



From the Desk of Pastor Meyer

An Unusual 4th of July Message

Happy 250th, America, as the great American holiday is celebrated with fireworks, picnics, hot-dog eating contests, and homemade ice cream. Veterans and actively serving military personnel will walk or ride along the parade route. Someone will sing "The Star-Spangled Banner." Politicians will give speeches that sound like sermons and pastors will deliver messages that sound more like political speeches. Elephants and Donkeys both will invoke God's name and supposed favor while implying His displeasure at the other side. They will close - partly praying, partly boasting - by solemnly intoning, "God bless America."

This is not one of those messages. As you read this, I pray that you neither cheer nor sneer, but heed the Word of the Lord and what it says for us as Christians who are in, yet not of, this world. Perhaps you will agree; perhaps you will be challenged. Perhaps the Holy Spirit will change your opinion of how to act and interact as Christians who are also citizens.

St. Paul writes in Romans 13, "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgement. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore, one must be in subjection not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God attending to this very thing. Pay to all what is owed: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed."

Paul says governmental authority is a gift of God. Luther agreed and placed government under the category of the 4th commandment, an extension of the parental vocation by way of being God's representative for the purpose of good order. Thus, from the top floor of the White House to the humblest civil servants, all are gifts of God, serving as His representative in the civil world. God even uses the American voter for His purpose! We call this His "Left-hand Kingdom."

You might be shaking your head. "That can't be true; God surely doesn't want [insert name/ party] in office." Remember: Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar, who vacillated back and forth in faithfulness, "The Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom He will," (Dan. 4:25). When He was on trial, Jesus told Pilate "You would have no authority against me at all unless it had been given you from above," (Jn 19:11). Paul wrote Romans late in the first century when the Roman Empire was ruled by Nero who was considered a god. He was not just a heathen; he was wicked, seeking and persecuting Christians for sport. Yet, it's as if Paul is saying, "Even this evil man who does wicked things to his countrymen and slaughters Christians for sport is an instrument of God."

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ST PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

JULY
NEWSLETTER



Take heart; fear not. He is God. I assure you, He is in control – even when He allows things to happen that are contrary to His will. I don't think God particularly cares about who is in office if there are more Red, Blue or Green elected officials. He uses whom He will, regardless their being left, right or center. What He does care how government is run – it is His representative, remember. He desires that it governs fairly, in justice, for good order, with eyes toward the weakest and most feeble. He desires that officials and citizens show love, mercy and compassion to each other in word and action. He uses government so that First Article blessings, such as protection and daily bread, can be administered.

This does raise the question of how and why God would use evil and unfaithful authorities to be His instrument to represent Him. It's a question whose answer is largely hidden from us and we dare not answer where the Scriptures are silent. We know this is true from Scripture: those who abuse their God-given authority will come under the judgement of God, if not in this lifetime, in the life that is to come. It is also true that God is at work even when hidden behind those who are wicked and opposed to God. We must leave the question with this: it's not the wickedness of individual rulers that comes from God, but the establishment of the ruling power itself.

Christians are called to be subject to the authorities. That's easy (or at least easier) to do when we support the candidate or party; when we disagree, it's much more difficult. Conventional wisdom says line up with signs up! Protest! Burn, loot and plunder to show our displeasure! Spread ugly stories on social media, call them names, make politics personal. Defy those in authority, urge unrest, and dare them to arrest you until you get what you want. This is the way the world operates, not how you are called to live as people of God in the world.

There is much to repent of regarding our attitude towards the government. With words, actions, social media posts, even the thoughts in our hearts and minds, we sin against these men and women whom God places in authority for His purpose. We then transfer those thoughts to their supporters and identify people with whom we disagree as enemies. How many families and friendships have been destroyed because of political disagreements? Jesus warns that it is as much a sin to do that as it is to assault the man or woman when He says if you call a man "fool," you are guilty of murder.

More than that, we sin against God Himself. Ours is a sin of idolatry, not that different than ancient Israel. A god is anything in which we place our fear, love and trust, and for all too many, government is god and our candidate, our politician, our party is its anointed savior. Too, listen to how people speak of God: it is more of a nationalistic deism that we confess rather than the Triune God of the Christian faith. We misuse God's name in pretending to speak for what He approves or disapproves.

