



# Tidings of Peace

*come grow with us*

*From the Pastor's Desk...*

*September 2024*

On your mark, get set, ready and go! It seems this phrase has been played over and over again throughout my life, for as long as I can remember. We are often encouraged to set goals, and once attained, to set more goals. Beginning with our childhoods, the mark is always being moved: first, graduate from high school, maybe attend college, get a good job, get married, have kids, look to retirement, etc., etc., etc...and the assumption is that life will get better with each milestone reached. How has this worked for you?



In his letters to churches across the kingdom, the apostle Paul addresses this very concern multiple times, and in multiple ways. If you haven't read his letters – the Epistles – I encourage you to take some time and begin reading them. And I would definitely encourage you to read the book of Acts first. Paul has a way of calling us out “*for missing the prize.*” We spend so much time looking back, maybe even regretting our decisions and choices, and discounting our accomplishments. And when we do look ahead, our sights are too focused on society's expectations of who we should be, and what we should have attained at our stage of life. By doing this, we miss the prize!

In his letter to the church in Philippi, Paul writes...

*“Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to see what lies ahead, I press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in*

*Christ Jesus. Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you. Only let us hold fast to what we have attained.”*

Paul isn't speaking to our everyday lives as people but rather is speaking to our lives as Christians. Being a Christian is not easy; in fact, it is extremely difficult at times. His words teach us that every man has a purpose in and through Christ Jesus; and that every man should live their life reaching for that purpose to which God has called them. Paul charges us with forgetting what we've done in the past and remember only what we still have to do.

For me, at the end of the day, a Christian life is the life of an athlete pressing onwards to a goal which is always in front. If we are mature in our faith, we must recognize the discipline and the effort and the agony of the Christian life. Living life first and foremost as a Christian, and not what others think we should, will help determine everything else. Our past is our past, and we should always honor that part of our lives; and at the same time, we should always be striving to look ahead. As Paul saw it, the Christian is an athlete of Christ Jesus.

Personally I think the phrase... “*on your mark, get set, ready and go!*” should be our mantra for living our lives as followers of Christ Jesus, too.

It's already a part of who we are... we might as well take it to the end. And let the past be simply that...the past because we have so much to look forward to. The goal has been set; the prize awaits all of us; and we can't do it on our own.

*“May we press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.”*

*God's Blessings and Peace*

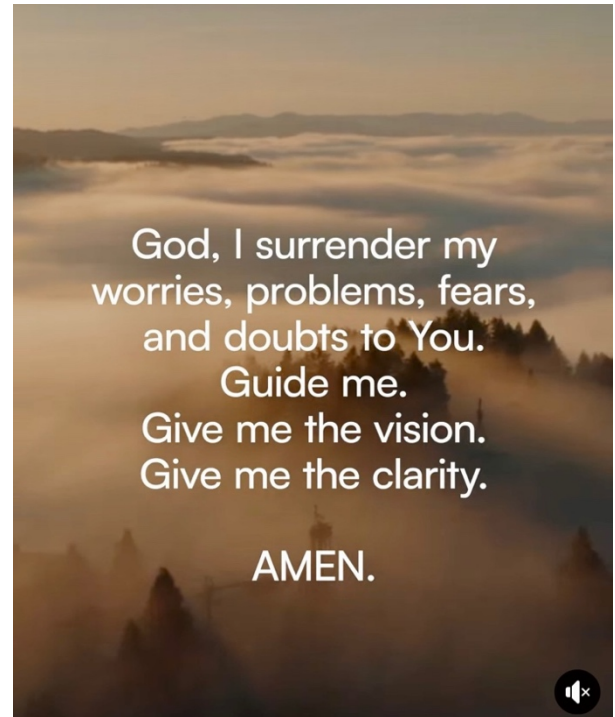
*Pastor Neil*

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**Pastor's Office Hours**

Tuesday & Wednesday: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

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## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

**Outdoor Worship/Potluck/Rally Day:** September 15

**Articles due for The Tidings:** September 16

**First Sunday for Adult Bible Study:** September 22

**Confirmation Class:** September 22

**Noisy Bucket Offering:** September 29



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## **Men's Breakfast – August**



**NOTE the CHANGE IN LOCATION....**

We will meet at the **Big Boy on Lansing Road in Charlotte** for breakfast and fellowship on **Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am.**

... Hope to see you there!

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## **Men's Night Out**

This month the men will meet at on Tuesday evening, **September 24<sup>th</sup> beginning at 6:00pm.** We will meet at **John Thiel's home** – John has graciously offered to host. More details later. This is something most of us enjoy – so let's get together again t's a great time to catch up with one another and share some stories and laughs. Hope to see you there!



