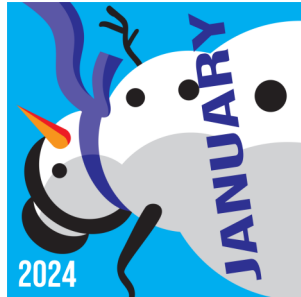


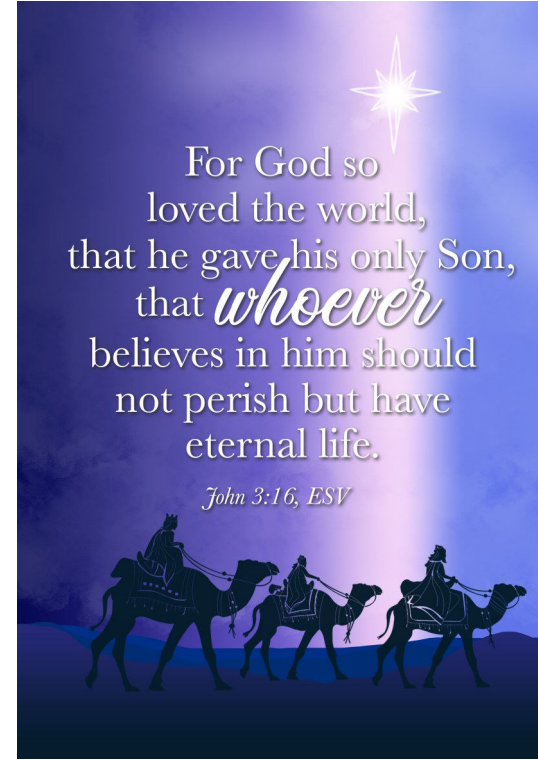
Christ's United Lutheran Church
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www.christsunited.org

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The CULC Messenger

God's Work, Our Actions



Join us for Worship - Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
 Sunday School - September through May
 1st & 3rd Sundays @ 10:45 a.m.



The CULC Messenger
 God's Work, Our Actions





Christ's United Lutheran Church

One God. One People. One Purpose.

437 Airport Road, Ashland, PA 17921

www.christsunited.org

(570) 875-1591

January 2024

CHURCH COUNCIL 2023

	Phone	Term Expires
Kay Berner President	570-875-1035	Feb. 2026
Dennis Wolfe Vice President	570-875-9085	Feb. 2024
Morgen Sweitzer Secretary	570-682-8240	Feb. 2026
Robert Carl	570-590-7281	Feb. 2025
Ken Dengler	570-933-5144	Feb. 2025
Debra Price	570-205-6241	Feb. 2024
Darlene Stank	570-875-1644	Feb. 2025
Robert Sweinhart	570-682-3697	Feb. 2026
Jacob Tice	570-875-2681	Feb. 2024

Youth Representative - Vacant

DESIGNATED PASTOR

Rev. Melinda Heppe
570-205-7450

STAFF

Parish Administrator Debbie Hall 570-875-1591
office@christsunited.org 570-789-9722
Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:00 am- 4:00 pm

Director of Music Jamie Johnson 570-590-1678
Treasurer Ann Marie Dillman 570-449-2021
Indoor Custodian Ann Ray Begis 570-590-2729
Outdoor Custodian Dennis Wolfe 570-875-9085
Financial Secretary Christine Brennan 570-875-0720

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Status of Accounts as of November 30

Total amount in checking account: \$135,229.37.

Amount needed in offerings per month to meet our 2023 Annual Budget of \$195,263.89 is \$16,271.99.

Income for November was \$9,835.99.

Expenses for November were \$6,753.97.

resulting in a net profit of \$3,082.02

Benevolence for November was \$1,027.00.



Christ's United Ministry Teams

Christian Education
Evangelism/Outreach
Lutheran Church Men (LCM)
Social Ministry
Stewardship
WELCA
Worship & Music
Multimedia Ministry
Safety and Security Team

Christ's United Committees

Auditing & Finance Committees
Endowment Fund
Mutual Ministry
Nominating
Personnel
Property

Christ's United Lutheran Church

Mission Statement

We the members of Christ's United Lutheran Church, Ashland, desiring to be blessed together with Word and Sacrament and to become more perfectly the Body of Christ in our world, do hereby commit ourselves to a mission which includes a creative re-examination of our worship life; a quality educational program for all ages; intentional witnessing; a serving spirit; and an integrated support system which will undergird our program and the maintenance of our facilities as it encourages improved stewardship.

Message from Designated Pastor Mindy...

Harry was precisely on time, well scrubbed, and carrying a pen and notebook. He settled himself on the edge of his seat and announced, "Rev, I want an epiphany."