Your Christian submission to their authority doesn't depend on opinions, agreements, party affiliations, or anything else. Scripture gives neither exceptions nor exclusions: submitting to God, you submit to the law of man. If you choose to disobey the law, you disobey God and deserve punishment as if it were from God Himself. You follow the law of the land because those laws are established through the authority of God. If you don't like the laws, policies, or decisions of the government, then follow the law of the land in how to change those rules. Yet do it with the grace and compassion of a man like Paul who well understood what it is to suffer under the laws of the land for the sake of Jesus.

Paul is deliberate and careful in his word choice. Subjection and submission is not the same thing as blind conformity and total obedience in every instance. The early church knew that there will be times that we must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). There will be times that the Church, the body of Christ, may choose to be noncompliant and directly disobey human authorities when they go against God and His Word. For the last 50 years, Christians chose to protest laws and the services who provided life-ending abortion services. Christians did so, knowing that various civil charges could be brought against them. Laity and pastors received a criminal record. Yet, their conscience told them that they must stand up for life and the Word of God regarding the sanctity of human life and against the rules and laws who said otherwise. But, even in their protests, they were usually gentle, compassionate, and eager to share the love of Jesus with those who needed to hear of His grace.



So, what are we to do? Pray for government authorities - not *about* them, lamenting and complaining to God, but *for* them, carrying their names and offices to the ears of the Almighty. St. Paul wrote to Timothy, "I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Again, notice – Paul doesn't say pray for those whom you like. Without qualification, pray for all who are in high positions. Pray that they understand their authority comes from God and that they are His agents. Pray for their wisdom to make Godly decisions, their compassion for the weak, their strength of character. Pray that they stand against temptation for arrogance and resist corruption and that they listen and hear. Pray that they defend the innocent and seek appropriate justice against those who harm others. Pray they are led to repentance for what they do wrong. Pray they govern with humility. Pray for fellow citizens, that they see officials as God's representatives. Pray that selfish idealism ceases. Pray that people stop seeing government as their god. And pray that you may be a witness to Christ – His Word, His compassion, and His love in a world that is evermore without truth, without mercy, and without grace. Pray that others see Christ in what you say and do, that they may too may be saved and know what true freedom is: eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, the true Savior of the world. Amen.

Shifting gears, I have two things I want to mention.

As I approach my first anniversary, the comment I hear repeatedly is along the lines of "What happened to [insert name]? They used to be here all the time?" Frankly, I usually don't know. If that person is on your mind, pick up your phone and give them a call. Connect with them and express your concern for their spiritual well-being. Invite them to return to St. Paul's – especially if they don't have a church home. The same is true if someone has been absent for a few weeks. Don't assume that the elders and I are contacting them. Take it upon yourself, pick up the phone and give them a call. Tell them that they are missed, that you miss them, and you hope to see them next Sunday. Offer to save them a place!

Second, I am a firm believer that Sunday mornings are times for God's people to receive His gifts of Word and Sacrament for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of faith. This includes the people who serve in various volunteer and paid roles at the church. Church business can wait, most of the time. Bills, basic maintenance issues, and calendar items aren't critical. Even building project questions can wait. Let these folks have Sunday to receive the gifts of God for themselves and with their families. Here's a 3-part litmus test: ask yourself, A) if it were me, would I want or need to be bothered by this piece of information? B) can this wait and passed on as an email or phone call later in the day? C) is this something you can do to help those who serve? To the point: unless there is fire, flood, or blood, try not to bother people with "church business" on Sunday mornings. Anything else can wait. If you're not sure, write it down and give me the note and I'll pass it along.

Feel free to call, text, email, or pop by and say "hi." I'm glad to share a cup of coffee and visit a while.

-Pastor Meyer



LWML
Lutheran Women in Mission

JULY IS MITE MONTH!

The Noisy offering in July will go to mites.