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## **Ladies Luncheon**

Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>  
11:30 am at Evelyn Bay

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## Bible Study – today and tomorrow

### Adult Study:

Our Fall study will be: *Encountering Jesus*. The books are here and ready for pick up at the Welcome desk across from Pastor's office. The study will **begin on Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11:00am in the big classroom** – 24 have signed up to attend so it will be a big gathering.



### Confirmation:

We are off for our final year together. First class will be on **Sunday, September 22, 2024 beginning at 6:00pm.**

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## Did you know... from *The Lutheran Handbook...*

### 60 Essential Bible Verses

<u>Story</u>	<u>Bible Text</u>	<u>Key Verse</u>
1. Creation	Genesis 1-2	Genesis 1:27
2. The Human Condition	Genesis 3-4	Genesis 3:5
3. The Flood and the 1 <sup>st</sup> Covenant	Genesis 6-9	Genesis 9:8
4. The Tower of Babel and Abraham and Sarah	Genesis 11-12	Genesis 12:1
5. Sarah, Hagar, and Abraham	Genesis 12-25	Genesis 17:19
6. Isaac and Rebecca	Genesis 22-25	Genesis 24:67
7. Jacob and Esau	Genesis 25-36	Genesis 28:15
8. Joseph and God's Hidden Ways	Genesis 37-50	Genesis 50:20
9. Moses and Pharaoh	Exodus 1-15	Exodus 2:23
10. The Ten Commandments	Exodus 20	Exodus 20:2
11. From the wilderness into the Promised Land	Exodus 16-18; Deuteronomy 1-6; Joshua 1-3, 24	Deuteronomy 6:4
12. Judges	Book of Judges	Judges 21:25
13. Ruth	Book of Ruth	Ruth 4:14
14. Samuel and Saul	1 Samuel 1-11	1 Samuel 3:1

15. King David	multiple OT books	1 Samuel 8:6
16. David, Nathan, and What is a Prophet?	2 Samuel 11-12	2 Samuel 7:12
17. Solomon	1 Kings 1-11	1 Kings 6:12
18. Split of the Kingdom	1 Kings 11ff	1 Kings 12:16
19. Northern Kingdom, Its Prophets and Fate	1 Kings – 2 Kings 17	Amos 5:21
20. Southern Kingdom Its Prophets and Fate (Part 1)	multiple OT books	Isaiah 5:7
21. Southern Kingdom Its Prophets and Fate (Part 2)	multiple OT books	Jeremiah 31:31
22. The Exile	Isaiah 40-55; Ezekiel	Isaiah 40:10
23. Return from Exile	multiple OT books	Ezra 1:1
24. Ezra and Nehemiah	Books of Ezra and Nehemiah	Ezra 3:10
25. Esther	Book of Esther	Esther 4:14
26. Job	Book of Job	Job 1:1
27. Daniel	Book of Daniel	Daniel 3:17
28. Psalms of Praise & Trust	Psalms 8,30,100,113,121	Psalms 121:1
29. Psalms for Help	various Psalms	Psalms 22:1
30. Wisdom	Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes	Proverbs 1:7
31. The Annunciation	Luke 1:26-56 Luke 1:31-33	
32. Magi	Matthew 2:1-12	Matthew 2:2-3
33. Birth of Jesus	Luke 2:1-20	Luke 2:10-11
34. Simeon	Luke 2:25-35	Luke 2:30-32
35. Wilderness Temptations	Matthew 4:1-11 Mark 1:12-13 Luke 4:1-13	Luke 4:12-13
36. Jesus' Nazareth Sermon	Matthew 13:54-58 Mark 1:1-6 Luke 4:16-30	Luke 4:18-19,21
37. Jesus Calls the First Disciples	Matthew 4:18-22 Mark 1:16-20 Luke 5:1-11	Luke 5:9-10
38. Beatitudes	Matthew 5:3-12	Luke 6:20-26
39. Gerasene Demoniac	Matthew 8:28-34 Mark 5:1-20 Luke 8:26-39	Luke 8:30