I smiled, and not just because I was close to laughter. He had been sober for all of a month and a half, and was still too scrambled to realize that he'd had about the biggest epiphany that one is likely to have: i.e. that he was (in his particular case after decades of athletically destructive drinking) aware that he was unable to rescue himself, but that God (a.k.a. "his higher power") could. He'd been faithful in attending the 5 or so A.A. meetings at the church each week and others as well, and followed his sponsor like a puppy—a good start, to be sure, but he had no idea how far he had to go.

I also smiled because I suspected that he had not the faintest idea what an epiphany was (He confirmed this suspicion recently, some decades later).

So, we talked epiphanies, how they happen and how they are God's surprises. I explained to him that the Church has both a festival and a whole season called Epiphany, celebrating the ways Jesus gave hints of what he was about, from the arrival of the wise men to his shiny appearance with historical friends on the Mount of the Transfiguration, with various signs and miracles and words along the way which enabled people to glimpse the enormity of what He was about.

Harry left a little confused, but that's ok, he kept coming back. And more has been revealed.

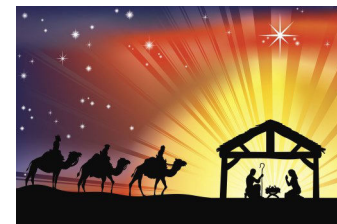
As we enter this season, be on the lookout for places where God has left the little surprises that are her calling cards. And be aware that sometimes He shows up in such godsmacking obviousness that you can't miss it. It's all part of the unending grace and love in which we are enveloped and in which is our hope.

Christian symbol



22

LATIN CROSS — The Latin cross is the simplest and most common form of the Christian cross, possibly dating from the second or third century. Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians typically display a crucifix — an image of Jesus hanging on the cross — to remember his death for the sake of the world. Protestant churches often favor the empty cross, commemorating Jesus' resurrection.



*The CULC Messenger
God's Work, Our Actions*



Member's Message by Donna Wallace—January

New Year's Day 2024.....what lies ahead for us, our family, and our church? We are hopeful that stressful situations will improve, relationships will be stronger and renewed. So it is with hope and joy that we begin the new year. But it isn't long before we discover that some of the same brokenness that existed December 31st are still present. Sin still exists and it's power to create pain and brokenness is felt.

Some of the old is still present. In the face of this truth is the Good News that Jesus who has become Immanuel, God with us, comes to you and me with His love and grace and gives us His righteousness. Martin Luther told us that as we remember our baptism, we can drown the old sinful self, be declared forgiven, and rise up as a new child of God each day. Jesus is the one who makes us new, no matter what day the calendar says.

In this new calendar year, renew your relationship with Jesus by attending worship services, studying the Scriptures at home, Sunday School, and Bible study sessions, and serving on church and community groups to care for others.

Happy New Year 2024 knowing that Jesus is the one who makes you new.



**January Council Contact of the month
is Robert Sweinhart.**

The Council Contact of the Month is the "on call" member of council, the person to contact if you have any concerns (other than pastoral concerns), or need access to the building. If you need to contact Robert, he can be reached at 570-682-3697.



**Council Member
of the Month**



**American Red Cross
Community Blood Drive
Christ's United
Lutheran Church**

**437 Airport Road (Gordon)
Ashland, PA 17921**

**Monday, February 5, 2024
1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

Please contact Debbie Hall or call
1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2676) or visit
www.redcrossblood.org
to schedule an appointment.

Open to the public and walk-ins are Welcome!

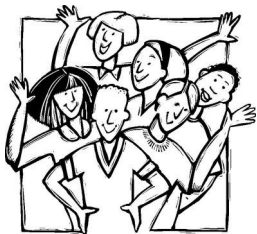
The heart of our faith



Christianity affirms that at the heart of reality is a Heart, a loving Father who works through history for the salvation of his children. Man cannot save himself, for man is not the measure of all things and humanity is not God. Bound by the chains of his own sin and finiteness, man needs a Savior.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

CULC YOUTH GROUP Activities



All kids who had First Communion and their families are welcome.

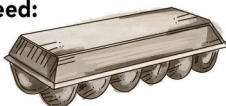
Watch the Newsletter for this year's schedule of Youth Group events.



Geodes look plain on the outside but contain beautiful crystals. Create these "rocks" to show how God makes us new on the inside.

What you need:

- Clean cardboard egg carton
- Scissors (and adult help)
- Epsom salt
- Plastic zippered bags (one per color of dye)
- Food coloring
- Glue
- Paintbrush



What you do:

1. Cut out the tops and bottoms of all the egg compartments so you can make 6 ball shapes.
2. In each bag, put 3 tablespoons of Epsom salt and a drop or two of food coloring. Seal and shake to mix.
3. With the paintbrush, spread glue inside two egg-carton halves. Sprinkle a spoonful of Epsom salt into those halves. Then close and shake.
4. Open your homemade geode and shake out excess salt.
5. Optional: Preserve the crystals with a coat of clear-drying glue.



