and precious in God's sight. Copies of the study will be available. Please join us!

**Offering Envelopes**

Please pick up your church offering envelopes in the office. Any remaining after June 30th will be disposed of.

Lost & Found

There are a lot of miscellaneous items in the Lost & Found bin located on the main floor on top of the coat rack by the elevator. Anything left after June 30th will be taken to Goodwill.

st. john's christian PRESCHOOL

Registration 2026-2027

St. John's Christian Preschool is currently enrolling students for the 2026-2027 school year. It is not too late to register or to refer a family to our preschool.

We invite you to visit our classrooms, meet our teachers, and request information to learn about the preschool experience! Click on our logo in the St John's website to find more information and registration materials.

Classes are limited to ten students each and are filled on a first-come-first-serve basis. We learn a lot, have some fun, and share God's love!

Director: Nancy Hanson (715)-834-9571.

SJCP in the Summer

We are happy to have time to clean, study, plan and prepare for the next school year.

While our classrooms are quieter in the summer, we know preschool children are learning and growing every day - in playgrounds and backyards, in the company of family and caregivers, or alone with a favorite toy or book.

We look forward to seeing current and returning families at St. John's VBS and Summer Stretch!

To our St. John's congregational family, we say thank you for your love, encouragement, generosity and support as we continue in shared ministry.

We had two sunny beautiful days for our Spring Field Trip to the Public Library, Olson's Ice cream, and bubble/chalk play in the Pablo courtyard!



Children, Youth & Family Updates



Summertime Summertime at St. John's

Pray & Play in the Park 

Sunday
June 14th
July 12th
August 9th

Join us in St. John's Park after worship!




Stretching in faith
Serving with heart

Wednesdays-
June 10 and 17
July 8, 15, 22
July 29-Valleyfair

Any youth completing 6th-12th grade in the spring of 2026. We encourage friends to come, too!

Sign up for all dates or if you can only make a few, sign up for those!



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

**AUGUST 3-6, 2026
FROM 1-4PM
AGES 4-4TH GRADE**



Luther Park Summer Camp Link-
<https://lutherpark.org/summer-camps>

Blessing Send off for the Mission Trip
June 20th 6:00 AM

Summer Stretch Dates
June 10, 17
July 8, 15, 22
July 29-Valleyfair
8:30am-3:45pm

JOIN US THIS SUMMER AT 

LUTHERAN FAMILY SWIM NIGHT!

FRIDAY
JULY 24TH
FREE POOL ENTRY!

7:00 - 8:45 PM

Fairfax Pool - 4200 Fairfax St
Eau Claire, WI 54701



Notice Board

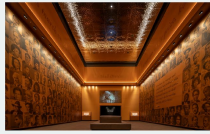
Please stop buying condiments and other perishables without first checking the fridge! When cleaning out the fridge, we found ancient relics from lost times that are haunted by the ghosts of food past. We would like to prevent a build up of both ancient ghosts and catsup bottles, so we ask that you all are more vigilant about purchases. Thank you!

A huge thank you to the Synder family who installed new LED lighting for our outdoor sign! Thanks to their time and talents, we were able to take steps towards more sustainable energy use at St. John's.

While volunteer appreciation week may have (officially) been in April, it's only fitting that we celebrate you year-round. After all, you are here supporting us every day and every step of the way. We truly could not do what we do without you. While this thanks may pale in comparison, know that our gratitude runs deep. From the smallest cleaning projects to major construction: your impact cascades out to the world as one unanimous voice to keep our river of compassion flowing. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you.

Join the Civil Rights Pilgrimage!

Montgomery * Birmingham * Selma * Atlanta
October 28 - November 2, 2026



Trip Highlights

- EJI Legacy Museum and Memorial
- Walking Tour of Downtown Montgomery
- MLK's "Dexter Church"
- Freedom Rides Museum
- Rosa Parks Museum
- slave market square
- The Selma Bridge Tour
- Birmingham 16th St Church
- Ingram Park
- Birmingham City Jail
- "Dynamite" Hill
- and much more!

Trip Details

FREE GIFT - when your Registration Form and Deposit are received

COST \$2500 - includes airfare, hotels, entry fees, speaker fees, some meals

\$200 Deposit - is required to register

WHY was the Voting Rights Act of 1965 so important?

WHAT is a foot soldier?

WHAT happened during the Montgomery Bus Boycott?

HOW can you learn the answers?

Learn history by WALKING!