40. Feeding of the 5,000	Matthew 14:13-21 Mark 6:30-44 Luke 9:10-17 John 6:14	Luke 9:16-17
41. The Transfiguration	Matthew 17:1-8 Mark 9:2-8 Luke 9:28-36	Luke 9:34-35
42. Sending of the 70	Matthew 8:19-22 Luke 10:1-16	Luke 10:8,16
43. Good Samaritan	Luke 10:25-37	Luke 10:27-28
44. Healing the Woman	Luke 13:10-17	Luke 13:16
45. Parables of Lost & Found	Luke 15:1-32	Luke 15:31-32
46. Rich Man & Lazarus	Luke 16:19-31	Luke 16:29-31
47. Zacchaeus	Luke 19:1-11	Luke 19:9
48. Sheep and Goats	Matthew 25:31-46	Matthew 25:40
49. Parables of the Vineyard	Matthew 21:33-46 Mark 12:1-12 Luke 20:9-19 Isaiah 5:1-7	Luke 20:14-16
50. The Last Supper	Matthew 26:20-29 Mark 14:12-15 Luke 22:14-38	Luke 22:19-20,27
51. Crucifixion	Matthew 27 Mark 15 Luke 23 John 19	Luke 23:42-43,46
52. Road to Emmaus	Luke 24	Luke 24:30-31
53. Pentecost	Acts 2:1-21	Acts 2:17-18
54. Healing the Lame Man	Acts 3-4	Acts 4:19
55. Baptism of the Ethiopian	Acts 8:26-39	Acts 8:35-37
56. Call of Saul	Acts 7:58-8:1; 9:1-30	Acts 9:15-16
57. Peter and Cornelius	Acts 10	Acts 10:34-35
58. Philippians Humility	Philippians 2:1-13	Philippians 2:12-13
59. Love Hymn	1 Corinthians 13	1 Corinthians 13:4-7
60. Resurrection	1 Corinthians 15	1 Corinthians 15:51-55

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## **Luther's Small Catechism** **(a refresher course)**

Many have asked about reviewing Luther's Small Catechism – especially the information covered in our confirmation classes. Continuing with each month, we will review in our newsletters things our confirmation students are required to know and understand in and from Luther's catechism.

This month, we continue with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. It is listed, along with Martin Luther's explanation – taken directly from the Small Catechism.

### **1. What is Baptism?**

Answer: Baptism is not simply plain water. Instead it is water used according to God's command and connected with God's Word.

#### **What then is this Word of God?**

Answer: Where our Lord Jesus Christ says in Matthew 28:19, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

### **2. What gifts or benefits does Baptism grant?**

Answer: It brings about forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it, as the Word and promise of God declare.

#### **What is this Word and promise of God?**

Answer: Where our Lord Jesus Christ says in Mark 16:16, *“The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned.”*

### **3. How can water do such great things?**

Answer: Clearly the water does not do it, but the Word of God, which is with, in, and among the water, and faith, which trusts this word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is plain water and not a baptism, but with the Word of God it is a baptism, that is, a grace-filled water of life and a “bath of the new birth in the Holy Spirit.” As Saint Paul says to Titus in 3: 5-8, *“He saves us, not because of any works of righteousness that we have done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been*

*justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is sure.”*

**4. What then is the significance of such a baptism with water?**

Answer: It signifies that the old person is us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned through daily sorrow for sin and repentance, and that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

**Where is this written?**

Answer: St. Paul says in Romans 6:3-4, *“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.”*

**Bible reading:** Matthew 28:16-20

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## **Helping Hands Ministry**

The Community Action Team will be collecting donations to support Helping Hands, our local food pantry. For the month of **September we are collecting tuna**. A basket has been placed in the gathering area in front of their bulletin board for your donations. Thank you for your support.



When buying ink from Staples for you or your family please consider using Peace’s phone number when checking out. Your purchase of ink can apply to Peace’s Rewards program. The office uses the rewards dollars for supplies for our church.

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The Pregnancy Center is in need of **wipes and baby food** (cereal and jars of fruits and vegetables).

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## It's time for a lot of PEACE...

It is time... for PEACE! In this year, may we all come together in our prayer lives – as we pray for so many things in our lives -the good and the not so good. But let us add another prayer to our time with God – and ask him to bless our world with peace – throughout the world, in our country, in our state and communities, in our families and among our friends.

It is time for PEACE! It is time to put our differences aside and learn to live in harmony with one another; it's time to name society's injustices for what they are; it's time to relabel our political party affiliations, and agree that we are first and foremost, Americans.

It is time for PEACE! It is time for goodwill among all people; it is time for making God a priority in our lives and spend a part of our every day in his presence.

It is time... for PEACE! Let this be the focus of our prayer lives – and our time together.

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### Did you know that we recycle pull tabs here at Peace?

Pull for Ronald McDonald House!



