



Reaching Out

St. John's Newsletter

Office Hours
Mon - Thurs 9-3
Friday 9-12

1804 Highland Ave.
Eau Claire, WI
54701

A Message From Pastor Christine

"You are dust and to dust you shall return" -Genesis 3:19

On Ash Wednesday, we were reminded yet again that we are dirt creatures; that is, we are made from dust, carbon, the substance from which all living things derive. It's sobering to consider every year. When God created us from the star stuff of the earth, we were blessed with an incredible garden and granted the power of responsibility, to steward and care for all that God made. But, as we know from Genesis, human beings rebelled against the very one who gave them the gift of life. They broke trust with God. This is the definition of sin and still is today – the breaking of trust or relationship. But, really, it's quite simple. We don't want anyone to tell us what we can and can't do. We rebel against God still because ultimately, we would rather decide how things are than God. We often believe that we have complete power over our lives, the lives of others, and the creation around us. Yet, even when we know that we abuse others, the earth, and ourselves, we often are in denial that mortality is final. While this seems like bad news for us dirt creatures, the Good News is that God didn't leave us trapped there. Instead, out of love, God came down to share our mortal life and die. What a remarkable God. This is our Lenten journey, the journey to the cross. God was and is ALL IN for us.

Each year on Ash Wednesday, we face our limited existence in this world, and we travel 40 days to remember the gift and sacrifice of Christ. The imposition of ashes placed upon our foreheads feels exactly like that: an imposition, an imposing of that reminder, a stark warning of our existence as temporary here on earth. No doubt people recognize this when they attend a burial, when upon the final committal to the ground, loved ones hear the uncomfortable and painful reminder, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust". We are dust, and to dust we shall return. But, this imposition, this reminder in ashes, is also an invitation to enter an incredible spiritual journey from death to new life, from the cross to the Resurrection. Essentially, it is a journey to our own Resurrection, a Resurrection we share through Christ at the waters of our own baptism, even when we remain mortal.

So here we are at the start of March. We are going all in for the journey yet again. The carbon reminder of the fleeting state of things, long rubbed off, now bring us to the slow march to a cross and beyond to something unfathomable: that God should choose the path of mortality, too, so that the universe could experience the eternal love and victory of a God who goes all in to restore all that was broken, making the dust of mortality live again. Spring is coming, dear friends in Christ! And, with it, the reminder of an Easter life fulfilled. May you find blessings as we approach the feast as the dirt creatures we are blessed to be.

Pastor Christine

Cemetery

Dear Members of St. John's Lutheran Church,

St. John's (German) Lutheran Cemetery is one of six cemeteries located in the 1800 block of Omaha Street. The land was acquired in 1879 and was divided into approximately 3,000 grave sites.

There is approximately a half mile of paved surface in the three roadways that run the length of the cemetery. I am not sure when the current road system was installed, but over the years, the condition of the roads has gradually deteriorated and does not reflect the level of care that is appropriate for the cemetery. A cemetery is a sacred place of remembrance, reflection, and connection for many families within our congregation and the wider community.

In 2025, a Cemetery Capital account was established, funded through donations and 85% of lot sale proceeds, to resurface the cemetery roads. The estimated cost of this project is approximately \$70,000. Thanks to several generous gifts, the account currently has a balance of \$22,000—an encouraging start toward our goal.

We prayerfully invite you to consider making a contribution to this meaningful project. Gifts of any size are deeply appreciated and will be used solely for the improvement of the cemetery roads.

Thank you for your continued support of our church and its ministries. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to reach out to me.

With gratitude and blessings,
Donna Meier

Constitutional Committee

As mentioned at the Annual Meeting, an advisory committee has been formed to review and begin a long process of reviewing and revising our Bylaws. It has been many years since our Bylaws were created and passed by this congregation. This advisory committee will review the Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions to help discern ways to enable our Bylaws to better reflect the makeup of our congregation, staff, volunteerism within in our community, and our mission statement to continue to be "...a people formed in the waters of Christian baptism to be a fountain of life for all who gather here, overflowing into a river of compassion for the world." Please see the minutes of our first meeting attached as a link here or in our Enews. These meetings are open and anyone may choose to attend. Our next meeting is Monday, March 9th at 10am in the library conference room. Future listening sessions and timelines will be announced as we go. The committee members are: Sandy Huebscher, Norb Kirk, Dramus Peuse, Jean Jirovec, Mary Spryer, and Pastor Christine

Can You Help?

