

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
5955 South Elm Avenue
Fresno, California 93706



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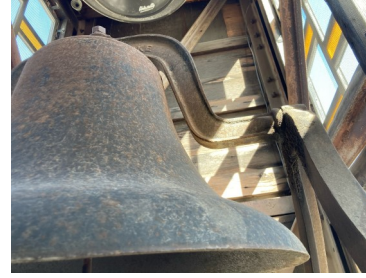


North American Lutheran Church

American Independence Day
July 4th
Remember to fly your American Flag!



Return Service Requested



The Immanuel Chimes July 2023

VIEW THIS NEWSLETTER ONLINE AT:
ImmanuelEaston.Com

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
A Mission of the North American Lutheran Church
5955 South Elm Avenue
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Church Phone Number (559) 237-7909

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July Highlights !

Easton Food Distribution on July 7th

Kingsburg Music in the Park, Thursdays
through July 20, at 8:00pm.

Summer Ummata

July 9th after church 12:00-2:00PM
Tuesday July 11th 6:00-8:00PM
Thursday, July 13 6:00-8:00PM

From our Pastor

Where do we find community?

Church attendance is on the decline. Spin cycle classes are on the rise.

I had a friend remark once that her spin cycle class was kind of like her church. She grew up attending church and enjoying it, but as she grew older and transitioned out of youth group, she found herself isolated in what had once been a thriving community. This issue was only made worse because she was single while her peers were married and joining young couples' classes. Eventually, she just stopped going altogether. Spin class was different. She could go and cry and scream and then, at the end of it, everyone introduced themselves and community began to form. She didn't feel like she had to check a demographic box to belong. She just had to show up.

In a world where we are increasingly isolated and polarized, community is our most scarce resource and the most difficult to cultivate. But community isn't just important, it's holy. When the Lord first formed us in his image, he knew Adam couldn't live in isolation and so he created Eve as well. We have a tendency to think of this solely as a romantic partnership, but far before romance ever entered into the picture, the observation God made was simply, "It's not right for man to be alone." From the very first moments of creation, we've needed each other. In the face of our neighbors, we see God's own image reflected back to us, and God in his wisdom established the church so that when we gather to worship we gather in community. We can rely on the faith of our neighbors to carry us through joy and sorrow alike. We can hear God's love and see his grace in those around us. Church at its best becomes a place where we say, "it's not right to be alone, so come take a seat here."

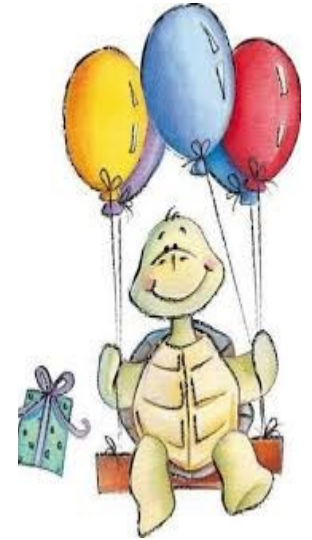
So what about my friend, then? Where did the church go wrong?

I think we tend to fall into two traps. First, we view community as a commodity to consume and commodities need to be marketed and marketing needs an audience. Consider how many classes and Bible studies are often geared towards specific demographics. This class is for this age range or this gender or people in this stage of life. Some of this is helpful! It's great to give young parents or widows and widowers a chance to talk to people who are going through similar things, but un-

In Celebration of our Members 2022

Birthdays

- 3-Betty Moore
- Diane Laub
- 5-Kay Jensen
- 7-Michael Hansen
- Mike Moser
- 9- Suzie Johnson
- 10-Lance Petersen
- Robert Hollenbeck
- 15-Steve Fletcher
- Leah Linger
- 16-Carl Jensen
- 17-Amos Harding
- 19-Taylor Ewing
- 20-Nancy Newsom
- 23-Shane Johnson
- 24- Irma Orozco
- 25-Joseph E. Perez
- 26-Cynthia Stetter
- Bobby Bell
- 28-Allison Terrones
- 31-Hilary Gardner