CIRCLE MEETINGS

Chancel Circle

Meets at 6:00 PM on Monday, July 6th

2106 Monitor

Community Service Circle

Meets at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, July 7th

2018 Lantern Lane

Service Circle

Meets at 1:00 PM on Wednesday, July 1st

Church Basement

Visiting Circle

Meets at 12:30 PM on Wednesday, July 1st

Room #108

All are warmly invited to attend any of our circle meetings.

Our next LWML **general meeting** will take place on **Monday, July 27th** at **6:00 PM** in the church basement. We will continue our Bible study by Donna Snow.

Beginning in July, the LWML will be collecting new or gently used shoes. The donation box will be in the narthex for your convenience. Please tie the pair together if the shoes have ties. If not a shoe with ties, bind the shoes together with string or a rubber band.

We cannot accept ice skates or roller blades.

Thank you for helping us recycle HP and Canon ink cartridges! Please save your original box to pack the used cartridges OR use a Ziplock bag. Also, we continue to collect the special Commemorative postage stamps. For a complete list of items to collect, go to www.oklml.org



Chancel Circle welcomes the gift of flowers

Living flowers and plants are a beautiful way to honor our Lord and enrich our time together in worship.

If you feel called to place flowers on the altar, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact the church office at **(580) 234-6646**

2026-2027 LWML Officers

President	Pam Wiederkehr	580-402-5271
Vice President	Lorie Legere	580-249-8372
Recording Secretary	Martha Gabriel	580-554-3528
Treasurer	Adola Stocker	210-385-1272
Corresponding Sec.	Kris Young	580-747-1496

2026-2027 Chancel Circle Officers

President	Kris Young	580-747-1496
Vice President	Sally Dunbar	580-402-3104
Project Committee	Sue Deterding	580-984-2174
	Jenny Smithson	580-747-6225

2026-2027 Community Service Circle Officers

President	Veta Wheeler	580-231-8403
Vice President	Cindy Fischaber	580-747-5287
Secretary/Treasurer	Lorie Legere	580-249-8372
Project Committee	Veta Wheeler	580-231-8403
	Kathy Wuerflein	580-541-6950

2026-2027 Service Circle Officers

President	Barbara Kroll	580-747-3726
Vice President	Darla Albright	580-548-7542
Secretary	Charlene McHenry	580-402-0782
Treasurer	Joyce Nolte	580-484-2362
Project Committee	Lovella Fisher	580-478-9351
	Lois Burdick	580-231-4368
Funeral Dinner Chair	Joyce Nolte	580-484-2362
Information Chair	Barbara Kroll	580-747-3726

2026-2027 Visiting Circle Officers

President	Martha Gabriel	580-758-3433 or 580-554-3528
Vice President	Donna Powell	580-541-8806
Secretary/Treasurer	Myrna Pritchett	580-542-2032
Project Committee	Jana Overstreet	580-395-0573
	Brenda Braley	580-484-0703





2026-2027

Chairman Elect
Ron Young

Secretary
Lorie Legere

Treasurer
Kirk Stocker

Members at Large
Layton Heitfeld
Robert Sims
Paul Fisher

Head Elder
Paul Dunbar

Properties Chairman
Jon Smithson

School Board Chairman
Adola Stocker

Stewardship Chairman
Gerald Nolte

Financial Secretary Committee Chairman
Ron Krey

Next Council meeting will be held **Thursday July 16th at 7:00 PM**



PORTALS OF PRAYER

We are updating our *Portals of Prayer* mailing list to ensure everyone who would like to receive this devotional is included. If you would like to continue or begin receiving *Portals of Prayer* by mail, please indicate your preference on the Church Information Update Form. Simply make a note next to your home address so we can keep our records accurate.

In the coming weeks, we will be updating our Church Directory to ensure all member information is accurate and up to date. This directory is an important resource for helping our church stay connected and informed.

We kindly ask all members to complete the **Church Membership Information Update Form**, which can be found on the page following this announcement. Please take a few moments to review your details and make any necessary updates.

All forms must be turned in no later than August 15 so that we can finalize and distribute the updated directory by **September 1**.