Hope Gospel Mission's Community Haven House is a safe space for people experiencing homelessness to get connected with the resources they need to move toward wellness and out of chronic homelessness. To do this well, more help is needed. Volunteers connect guests with agencies, assist guests during the check-in process, assist with shower and laundry schedules, and help with cleaning tasks. Shifts are two or four hours, once every week or every other week. Volunteer opportunities are listed at hopegospelmission.org, or contact volunteer coordinator Linda: 715-552-5566, ext. 1302; or email her at lindav@hopegospelmission.org.

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MEETING: February 9, 2026 at 10 a.m.

Present: Pr. Christine Emerson (staff), Sandy Huebscher, Jean Jirovec, Norb Kirk, Dramus Peuse, Mary Spryer

The meeting started at 10:05 a.m.; Pr. Emerson opened with a prayer. This first meeting was mainly a discussion of how we want to proceed with reviewing St. John's constitution.

1. Is St. John's constitution outdated for us? Should we review our mission statement?

“St. John's Lutheran Church is a people formed in the waters of Christian baptism to be a fountain of life for all who gather here, overflowing into a river of compassion for the world.”

2. Do we have a listening session for St. John's members who may have questions? Maybe early fall during adult education?

3. Once we are further along reviewing our constitution, do we invite the synod parliamentarian to meet with us?

4. The synod should review any changes we make to the constitution before we present it to the congregation for approval.

5. Faith Family, Education and Youth Ministries:

Do we need all three or is there a way to consolidate these ministries?

Mary Spryer volunteered to contact Immanuel, Hope, Spirit and Grace churches to see if they recently changed their constitutions and what they did. It was decided our first step would be to compare the required provisions (marked with an *) in the Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA to St. John's constitution to make sure St. John's provisions are up to date. We divided the chapters with required provisions as follows: 1-3: Jean Jirovec; 4-6: Sandy Huebscher; 7-8: Norb Kirk; 9 & 15: Mary Spryer; 16-20: Dramus Peuse

Our next meeting is Monday, March 9, at 10 a.m. Dramus Peuse made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mary Spryer seconded. Motion unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Sandy Huebscher

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thrivent Choice Dollars allows eligible Thrivent Financial 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 have directed their “Choice Dollars” to St. John's Lutheran Church for February was Jacklyn Hansen, Mary Haukeness-Mack, Gary & Cora Klawiter, Erv & Linda LaFave, Lois Mai, Mike McCarty and Karen Stuber.

St. John's thanks you for doing this.

Mastersingers*Eric Nielsen*

The Mastersingers will present their final concert on the 2025-2026 season, "Choral Images: Journey and Refuge" on Sunday, March 29. Held at First Congregational Church, 310 Broadway St in Eau Claire, the program will begin at 3:00. The Mastersingers welcome guests from the Macalester Asian Music Ensemble in St Paul who will play for intermission and accompany the group on some selections of the program. Tickets are available online at <http://www.themastersingers.net>. Tickets are \$25, with student tickets available for \$10. For more information you can speak with Eric Nielsen.

Caretakers of Creation*Excerpts from NH Audubon**Supporting Pollinators & Biodiversity:*

Spring is getting ready to spring. Are you ready?

Whoa! Before grabbing that rake, let's delay the cleanup to let nature awaken. Those leaves are providing shelter for pollinators and other insects that have been wintering there. That leaves litter is providing protection for the bumblebees, beetles, spiders, worms and caterpillars. Instead of removing all the organic material, adopt a balanced approach;

- Move, Don't Remove
- Fluff, Don't Bag
- Tidy Selectively
- Avoid using Leaf Blowers or Shredders

A gentle, more mindful cleanup not only helps your garden and yard but also gives pollinators the shelter they need to survive and flourish. They want to feed, breed and enjoy the flowers, trees and blossoms in your yard.