Wedding Anniversaries

- 1-Bill & Kay Pucheu (44)
- 9-Dale & Donna Ewing (35)
- 17-Lance & Barbara Petersen (52)
- Phil & Susie Tews (45)
- 24-Mike & Carol Bennetts (47)
- 27-Mike & Laura Nielsen (38)
- 30-Luke and Pastor Taylor Stempniak (3)



Baptismal Birthdays

- 5-Nick Bennetts
- 8-Gail Hansen
- Pat Griffin
- 11-Kathi Mehrten
- 20-Tori Tarlton
- Tayla Tarlton
- Tommy Tarlton
- 27-Elijah Cisneros
- 30-Lance Petersen



"I have held thee
in the palm of my hand."
Isaiah 51:16



Caruthers Fair Food Booth

Fundraiser for Fresno Mission

The Caruthers Fair is scheduled on the annual date of the last Wednesday in **September 27th –30th! This marks Immanuel's 20th year hosting a food booth to raise funds for the Fresno Mission! Plan to help with the booth as much as you can.**

There are so many dates and ways you can help with the fair. If you don't like large crowds and would rather help with some simple projects when there are not a lot of folks around, here are some of the dates and projects that you might like to help with:

9.15.23 6:30 pm Sweep and wipe down shelves and at the booth

9.16.23 9:00 am Sweep and paint the floor of food booth.

9.22.23 6:30 pm Wipe down the booth final time before moving in.

9.23.23 9:00 am Move Supplies out to the booth

9.26.23 5:30 pm Shuck Corn at the Fairgrounds

Look for more information as it becomes available in the Sunday Bulletins.

Victoria Salwasser

Fair Enthusiast!

Prayers for our members and friends...

Members and their families serving in the military: Erica Botello, Canaan Campbell, Joey Brewer, Henry Clark, Ryan Freitas, Michael Hansen, Leah Linger, Connor Mannix, & Matthew Tigchelaar.

Those unable to travel about: Gail Hansen, Paul Pedersen, & Kenneth Selzer, Bonnie Terkelsen.

Those in need of pain relief & healing: Sandy Britter, Ed Bordin, Donnie Cathey, Gaye Cissel, Valarie Cooper, Kristen Gibson, Ed Gomez, Paul Jones, Donna Kennedy, Jan Kersgaard, Diane & Darel Mehrten, Marcus Miranda, Betty Moore, Laura Nielsen, Gloria Payne, Lance Petersen, Christie Pettitt, Patti Price, Bob Reynolds, Richard Smith, Rebecca Stempniak, Allison Terrones, & Keitt Wilson.

For those morning the loss of loved ones: The family of Glenn Rasmussen.

For people dealing with loneliness and depression. For those battling the illness and the health care providers tending to those in need.

less you have a staff of a hundred people leading small groups, someone is going to inevitably not fit in the right box and feel left out. That's why it's important to make sure we view the church as a whole as a community and give us the opportunity to break barriers—like we strive to do with Ummata every year. We need to be in relationships with people who don't just look like us and talk like us because it gives a fuller picture of the world and, if we believe that each of us is created in the image of God, it gives us a fuller picture of God too. In spin class, my friend was shaking hands with businessmen and teachers and models and she loved that no one was asking her to go cycle next to the other nurses.

The second trap churches fall too is a lot sneakier. We already have established communities. We have our groups that we gravitate to, and so it's harder to notice when people are left out. It can even be uncomfortable when people try to join. We view it as an intrusion. We're happy to have folks in church! We'll welcome them and give them a slice of cake! But inviting them to *our* class or *our* group, well that's too far, but it's not enough to be welcoming if we aren't making space in our lives for those we invite in. You wouldn't invite someone to dinner and then make them eat at another table or invite a friend to spin class and never talk to them while they're there. Church has the opportunity to be a place where people find belonging, but if we aren't willing to invite people into new spaces—our spaces—it'll never be the community it can be.

What's amazing about serving in Immanuel is I have been adopted into your community and it's given me a family away from home. I know firsthand how wonderful this church can be, and as an outsider who was brought in, I know building and maintaining community is a team sport. It's not something that can be done by a single pastor or just a few people. It's a whole church reaching out, shaking hands, and inviting people to experience not just Sunday morning but life together. It's not good that we should be alone, so let us rejoice that the Lord has made us to be together.