Drop off forms at the church office Monday-Friday 8:00AM-12:00PM or email to church@stpaulsenid.com



Church Membership Information Update Form

Date Submitted: _____

Member Information

Full Name: _____

Spouse Name (if applicable): _____

Household Members: _____

Contact Information Updates

Address Change: ☐ No Change ☐ New Address

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number Change: ☐ No Change ☐ Updated Numbers

Home Phone: _____

Mobile Phone: _____

Other: _____

Email Address Update: ☐ No Change ☐ New Email

Primary Email: _____

Secondary Email: _____

Life Event Updates

☐ Birth - Child's Name: _____ Date: _____

☐ Death - Name: _____ Date: _____

☐ Marriage - Names: _____
_____ Date: _____

☐ Divorce - Name(s): _____
_____ Date: _____

☐ Transfer of Membership

Transferring IN - Previous Church:

Transferring OUT - New Church:

Date of Transfer: _____

Additional Notes

Signature

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Announcements & What's Happening

PreK3 & PreK4

PREVIEW

July 1st 6:00PM-7:30PM

Before you choose where your child starts, see where they can go



PREK & PK3
PREVIEW | **JULY 1ST AT 6PM**



Children's Ministry

As we prepare for Vacation Bible School (VBS), July 13–16, the Children's Ministry Team is grateful for your support in two special donation efforts!

SPCA Collection

During VBS, our children will be learning about God's creation of animals. To support this theme, we are partnering with the SPCA and collecting donations of animal food (**please no rawhide items**). A donation box is available in the narthex for drop-off. All items will be delivered to the SPCA following VBS.

A colorful graphic for Vacation Bible School. It features a giraffe, a cow, a donkey, and a sheep in a grassy field under a blue sky with clouds. The text is centered and reads:

**Vacation
Bible School**

**Visiting with God's
Creation**

July 13-16, 2026

6pm to 8pm

age 3 - grade 5

St. Paul's Lutheran Enid
1626 E. Broadway, Enid, OK

Register online at
<https://stpaulsenid.com/VBS>

VBS Supplies Needed

We are also collecting supplies to help make VBS a wonderful experience for the approximately 60 children attending:

- Two empty cans per child:
 - One can (14–22 oz)
 - One smaller can that fits inside the larger can
- Fiberfill stuffing for pillow crafts

•Donations may be dropped off at the church office Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM–12:00 PM.

Thank you for your generosity and for helping care for both God's children and His creatures!

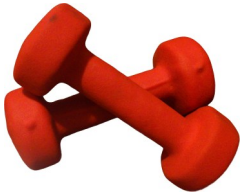
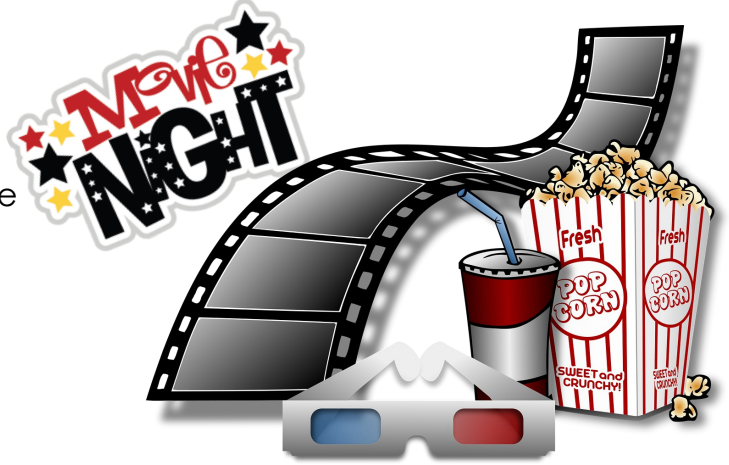


FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

Bring the whole family and enjoy a wholesome movie together in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

Free popcorn will be provided!

Join us in the church basement on
Sunday, July 26th at 5:00 PM



Balance & Strength

This class is a great opportunity to improve balance, increase strength, and enjoy fellowship in a supportive, encouraging environment. It's suitable for all fitness levels, come as you are!