Sustainability for Spring:

- Plant Vegetables
- Plant Native Plants
- Plant Pollinators
- Talk to kids about sustainable behaviors
- Add one new Sustainable Habit

Make plans to attend the Earth Fest 2026 on April 18th at the Sonnentag Center!

Thank you,
John Price

Caring Committee*Barb Graham*

The Caring Committee would like to thank all who contributed to our Sock and Underwear Drive in January. We would especially like to thank The Fountain of Life Fund & Thrivent Financial for funds to purchase many of these times. The totals are:

- Socks - 142
- Sweatpants - 5
- Scarves - 4
- Men's T-Shirts - 20
- Long Underwear Sets - 3
- Gloves - 14
- Hats - 7
- Leggings - 3
- Hooded Jackets - 2
- Women's Briefs - 33
- Headbands - 3
- Men's Briefs - 59
- Long Underwear Bottoms - 33
- Zipped Lightweight Tops Men's - 9
- Wool Blanket - 1

Diner's Club

The diner's club in March will meet at Olive Garden restaurant March 18th at 11:30. Please RSVP to Louise Alt by March 16th at 715-834-1693 or altlk@charter.net

New Member Orientation

March 5th @ 6:30pm in the conference room

The Chosen*Adult Education*

The popular You Tube sensation historical drama on the life of Jesus called "The Chosen" is making an appearance at our Adult Education as we approach Lent! Beginning February 15th, we will study this alongside scripture. Look for the link to the drama as it is sent out each week in the Enews. Please watch the episode prior to our education hour for best results (although if you don't watch it, you are still most welcome to attend the class). The dates for this study series are:

March 1st, 8th, 15th 22nd

Trivia Corner

Who delivered Israel by killing 600 Philistines with an ox goad?

Church of the Wild

The Church of the Wild dates for the season Spring and Summer will be:

- April 28, 6:30pm
- May 26th, 6:30pm
- June 23, 6:30pm
- August 25th, 6:30pm
- September 22nd, 6:30pm

Wild Spirituality Retreat (Reservation only) at the Christine Center July 22-24

Finger Labyrinth

Promise Room & Prayer Room

A Labyrinth is a meandering path, often unicursal, with a singular path leading to a center. It is not a maze, a maze has blind dead ends that are used to confuse and trick the mind. Labyrinths are used to calm and relax. It is useful for concentrating while in contemplation or centering prayer.

We will once again have a Labyrinth available during Holy Week in the Promise Room & Prayer Room.

“Together in God” Broadcast Schedule	
WQOW Broadcast @ 10:30 AM	
March - 1, 15, 29	ABC Network
April - 12, 26	Channel 18
May - 10, 24	Cable 9
	HD 618

Memorials & Honorariums

General Operations

- IMO Edwin Hanson by Chris Muenich
- IMO my husband Roger & son Alan Dahl by Janet Dahl
- IHO my great grandsons Wyatt, Lucas & Hunter Hedlund by Janet Dahl
- IMO John Friederichs by Mary Ann Friederichs

Brick Work

- IMO Ed Hanson by Keith, Kurt & Shari Hanson
- IMO Edwin Hanson by Julie & Douglas Hedlund
- IMO Ed Hanson by Deborah & Luke Wilke
- IMO Ed Hanson by Lori & Mark O’Koren
- IMO Ed Hanson by Duane & Denay Oyen
- IMO Edwin Hanson by Donald & Jan Betthausen
- IMO Ed Hanson by Dennis & Linda Peterson
- IMO Ed Hanson by Jean Quale
- IMO Ed Hanson by Janet Tolan

TV Ministry

- IMO my mother Marguerite Branham-Miller by Bonnie Branham

Jesus Christ Superstar

A Captivating Story of the Passion of Christ

Congregations of NW Wisconsin, you are invited to a special production of Jesus Christ Superstar! This musical has impacted audiences around the world for more than 50 years and will be performed in Eau Claire the two weekends leading up to Easter. 36 talented performers will retell the last days of Jesus life leading up to his crucifixion. As we journey through this season of Lent, it is a unique way to engage in this powerful story.