For questions or more details, contact Joanne at: 651-398-3989 or joanne@inourhandsadventures.com



Thanks to your generous donations, we were able to replace our kitchen fridge! We sincerely appreciate your willingness to come together to keep our building up and running.

Indian Boarding Schools: ELCA Truth-Seeking and Truth-Telling Initiative – Join the work

The Truth-Seeking and Truth-Telling Initiative is leading a coordinated effort to research Lutheran involvement in Indian boarding and day schools dating back to the 1820s. We are seeking both clergy and lay volunteers who want to be part of this initiative. All are welcome, including those with skills in research, data collection, organizing, education, and leadership. The goals are to find and gather information in order to share it with impacted Indigenous individuals, families, and communities; for our church members to know our history of church-sponsored Indian boarding schools and their devastating impacts on Native communities; all as part of an ongoing truth and healing process.

We started in 2022 with 15 synods across four states. In May 2023, we expanded to 27 synods across ten states. We are now expanding to all synods across all states. We welcome you!

To learn more and to get involved, visit tstti.org

★ ENCOUNTERS ★

JONAH'S 3RD ANNUAL ART EXHIBITION

Tell us your story through art! We need artists to answer this question: **"What defines who you are, beyond labels?"** How can a viewer encounter it through your work? Art is due November 1, 2026.

ARTISTS

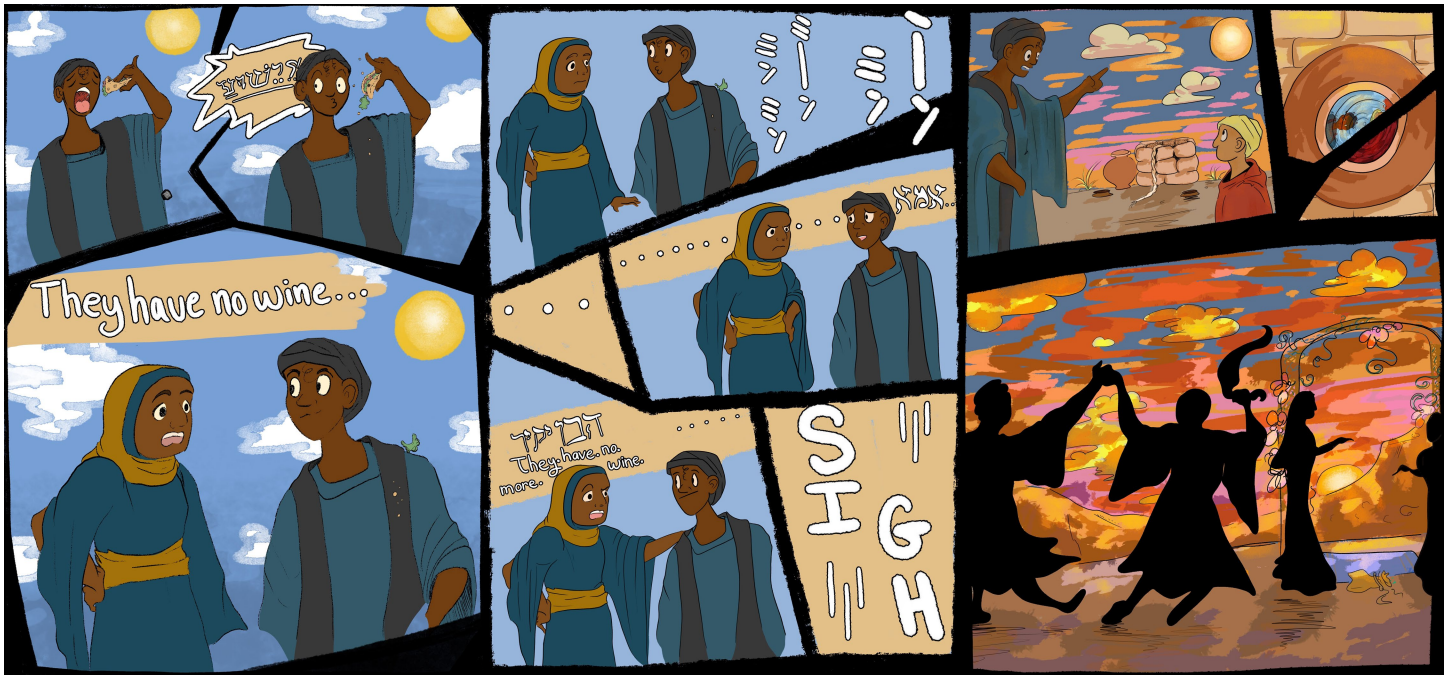
STORIES

Not an artist? No problem! Share your story with us, and **we will pair you anonymously with an artist who can make your story into art.** Stories are due October 1, 2026 to allow time for the artists to create.