Blessings,
Pastor Taylor

Immanuel you are invited to the Literary Event of the season!

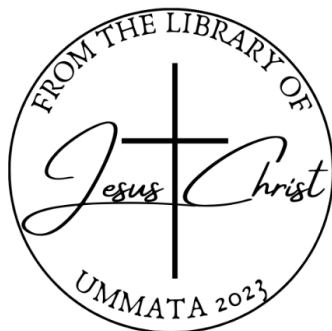
This summer the intergenerational team would like to invite you to join us for our literary-themed summer Ummata. We will provide a meal, fun classes, a speaker, and some music; all themed around fabulous modern books and based on the best book of them all, the Bible.

Dates: July 9 from 12 pm-2 pm
July 11 from 6 pm-8 pm
July 13 from 6 pm-8 pm

We have 4 classes:

- The Hatchet: Focuses on Outdoor Skills
- Eat, Pray, Love: A day each of eating, praying, and love (florals)
- Oh, the Places You'll Go: Learn about trips the leaders have taken and experience some culture from that area
- The Not So Quiet Library: Read a children's book and do activities inspired by the book (All are invited for this but we especially recommend this one for our younger ones)

**ANY QUESTIONS OR TO SIGN UP TEXT
KRISTI HOLLENBECK @ (559)974-4408 OR
USE THE QR CODE TO SIGN UP ONLINE**



P.S. No Reading Required

worked in disaster relief. I love getting out of my comfort zone and trying new things, however, I was a little hesitant to join this group. I was asked to be a leader specifically for our young girls who had signed up to join. For the first time I would be in this leadership position in a mission field. It was impossible to ignore the push God gave me. He knew I needed to be on this trip. God's plan is greater than mine and it was a reminder I needed to hear.

Even though I was hesitant, I'm glad I trusted God and went on the trip. He used me in ways I didn't expect. One specifically throwing a birthday party for one of our young girls. I got to be a fun and energetic hostess. We played games and had music which seems silly to do on a mission trip but I believe it was important to enjoy each other's company as fellow Christians. We went to see a movie and talked about the differences the movie displayed versus what we know as Christians. In all of these fun things we got to do, God was brought into every one of them. He really does show up in every aspect of Our Lives whether we want him to or not. I can say in certainty that we are all glad He did. God proved to me that I can be fun and godly at the same time. The two aspects in my life do not have to be different but in fact they should coexist. I believe the kids learned the same lesson. It's funny how leaders always end up learning the same lessons that they are teaching whether or not they knew them before.

Working with NALC was very exciting and nerve racking at the same time. I am very comfortable outdoors, but this was still very new to me. Men all around us were cutting down huge trees, we were separating different kinds of wood so that the locals can use it in their fireplaces, and lifting very heavy logs. I won't lie, I was intimidated. The saying, 'God gives strength' was proven to be correct this week. I saw young girls lifting their body weight, things I have never seen before! Learning about the different ways we can push our bodies with God's help was so incredible. I would come back time and time again to this wonderful challenge.

Not only did we work and have fun, we met strangers and shared the gospel. On a drive after work one day, we stopped at this thrift shop. Looking around the store and finding funny treasures, we ran into the shop worker. I stopped to have a conversation with him and I brought up the fact we were on a mission trip. After talking about it he mentions he is a Christian and is in the program City Team. My fellow leader, Scott Campbell went through the same program and volunteers there currently. Coincidence? I think not. Who would have thought that shopping at random thrift store would bring other people closer to God. Everything we can be in the name of the Lord.

I should not be surprised on how good God is, and how his love is so strong, however I am always shocked at how truly wonderful he is to us.

Victoria Thornton, July 2022

Central Pacific Mission District

It is time for our District's second annual mission trip! Scheduled for the third week of July, beginning Sunday afternoon, **July 16th and ending the morning of Saturday, July 22nd.** For those of us who took part in last year's Lake Madrone trip, you'll remember how rewarding it was helping others in a burn area and making new friends. Victoria Thornton, one of last years participants from St. Timothy, wrote a wonderful recount of the trip from her perspective, see her recount below.