Pull tabs are taken to the Ronald McDonald House in Lansing

They turn these tabs in to cash to help support the House. The House provides care, comfort, and a free place to stay for families to heal together while their child receives medical treatment.

This is a simple way to help support the House, just pull those tabs off the cans and **place them in the container at church** and Dar will see that they get over to Ronald McDonald House.

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# Scripture study, Lutheran-style

## *Deeper understandings – August 2024*

By Troy Troftgruben, August 27, 2024

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2024/08/scripture-study-lutheran-style/>



“Martin Luther Translating the Bible, Wartburg Castle, 1521” by Eugène Siberdt (1851–1931).

**Series editor’s note:** *Throughout 2024 “Deeper understandings” will feature teaching scholars of the ELCA reflecting on the many ways that Lutheran theology makes a difference for our daily lives. —Kristin Johnston Lergen, president of Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, on behalf of the ELCA’s seminaries*

Scripture study is a very Lutheran thing to do.

Personal experiences with Scripture can vary greatly, from highly positive to very negative. Some people enjoy reading the Bible and can hardly imagine life without it. Others find it to be intimidating, riddled with obscure details and hard to make sense of. Some shy away from the Bible in response to fundamentalist approaches that demand a stifling literalism. I once asked a group of Lutherans what they like about our tradition and heard: “We like Jesus, not Scripture.” While I can appreciate the distinction, I don’t believe the two are opposed.

Truth be told, the study of Scripture is what started the Reformation. Martin Luther was a Bible professor. He took Scripture seriously. In doing so, he saw discrepancies between it and many church practices in his day. In response, he wrote the 95 Theses. When asked to recant his views a few years later before the [Diet of Worms](#), he insisted: “Unless I am convicted by Scripture and plain reason ... my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything.”

The study of Scripture brought Protestant Christianity into existence.

Even more, Luther dreamed that everyone would have direct access to Scripture, to be able to read and understand it for themselves and to talk about it meaningfully using “plain reason.” As he wrote in his reforms of worship (*Luther’s Works* [53:14](#)), “We profit by nothing as much as by the Word. For the whole Scripture shows that the Word should have free course among Christians.” He thought meditating on Scripture—including Bible-based summaries like the Small Catechism—should be a daily practice, since “we daily need God’s Word just as we do our daily bread” (*Book of Concord*, page 13). On his deathbed, he continued to praise Scripture as deserving a lifetime of devotion (*LW* [54:476](#)).

I invite us to see regular Scripture study not only as a spiritual practice but as something that stands at the very heart of Lutheranism.

### **Scripture is complex**

In the Lutheran tradition, faithful Scripture study is less about finding one-note answers and more about opening and deepening theological questions and learning. As such, it’s not a straightforward path with predictable results. Like prayer, it opens us up to hear God speak in new ways. Take Luther’s example:

- He questioned scriptural authorship claims, identified perceived errors and admitted confusion.
- He challenged interpretations that were harmful to real people.
- He refused rigid rules of interpretation because of Scripture’s complexity.
- He acknowledged that some Scripture passages conveyed Christ better than others.
- He quoted, recited, studied and revered Scripture to his dying day.

For Lutherans, Christ is both the source of Scripture and the story that Scripture wants to tell. As such, elevating Christ does not require putting Scripture down. Instead, Christ is our guide and focal lens for the faithful reading of Scripture. Instead of leaving us to judge what we like and don’t like about the Bible, this way of reading lets Scripture share its good news with us as a message grounded in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Our [ELCA constitution](#) calls Scripture “the inspired Word of God and authoritative source and norm of our proclamation, faith, and life,” which holds accountable our tendencies to set ourselves up as lords of Scripture and to make Jesus look like ourselves.

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*For Lutherans, Christ is both the source of Scripture and the story that Scripture wants to tell.*

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Scripture is complex. Like our sacraments, it is both divine and human all at once. It deserves to be read with curiosity and care. And it points us to Christ. Luther called Scripture “the swaddling clothes and the manger in which Christ lies. ... Simple and lowly are these swaddling clothes, but dear is the treasure, Christ, who lies in them” (*LW* 35:237).

Unfortunately, Scripture has indeed been used to harm, enslave and condemn. But evil uses of a good thing do not make it evil. Social reformer Frederick Douglass understood this. Eyeing interpretations condoning slavery, he asked: “What do we do in such a case? ... Do you go and throw your Bible into the fire? ... Do you sing out, ‘No union with the Bible!’ Do you declare that a thing is bad because it has been misused, abused, and made bad use of? ... No! You press it to your bosom all the more closely; you read it all the more diligently; and prove from its pages that it is on the side of liberty—and not on the side of slavery” (*The Frederick Douglass Papers: Series One: Speeches, Debates, and Interviews, Vol. 3 1855-63*; ed. John Blassingame; Yale University Press, 1985).