Due to the generosity of a local philanthropist who covered all production costs, tickets for this production are affordable and 100% of the proceeds will benefit three local non-profits: The Community Table, JONAH, and the Eau Claire Children’s Theater.

Please reach out to Lydia for more information lydia@stjohns-ec.org

We Mourned the Death of
Lyle Romundstad, 83

We Celebrated the Baptism of
Adaline Sue Duce, daughter of Lucas & Jessalyn Duce



st. john's christian PRESCHOOL



Thank you!

The annual Shrove Tuesday fundraiser was a huge success! Thanks to everyone who worked, baked, donated, ate and played at the event. The dinner, carnival, and silent auction raised about \$2,200.00. Thank you!
Thank you! Thank you!

Preschool Days

We are enjoying a busy year at preschool and cannot believe that it is March already. God's love abounds and the children are learning and growing!



Jesus loved to teach with stories and parables and so do we! During Lent we will be learning about the lost sheep, the good Samaritan, the good soil among others. We will all look at the days of Holy week and celebrate Easter.

Conferences

Parent/Teachers conferences are scheduled this month. We appreciate the chance to connect with each family, share some discussion about their child's progress and experience here at SJCP.



2026-27 Registration

We are currently enrolling children for the 2026-27 school year. We would love to welcome your family to SJCP! Stop in the Church office for an information card that you can share with your friends and neighbors. Call Nancy Hanson for more information or to arrange a tour. 715.834.9571.

Summer Camp Registration – Best Value Pricing

Summer will be here before we know it. Days on the lake, campfires under the stars, new friendships, and faith-filled moments are already being dreamed about and planned. Now is a great time to explore camp options and take advantage of best value pricing while it's available. If summer at Luther Park has been on your heart, this is a wonderful moment to take that next step.

<https://lutherpark.org/summer-camps>

Sunday School students will be singing at 9am service on Palm Sunday (March 29th). Sunday School will follow at 10:15. Call time is 8:50!

Screenagers: Growing Up In The Digital Age

6-8 Confirmation students have an amazing opportunity to watch a documentary

When: Wednesday, March 11th 6pm-8:45pm

Where: Trinity Lutheran Church

This will be where 8th and 9th grade confirmation students will meet on March 11th. ALL 6-9th grade families are welcome. Parents please join too! 8th and 9th grade mentors are welcome too! Let's learn about ways to help our youth stay healthy, resilient and create a better balance for our kids.



Summer Stretch '26

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!



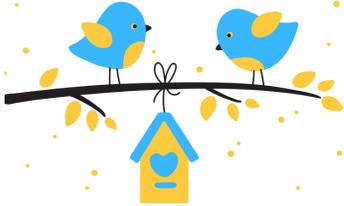
Bluebird

\$40

HOUSES

HANDCRAFTED BY
THE 2026 MISSION
TRIP YOUTH

Now Available for Pre-Order!



Call Becky Cater at 715-271-3492 to reserve yours!

Limited Quantities...

Pre-Order pick-up in church office starting the week of March 16.

All houses not sold through pre-ordering will be available for purchase on Sunday, March 29th at Palm Sunday Brunch

ELCA WOMEN'S CHIPPEWA VALLEY CONFERENCE
DAY OF RENEWAL | 2026

CARING FOR GOD'S
CREATION
BEGINNING WITH YOU

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2026
8:00 AM - 1:30 PM

SPIRIT LUTHERAN
1310 MAIN ST. | EAU CLAIRE

\$25 REGISTRATION FEE
(INCLUDES LUNCH)

COME BE PART OF THIS YEAR'S DAY OF
RENEWAL, AS WE FOCUS ON BODY, MIND,
AND SPIRIT — AND DISCOVER HOW
CARING FOR GOD'S CREATION
BEGINS WITH YOU.

REGISTRATION AND
PAYMENT ARE DUE BY
MARCH 22.