Do you enjoy meeting new people or working behind the scenes? Sign up to **help volunteer with the planning, set up, staffing the exhibit, or final clean up.** Final date/time of exhibit coming soon.

VOLUNTEERS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY: JONAH, CVTC ELL, HMAA, UWEC ART DEPT, BAREDFEET, & AMY HAHN ART THERAPIST



Trivia Corner

A: Water turned to wine (John 2:1)
THE WEDDING AT CANA!!

“Together in God” Broadcast Schedule

WQOW Broadcast @ 10:30 AM

June - 7, 21
July - 5, 19

**ABC Network
Channel 18
Cable 9
HD 618**

Weekend Events:

- 7/3 - Office Closed
- 7/24 - Wild Spirituality Retreat
- 7/24 - 7:00 Lutheran Family Swim Night @ Fairfax



Church Council

- At-Large:** Jeff Putnam
- At-Large:** Mike Kitzman
- Secretary:** Karla Spies
- Treasurer:** Norb Kirk
- Caring Ministry:** Mary Spryer
- Community & World:** Louise Alt
- Education Ministry:** Stacy Kelly
- Faith Family:** OPEN
- President:** Jean Jirovec
- Seniors & Home Visitation:** Larry Schaefer
- Vice President:** Dramus Peuse
- Worship & Music:** Richard Spryer
- Youth Ministry:** Becky Cater

Your Church Staff

- Administrative Assistant:** Genny Gorton
- Bookkeeper:** Marlee Agner
- Communications Coordinator:** Lydia Elko
- Custodian:** Tyeanna Segura
- CYF Director:** Amanda Burkart
- Facility & Grounds Manager:** David LaRose
- Ministers:** All the Congregation
- Music Director:** Mark Lundin
- Organist:** Linda Ranney
- Pastor:** Pr. Christine Emerson
- St. John’s Christian Preschool:**
Nancy Hanson, Amanda Schroeder,
Amanda Downing, Bria Lindstrom

June Calendar

31 9:00 Worship	1 6:30 Boy Scout Court of Honor	2 9:45 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	3 9:00 Quilting 3:00 Men's Bible Study	4 1:30 St. John's Apartment Services 6:00 Youth 6:30 New Member Orientation
7 9:00 Worship	8 10:00 Constitution Meeting 5:15 Education	9 9:45 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	10 8:30 Summer Stretch 3:00 Men's Bible Study 6:30 Mission Trip Meeting	11 10:00 Caring Ministry 7:00 Property
14 9:00 Worship 10:15 Pray & Play 10:30 Caretakers of Creation	15 3:00 Bible Study @ The Classics 5:00 Stewardship	16 9:45 Staff Meeting 5:30 Diner's Club @ Lake Hallie Golf Course 7:00 STEP Group	17 8:30 Summer Stretch 1:00 Cards & Games 3:00 Men's Bible Study	18 9:00 Volunteer @ The Community Table
21 9:00 Worship	22	23 9:45 Staff Meeting 6:30 Church of the Wild 7:00 STEP Group	24 9:00 Quilting 3:00 Men's Bible Study	25 10:30 Oakwood Health Services

July Calendar

28 9:00 Worship	29 8:00 WELCA Retreat @ Luther Park	30 9:45 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	1 9:00 Quilting 3:00 Men's Bible Study	2 6:00 Youth
5 9:00 Worship	6	7 9:45 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	8 8:30 Summer Stretch 3:00 Men's Bible Study	9 7:00 Property
12 9:00 Worship 10:15 Pray & Play 10:30 Caretakers of Creation	13 5:15 Education	14 9:45 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	15 8:30 Summer Stretch 1:00 Cards & Games 3:00 Men's Bible Study	16 9:00 Volunteer @ The Community Table 6:00 Council
19 9:00 Worship	20 3:00 Bible Study @ The Classics 4:00 Finance	21 9:45 Staff Meeting 5:30 Diner's Club @ Azul Tequila 7:00 STEP Group	22 WS Retreat 8:30 Summer Stretch 9:00 Quilting 3:00 Men's Bible Study	23 WS Retreat 10:30 Oakwood Health Services
26 9:00 Worship	27	28 9:45 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	29 8:30 Summer Stretch @ Valley Fair 9:00 Quilting 3:00 Men's Bible Study	30