This year we are also helping those who have lost their homes and possessions due to fire, but in two separate areas of Northern California. On Sunday, the 16th, we will be heading to the mountain town of Somerset as the Pioneer Bible Church will be our accommodations for the evenings of Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Work will take place in Grizzly Flats, helping rebuild a home under construction. Wednesday, after breakfast, we will make our way to Volcanoville to build a storage shed for a fire victim, then making our way to our Foresthill Church, New Hope, that will serve as our hotel for the next three nights. Construction help will take place in Michigan Bluff, about a twenty minute ride from Foresthill, one day, and the other day will be working at the Church.

This wonderful opportunity of working within communities affected by wildfire, is open to youth and adults. Participate the entire week or part. All meals are provided and will be at the approximate cost of \$125.00 per person for the week, or pro-rated per participation time. More details will be forthcoming as we nail them down. Coordinators, please let me know of your Church's participants by Sunday, July 9th. Please contact me with any questions you may have. 530-878-1027 or Email - riedel.75@hotmail.com

Let's get the word out! Let's be the hands and feet of Jesus!
Jan Riedel

Testimony about last years trip from Victoria Thornton:

During the third week of July, 2022, my church, Saint Timothy's Lutheran Church, in San Jose, California along with Our Savior Lutheran Church in Auburn, California traveled to Oroville, Ca. on a mission trip. We paired with the NALC's natural disaster response effort. While we were there, we cut down trees, identified wood and made the Community more fire safe. During our off work hours, we had a birthday party for one of our mission trip attendees and talked with strangers about God.

I have been to Mexico many times on mission trips before, but never have I

Immanuel's Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study

If you are looking for an opportunity to dig deep into the book of Hebrews join Pastor Taylor and the Women's Tuesday Morning Bible Study. They gather from 10:00-11:00 am in the church library for prayer and Bible study. This summer the discussion is on the book of Hebrews. The readings are listed below according to the study. Since summers are busy, check the Sunday bulletin for meeting dates and corresponding readings.

20Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, 21make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21

Study 4: The Suffering Savior

Hebrews 5
Matthew 26:36-46
Matthew 26:45-50

Study 9: One and Done

Hebrews 10
Matthew 3:11-17
Matthew 26:29

Study 5: God's Salvation is Guaranteed

Hebrews 6
Genesis 15

Study 10: The Faith of Our Fathers

Hebrews 11-12:2
Genesis 5:21-24
Revelation 7:9-17

Study 6: The Order of Melchizedek

Hebrews 7
Genesis 14:18-20
Psalm 110

Study 11: Christ The King

Hebrew 12
John 14:1-7
Luke 2:46-55

Study 7: The New Covenant

Hebrews 8
Matthew 5:17-20
Acts 15:1-21

Study 12: Hebrews 13

Hebrews 13
Matthew 5:1-12

Study 8: The Sacrifice of Christ

Hebrews 9
Genesis 3

Journey

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands. Clap, Clap.

So you're experiencing the stages of grief; shock, emotion, depression, loneliness, panicky, etc. you've felt them, you're okay with some of those feelings. You may go back and feel them again next week. That's all okay. It's okay because it's your journey with grief. If you get bogged down on one and kind of skim over another. Again, it's your journey, not mine not your neighbors or even your kids, it's yours. Taking more time with one and not much with another isn't a sign that your experience is less or more than mine. It's yours.

At some point, God willing, you'll be ready to start letting yourself feel good about some things. You won't lose those memories but the memories won't shadow everything like they did for a period of time. Now you're ready to go to a party or repeat a joke you heard the other day.

Two vultures sitting in a tree looking down on another bird. One turns to the other and says, "Egrets, I've had a few." One of my all-time favorite cartoons.

So when is it okay to be happy again? How about when you feel happy. It doesn't mean you are somehow disparaging your loved one. Cindy's mind, thank goodness, didn't work like mine does. I'd tell her jokes and she would stare at me blankly, then we'd laugh as I explained them to her and realize the joke was on me because it wasn't funny at all. Even now I recall a joke or story I'd tell her and smile at the thought that it was something that we could share. I really miss those times. One of my greatest joys these days is interacting with my grandkids. They are just plain fun. From head bonking and talking trains with Samuel and discussing baby dolls with Hannah to fist bumping and high fiving with Violet.