Women of the ELCA

FOR LOVE OF NEIGHBOR

A PALM SUNDAY PATH TO UNITY,
WELCOME, AND INCLUSION



**MARCH 29, 2026
EAU CLAIRE, WI**

Gathering for:

- Peaceful witness of faith
- Building community with our neighbors
- Uplifting values to care for the hungry, the thirsty, the strangers, the sick, the naked, the prisoners (Matthew 25: 31-47)

FROM
FEAR TO FIRE
IGNITING COMMUNITY FOR A PLANET IN PERIL

ECOFAITH SUMMIT
OF THE UPPER MIDWEST
APRIL 18, 2026 ~ DULUTH, MN

TROOP 30 EAU CLAIRE SPAGHETTI DINNER & SILNET AUCTION

JOIN US FOR A DELICIOUS EVENING OF FOOD, FUN, & COMMUNITY SPIRIT ALL IN SUPPORT OF TROOP 30'S SCOUTING ADVENTURES

**THURS
APRIL 9
4:30-7PM**

ST JOHN'S CHURCH
1804 HIGHLAND AVE EAU CLAIRE

GOODWILL DONATION AT THE DOOR

Scouting  America



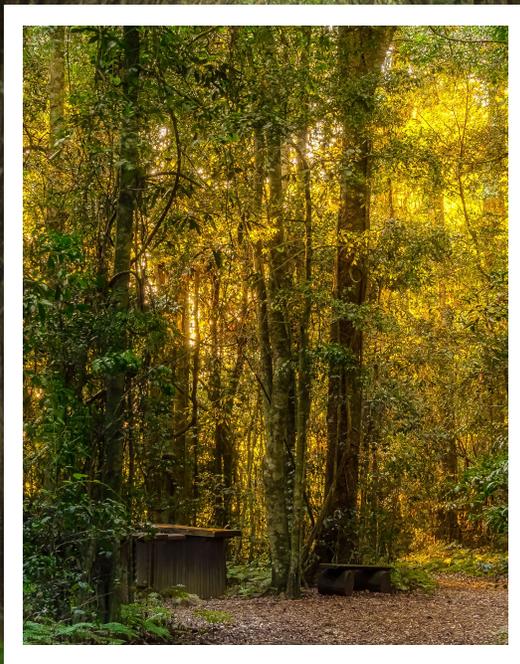
Resurrection of Our Lord Vigil of Easter

Saturday, April 4 * 7:30 pm



The Hidden Life of Trees

Jörg Adolph * Peter Wohlleben* Jan Haft



**Caretakers of Creation - Earth Month Event
April 26th * 10:30**



HOPE RESTORED FUNDRAISER

An Evening of Hope, Community, and Impact

APRIL 18TH 2026 @5PM

Knights of Columbus - 236 Pumphouse Rd
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

- Live & Reverse Auction
- Silent Auction
- 50/50 Raffle
- Memory Stones
- Gift Card Wheel
- Meal Catered by BIG PAPA BBQ



FOR TICKETS & INFO
WWW.REDHOUSEOFHOPE.COM

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

Updates

-There will be no Soup Supper on March 18th
-Church of the Wild dates have been released!
-New Member Orientation is on March 5th

Holy Week Schedule

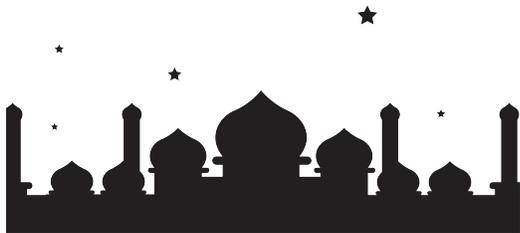
Palm & Passion Sunday
March 29th - 9:00 a.m.
Brunch - 10:15

Maundy Thursday
April 2nd - 7:00 p.m

Good Friday
April 3rd - 12:00 & 7:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday Vigil
April 4th - 7:30 p.m.