Meet in the Music Room every
Tuesday & Thursday at 11:00 AM



Men's
Breakfast &
Bible Study
Meet's every
Friday at 7:00 AM

Boomerang
Diner

721 S. Oakwood Rd.



Dominoes Group
meets the **1st and 3rd Mondays** of
each month at
9:45AM

3005 Forrestridge Pl

Pinochle Group
meets the **1st and 3rd Tuesdays** of
each month at
1:00PM
3005 Forrestridge Pl



Ladies Bible Study

Wednesdays, 9:30AM or 6:30PM

Begins August 26th, 2026

St. Paul's Library

Questions? Contact Adola Stocker

at (210) 385-1272



SAM's Lunch will be **July 29th at 12:30 PM** at
Dunbar's

2506 Sleepy Hollow Dr.



Please help us welcome Annabelle Bellow to the St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School family

Annabelle joins our team as our new Business Manager, bringing an outstanding background in accounting and finance. She is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), a Texas A&M University graduate, and most recently served as a Commercial Tax Manager in Houston.



Following her marriage earlier this year, Annabelle and her husband relocated to Enid, where he serves as a T-38 instructor pilot at Vance Air Force Base.

We are grateful that God has led Annabelle to St. Paul's. Her exceptional professional experience and servant's heart make her an outstanding addition to the Herd. We are confident she will be a tremendous blessing to our church, school, students, families, and congregation.

We look forward to the many ways Annabelle will help strengthen our mission and serve the Herd!



The site construction documents (including the site plan) have been submitted to the City of Enid Planning and Engineering departments respectively, this review process typically takes 3 to 4 weeks with some back-and-forth updates and revisions. These documents are located in the narthex.

Once the site plan is approved by both departments, the building plans will be completed and will be submitted to the code department for review and approval, this process typically takes another 3 weeks, unfortunately these cannot be done at the same time as the code department will not begin building review until the site plan is approved by the other departments.

I will keep everyone posted.

Thank You

Christopher Burdick

Senior Designer

July Birthdays



- | | |
|--|--|
| 8 - Watson Burdick
Joshua Koehn
Valera Sheets | 19 - Robert Sims |
| 10 - Dustin Albright
Paul Stephen Fisher
Mike Helberg | 20 - Caleb Ellington
Marilyn Hoeltzel
Linda Stong |
| 11 - Brooks LaBrue
Justin Wiederkehr
Andrew Wiederkehr | 23 - Doug Cole
Katie Hedges |
| 15 - Kaleb Ingels
Rylie Navarro | 24 - Leah Fulk |
| 17 - Jimmy Balisle
Joe Felton
Alexzander Lunday
Tim Riesen | 26 - Lexie Pendleton |
| | 27 - Pat Dresser |
| | 28 - Aaron Gabriel
Gene Hollrah |
| | 29 - Nancy Long |
| | 30 - Mary Light
Zach Wyant |
| | 31 - Jonathan Becker
Carla Burdick |

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 - Roy & Cynthia Allen | |
| 4 - Zach & Danielle Wyant | |
| 12 - David & Mechele Riesen | 22 - Derek & Colleen Gabriel |
| 13 - Casey & Melissa LaBrue | 28 - Phil & Jane Sutter |
| 17 - Bryce & Kara Kvasnicka | 30 - John & Rhonda Lamle |



With heartfelt sorrow, we share the passing of several beloved members of our church family. We honor their lives, their faith, and the countless ways they blessed our congregation.

Thelma Travis

April 18, 2026

Velma "June" Bone

April 27, 2026

Phillip Sutter

May 10, 2026

Jerry Lichtenberg

May 10, 2026

Steve Simpson

May 27, 2026

James Hoeltzel

May 30, 2026

Richard Simpson

June 4, 2026

Bill Wiederkehr

June 22, 2026

We extend our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of each of these dear individuals

Please keep these families in your prayers during this time of loss. May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard their hearts and minds and bring them comfort in the days ahead.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."
Matthew 5:4