I believe God created us to be joyful and happy. He must have a sense of humor, look at me. We need not be somber and downcast, we can and should be joy filled. We have forgiveness of sins and eternal life, isn't that worth being happy about? Aren't there people in your sphere that just make you smile in your heart when you see them. Think about the things that make you happy and do them. Go for a drive. Eat a bowl of ice cream. Watch your favorite comedy movie again. Feed some birds. Play with your dog. You don't have to be obnoxiously giddy all the time but when the mood strikes you, smile. Won't it feel

News Notes continued...

Mark Salwasser took a vacation in June to Indiana and Ohio to watch his favorite sport: Racing. In Indiana he followed the United States Auto Club Midgets Speed Week. He stayed a block away from the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. When he wasn't watching the races he enjoyed walking around the Indie 500 Speedway. He also got to visit the Roth Motor Sports World of Outlaws team at their Indiana shop. He hiked in Turkey Run State Park and Cataract Falls State Park. He also visited a maple syrup farm in Indiana. He next journey was to Wooster, Ohio. He walked through the Ohio State University Ag Campus. The entire campus is devoted to agriculture. He visited the Smucker's Factory store. He then drove to Millersburg, Ohio and had dinner at an authentic Amish restaurant. The next day he hiked at Cuyahoga Valley National Park and saw some amazing waterfalls. In Ohio his evenings were spent following the entire All Star Ohio Sprint Car Speed Week Series. His son Shane joined him for the last three nights of racing. They enjoyed a day hike to Ludlow Falls near Dayton and Englewood Metro Park. They enjoyed lunch at Shane's favorite restaurant in Cincinnati at The Eagle OTR. They walked off their lunch at the Cincinnati River Walk before heading back to Des Moines for Father's Day. Mark had a great time on his vacation and is looking forward to his next trip.

Immanuel's Fellowship Luncheon resumed on June 22nd! Everyone enjoyed Taco Bowls, then churros & ice cream for dessert! The 29 folks who gathered enjoyed the gathering. We missed a few of you so please join us at our next one on **July 27th at 12:00pm in the Social Hall!** Volunteers are always welcome to help with the lunches, share ideas and or provide entertainment. Please call the church office for more information.

The Perez kids are performing again! Willy Wonka Jr. at the Selma Arts Center runs July 20-30th! **Julius Perez stars as Willy Wonka and Lillianna Perez is one of the main Oompa Loompas** in Cast A performing July 20th, 22nd (2pm & 7PM), July 28th, and July 30th (2pm & 7pm). Who wants to plan an Immanuel night at Selma Arts Center?

Sympathy love and prayers to the family of Glenn Rasmussen Glenn Rasmussen passed away on Wednesday morning, June 7th with his wife Shirley by his side. He and Shirley grew up at Immanuel, were baptized, confirmed and married in our church. They were married on August 1st 1959 by Pastor Svendsen. Glenn was in the Army for two years and then attended Fresno State and began teaching at Washington Union for 35 years and finished his career as a counselor. He enjoyed golfing, hiking, hunting and fishing. He is survived by his wife Shirley and daughters, Becky & Bill and Janice & Tony. A graveside service was held at Washington Colony followed by a brunch at Immanuel on June 16th. The family of Glenn would like to thank Immanuel for the wonderful meal that was shared with friends and family.

News Notes

Happy Birthday Blessings to: BETTY MOORE on her 82nd birthday on the 3rd, KAY JENSEN on her 88th birthday on the 5th; STEVE FLETCHER on his 82nd on the 15th; CARL JENSEN on his 95th on the 16th.

Belated birthday blessings are sent out to Gordon Bennetts who turned 93 years young on June 16th. We celebrated his birthday with root beer floats and cookies after church on June 11th.



Carl Jensen received his 75-year pin, having been a union member for 75 years! On June 3rd the Carpenters Union Local 701 held their annual picnic. The next closest award was for 55 years! 75 years is unheard of. Carl's family is very proud of him receiving this recognition. Congratulations Carl!