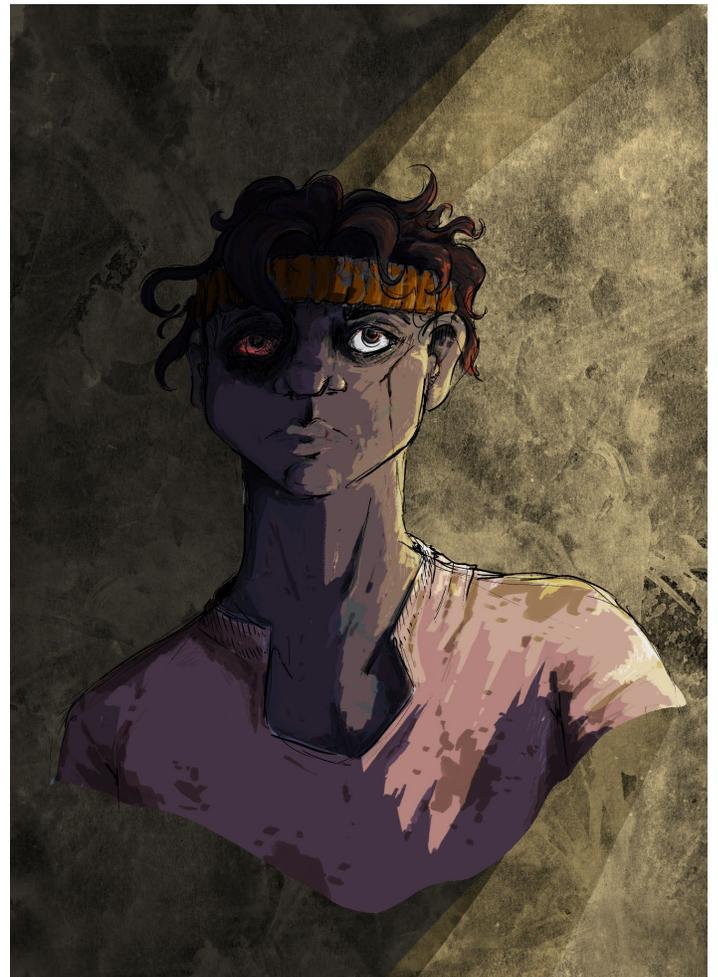
Easter Sunday
April 5th - 9:00 a.m.



Trivia Corner

A: Shamgar Judg 3:31

He is not a fraudulent fish.



March Calendar

Weekend Events

3/21 - "Walking Together" @ Bethany Lutheran

1 9:00 Worhsip 10:15 Sunday School 10:30 Adult Ed 2:00 GriefShare	2 No Preschool 5:00 Easter Vigil Meeting 6:30 JuBellation	3 1:00 Staff 7:00 STEP Group	4 9:00 Quilting 3:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Soup Supper 5:30 Choir 6:00 8-9th Gr. Confirmation 6:00 CREW 7:00 Worship	5 1:30 St. J's Apt. Services 6:00 Youth 6:30 New Member Orientation
8 New Member Sunday 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 10:30 Adult Ed 11:15 Caretakers 2:00 GriefShare 3:30 Boy Scouts	9 10:00 Constitution 5:15 Education 6:30 JuBellation	10 9:30 Staff Meeting 1:00 Worship & Music 6:30 Preschool 7:00 STEP Group	11 12:00 CVVIP 3:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Choir 5:30 Soup Supper 6:45 Screenagers 7:00 Worship	12 9:30 Rostered Leaders @ Grace Lutheran 7:00 Property
15 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 10:15 Faith Family 10:30 Adult Ed 2:00 GriefShare	16 6:30 JuBellation	17 9:30 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	18 9:30 Women's Circle 11:30 Diner's Club @ Olive Garden 1:00 Cards & Games 3:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Choir 6:00 9th Grade Confirmation 7:00 Worship	19 9:00 Volunteer @ The Community Table 6:00 Council
22 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 10:30 Adult Ed 2:00 GriefShare	23 4:00 Finance 5:15 Easter Vigil Meeting 6:30 JuBellation 7:00 Boy Scouts	24 9:30 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group	25 9:00 Quilting 3:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Choir 5:30 Soup Supper 6:00 9th Gr. Confirmation 7:00 Worship 7:30 Mission Trip Meeting	26 10:30 Oakwood Health Services 5:00 Stewardship
29 9:00 Worship 10:15 Palm Sunday Brunch 10:15 Sunday School 10:15 Mission Trip Meeting 2:00 GriefShare	30 3:00 Bible Study @ The Classics 6:30 JuBellation	31 9:30 Staff Meeting 7:00 STEP Group		