There will always be harmful interpreters and interpretations that use God’s word to hurt rather than heal. But, as Douglass taught, this does not change the fact that Scripture is a gift from God and a message of good news of divine life for all.

### **Where to begin**

Many people struggle to know where to begin with the spiritual practice of Scripture study. Here are some practical pointers:

- Don’t feel like you need to start at the beginning or read it “front to back” like you would a novel. This book is different.
- Start small, with something short. It doesn’t need to be Genesis or Matthew. Try books like Ruth, Mark or Philippians, for example.
- Read the Bible with others. Start a group if there isn’t one.
- Consult a pastor, deacon or mentor for guidance.
- Try updated, inclusive Bible translations and versions.
- Use resources such as study Bibles, commentaries and trustworthy online resources and apps. Ask questions about God and what God is up to while reading.
- Read in creative ways, using contemplative prayer practices.

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*I invite us to see regular Scripture study not only as a spiritual practice but as something at the very heart of Lutheranism.*

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On this last point, writing to his barber about how to pray, Luther encouraged meditating on Scripture and catechism portions through four “garlands” or areas for consideration:

1. **Thanksgiving.** What in this passage moves me to give thanks?
2. **Instruction.** What does the Spirit want me to learn from these words?
3. **Confession.** What in this passage moves me to ask for forgiveness and to change?
4. **Prayer.** What moves me to ask God for specific things (*LW* [43:193-211](#))?

I invite us to see regular Scripture study not only as a spiritual practice but as something at the very heart of Lutheranism. It may even start a Reformation in your own life and in the life of your Christian community.



*Troy Troftgruben is associate professor of New Testament and William A. and John E. Wagner Professor of Biblical Theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.*

## Worship Ministry September 2024

Date	Sunday 9/1	Sunday 9/8	Sunday 9/15	Sunday 9/22	Sunday 9/29
<b>Acolyte</b>			Outdoor Worship Service	Payton Jobson	Kendall Jobson
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Lorene Crigier	Lorene Crigier	Lorene Crigier	Lorene Crigier	Lorene Crigier
<b>Audio/ Visual</b>	Scott Lumbert Gordon Edgerton	Scott Lumbert Gordon Edgerton	Scott Lumbert Gordon Edgerton	Scott Lumbert Gordon Edgerton	Scott Lumbert Gordon Edgerton
<b>Choir Director/ Musician</b>	Phyllis Augenstein	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio	Bryan Guarnuccio
<b>Fellowship</b>		Beverly Leffler Kathy Cook	Outdoor worship with Potluck	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
<b>Lector</b>	Susie Moore	Cathey Levi	Susie Moore	Cathey Levi	Susie Moore
<b>Pastor</b>	Pastor Neil Brady	Pastor Neil Brady	Pastor Neil Brady	Pastor Neil Brady	Pastor Neil Brady
<b>Ushers</b>	The Augenstein's	The Augenstein's	The Augenstein's	The Augenstein's	The Augenstein's
<b>Worship Assistant</b>	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln	Matt Lincoln



## Church Calendar – September 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30 am Worship 10:30 Gathering	2	3  7:00 pm CAT Team Meeting	4 11:30 am Caring Team Meeting  6:00 pm AA Meeting	5	6	7
8 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering	9	10 10:00 am Worship and Music Meeting  7:00 pm Council Meeting	11   6:00 pm AA Meeting	12 8:30 am Men's Breakfast @Big Boy	13   6:00 pm AA Meeting	14
15 Outdoor Worship Service/Potluck/Rally Day 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering	16 Newsletter articles due	17 7:00 pm GFS Team Meeting	18 11:30 am Ladies Luncheon @ Evelyn Bay  6:00 pm AA Meeting	19	20 6:00 pm AA Meeting	21
22 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering  6:00 pm Confirmation Class	23	24  6:00 pm Men's Night Out	25  7:00 pm Property Team Meeting  6:00 pm AA Meeting	26	27   6:00 pm AA Meeting	28 Building Usage All Day
29 Noisy Bucket 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Gathering	30				<b>Pastor Neil's Office Hours</b> Tuesday-Wednesday 10:00 am-3:00 pm	

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Please feel free to submit articles or pictures for the Tidings to the editor, Kristin Shannon  
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*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul,  
and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and love your  
neighbor as yourself.*

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