Mike and Carol Bennetts have recently returned from a two-week Presidential Libraries Tour in Texas with their friends, the Matsumotos. After flying into Dallas, they visited various historic sites. The first of many was The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza, the unfortunate site of the JFK assassination. Next was the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum. While in Dallas, they also visited Southfork Ranch, the home of the Dallas television show and had the very best steak ever at Dunston's steakhouse!

The next leg of the journey was to Willis, where they stayed for 5 nights on Lake Conroe. On the way to Willis they stopped in Ennis and drove the Bluebonnet Trail to see the state's most famous flower in full bloom. From Willis they made several day trips, the first to Houston where they visited NASA. What an interesting place that is, and the tour of the original Mission Control Center that was in operation when the men landed on the moon was especially informative. The next day the Bennetts and Matsumotos visited College Station, the home of the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum.

After a day of rest, they drove to Austin where they attended a Leo Kottke concert in the historic and beautiful Paramount Theatre. The next day they visited the third (and last in Texas) of the Presidential libraries, that of LBJ, and then went to see his wife's legacy, The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.

From Austin they drove to San Antonio for a total of 964 driving miles (one big triangle shape on the map of a very large state!) They took a canal ride down the famous River Walk section of town, and then visited The Alamo...so much interesting history there.

After accomplishing everything on their agenda, they flew home from San Antonio. It was a great trip with good food, good friends, and good times.

good to do something else? Make a phone call. Send a text. And for those of you who are older, write a letter.

So the point here is this: the time to let yourself feel happy is when you feel it's the right time for you. Again, this is your journey.

Next time you see me tell me a crazy joke, I promise we won't have any EGRETS.

Love you guys, you keep me going.
John.

If you're happy and you know it clap your hands. Clap, Clap.

Prayer Focus Each Week

Week of 7-3-2023. Focus on freedom. 2 Corinthians 3:17 NIV. Now the LORD is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is freedom.

Week of 7-10-2023. Focus on the completeness of God. Ephesians 3: 17b-19 NIV. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power together with all the LORD's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love surpasses knowledge-that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Week of 7-17-2023. Focus on keeping God's commands. Ecclesiastes 12:13,14 NIV. Now all has been heard; hear the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

Week of 7-24-2023. Focus on praising God through Jesus. 1 Peter 4:11 NIV. If anyone speaks they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Week of 7-31-2023. Focus on not condemning and judging. Luke 6:37 NIV. Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven.



JULY 2023



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|---|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 9:30am Sunday School in Grace Hall 10:30am Worship & Communion | 3 7:00 PM NA in Grace Hall | 4  No Women's Bible Study today. | | 6 6:00am Men's Bible Study in Social Hall | 7 Easton Food Distribution 12:00PM | 8 |
| 9 Ummata 9:30am Sunday School in Grace Hall 10:30am Worship & Communion 12:00PM—2:00PM Ummata | 10 7:00 PM NA in Grace Hall | 11 10:00AM Women's Bible Study Ummata 6:00-8:00PM | 12 | 13 6:00am Men's Bible Study in Social Hall Ummata 6:00-8:00PM | 14 | 15 |
| 16 9:30am Sunday School in Grace Hall 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:45 am Congregational Prayer In the sanctuary following worship. | 17 CMPD Mission Trip 7:00 PM NA in Grace | 18 CMPD Mission Trip 10:00AM Women's Bible Study | 19 CMPD Mission Trip | 20 CMPD Mission Trip 6:00am Men's Bible Study in Social Hall | 21 CMPD Mission Trip | 22 NA Women's Event in Grace Hall |
| 23 9:30am Sunday School in Grace Hall 10:30am Worship & Communion | 24 Chimes Deadline 7:00 PM NA in Grace | 25 10:00AM Women's Bible Study 6:30PM Church Council Meeting | 26 | 27 6:00am Men's Bible Study in Social Hall | 28 | 30 |
| 30 Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting 9:30am Sunday School in Grace Hall 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:45 am Semii-Annual Meeting | 31 7:00 PM NA in Grace Hall | August 1 10:00AM Women's Bible Study | 2 | 3 6:00am Men's Bible Study in Social Hall | 4 | 5 |