Worship Service Duties

DATE	LESSONS	HYMNS	ACOLYTE	LIVESTREAM	SOUND	READERS	ELDER	COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	USHERS	GREETERS	CHILDREN'S SERMON	NURSERY
Sun. July 5, 2026 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost	Zech. 9:9-12 Psalm 145:1-14 Romans 7:14-25a Matthew 11:25-30	816, 684, 818, 752, 748, 732, 966	Ron Young	Paul Fisher	Gerald Nolte	Chris Bauer	Stephen Wiederkehr & Ron Young	Stephen Wiederkehr & Ron Young	G. Breitenkamp, G. Hollrah, R. Mueller, Richard Burdick	Kris Young & Kathy Wuerflein	Pastor Meyer	Kathy Wuerflein
Sun. July 12, 2026 Seventh Sunday after Pentecost	Isaiah 55:10-13 Psalm 65:9(1-8) 9-13 Romans 8:12-17 Matthew 13:1-9 18-23	790, 577, 921	James Wuerflein	Zach Wyant	Gerald Nolte	Chris Bauer	Gene Breitenkamp		Gene Breitenkamp, Gene Hollrah, Ray Mueller	Laura Burdick & Brenda Braley	Teresa Peyton	Cindy Fischhaber
Sun. July 19, 2026 Eighth Sunday after Pentecost	Isaiah 44:6-8 Psalm 119:57-64 Romans 8:18-27 Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	794, 584, 616, 623, 892, 577, 923	Jonathan Becker	Zach Wyant	Gerald Nolte	Chris Bauer	Jonathan Becker & Paul Dunbar	Jonathan Becker & Paul Dunbar	Gene Breitenkamp, Bill White, James Wurflein, Richard Burdick	Teresa Peyton & Rhonda Fox	Carolyn LaBrue	The Biggers Family
Sun. July 26, 2026 Ninth Sunday after Pentecost	Deut 7:6-9 Psalm 125 Romans 8:28-39 Matthew 13:44-52	507, 646, 669	Ron Young	Paul Fisher	Gerald Nolte	Chris Bauer	Gene Breitenkamp		Gene Breitenkamp, Jere Courter, Chris Burdick, Chris Bauer	Adola Stocker & Lacie Heitfeld	Martha Gabriel	Lorie Legere
Sun. Aug. 2, 2026 Tenth Sunday after Pentecost	Isaiah 55:1-5 Psalm 136:1-9 (23-26) Romans 9:1-5 (6-13) Matthew 14:13-21	633, 642, 631, 744, 684, 628, 917	Jonathan Becker	Zach Wyant	Gerald Nolte	TBD	Jonathan Becker & Rick Lunday	Jonathan Becker & Rick Lunday	G. Breitenkamp, G. Hollrah, R. Mueller, Richard Burdick	Martha Gabriel & Barbara Kroll	Pastor Meyer	TBD

JULY 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 Lutheran Women <i>in Mission</i>			1 12:30 Visiting Circle 1:00 Service Circle PreK3 & PreK4 Preview 6:00-7:30	2 11:00 Balance & Strength	3 Office Closed 7:00 Men's Breakfast & Bible Study	4 
JULY'S MITE MONTH						
5 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost Communion 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School	6 10:00 Finance Board	7 11:00 Balance & Strength 7:00 Community Service Circle	8	9 11:00 Balance & Strength	10 7:00 Men's Breakfast & Bible Study	11
12 Seventh Sunday after Pentecost Communion 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School	13 9:45 Dominoes 10:00 Finance Board 6:00 Chancel Circle	14 11:00 Balance & Strength 1:00 Pinochle	15	16 11:00 Balance & Strength 7:00 Church Council	17 7:00 Men's Breakfast & Bible Study	18
Vacation Bible School (July 13-16) 6PM-8PM						
19 Eighth Sunday after Pentecost Communion 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School	20 10:00 Finance Board	21 11:00 Balance & Strength 7:00 Elder's Meeting	22 <u>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</u>	23 11:00 Balance & Strength 5:00 School Board	24 7:00 Men's Breakfast & Bible Study	25
26 Ninth Sunday after Pentecost Communion 9:00 Worship 10:15 Sunday School 5:00 Family Movie	27 9:45 Dominoes 10:00 Finance Board 6:00 LWML General Meeting	28 11:00 Balance & Strength 1:00 Pinochle	29 12:30 S.A.M. Potluck	30 11:00 Balance & Strength	31 7:00 Men's Breakfast & Bible Study	