Church Council Highlights From December

- Bible Study has been paused at least till after the holidays. There will be weekday communion service during lent.
- Communion Elements are to be taken up front to the altar during the Choir Anthem.
- Five students will receive \$500 for Endowment Scholarship.
- Ornamental grass on either side of driveway will be cut for winter.
- Kitchen freezer is being repaired.
- Furnace replacement is under way.
- All committee reports are due to the office by January 22nd for the Annual Congregational meeting.



Annual Committee Reports Due



All Committee Secretaries and Treasurers:

Please have your reports submitted to the church office by Monday, January 22, 2024.

This is the deadline for all information so it can be included in the Annual Congregational Report. Our annual meeting is on Sunday, February 18th after worship.

Thank You!





I want to thank everyone for the cards, offers to help as needed and well wishes that were given to me during my recent illness. I was completely taken by surprise at my need for surgery.

Thank you to Pastor Mindy for her hospital visit. It's nice to know I have the support of my church family.

- Barbara Stepanchick

PRAYER CHAIN



Each day members of Christ's United bow their heads and lift their hearts in prayer for the ministries of this congregation and people in need.

A copy of the Prayer List is available at worship services each Sunday. You also have an email sent to you each week with a list of those in need of your prayers. A phone chain notifies you of immediate needs. If there is an immediate need of prayer, please call the church office. In the event the office is closed, Gail Marquardt (570-554-1075 or 570-933-1737) should be called to begin the prayer chain. Please call the church office for more information or to become a Prayer Chain Participant.

Praying Through the Directory

Each month we will be listing three of our church faith families. We ask that you take the time and uplift them in prayer for their needs and spiritual journey.

This month we pray for:

- The Bereski Family - Paul, Toni, Dakota, Penelope Ann
- The Pennypacker Family - Lewis
- The Wenholt Family - Dennis & Lori Knorr



ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIPS



The Endowment Committee is pleased to announce that the following student also received a scholarship check to assist in furthering their education:

Amy Johnson is in her 1st year of a 2-year Associate Degree Program at Penn State University, Schuylkill Haven. She is studying Radiology Sciences.



Three powerful prayers

Amy Carmichael (1867-1951), an Irish Protestant missionary, served in India for 55 years. Much of her work was with children, especially rescuing them from sexual slavery. Carmichael wrote 35 books and many articles about her mission work. The Church of England remembers her on January 18, the anniversary of her death.

The following brief but powerful prayers are attributed to Carmichael:

- May thy grace, O Lord, make that possible to me which seems impossible to me by nature.
- Holy Spirit, think through me, till your ideas are my ideas.
- God, hold us to that which drew us first, when the cross was the attraction, and we wanted nothing else.





2024 Sponsorships

The new sponsorship sign up sheets are now posted on the bulletin board. Sign up for:

- Altar Flowers \$35.00*
- Worship Bulletins \$15.00
- Special service bulletins \$10.00
- Sanctuary Candle \$10.00
- Children's Bulletins \$10.00
- Monthly Newsletters \$40.00
- Palms for Palm Sunday Worship \$15.00

For Altar Flowers:

Please sign up by the bulletin board for week(s) you would like to sponsor Altar Flowers and call "Flowers From the Heart"

570-339-2519 to place order. **Cost is \$35.00.**

Please place order and make payment directly to the florist.

All other sponsorships, please make payable to CULC and give to Debbie in the Church Office.

Give Electronically

Checking/Savings Credit/Debit Card
Christ's United accepts electronic donations

Electronic Giving is a convenient way to provide consistent financial support to our church. Go to www.christsunited.org or scan the QR code to learn how you can participate.



We Offer our Prayers to...

Please note that those experiencing a traumatic event are placed onto the Prayer List and will be **kept on for one month and then taken off**. If you would like someone added, please call the office or write their name on the Prayer Request sheet found on the Prayer Podium. **Please provide updates to the office in order that the list is always current.**



December 24 -- Joe Towey (J. Towey)
 Roger Klinger, Jr. (P. Dziczek)
 Arianna Gyomber (D. Zaharick)
 Rick Hummel (C. Hummel)
 Dianna & Ken Connor (T. Wolfe)
 Michelle Adams & Amber Adams
 Raymond Jacob Price (D. Price)
 Jenny
 Sue Hendricks

Family of Mary Calvert

December 17 – Mary Heverling (T. Wolfe)
 Leo Young (J. Young)
 Nancy Mattis (D. Stank)
 Mary Calvert (D. Stank)
 Barry Oswald (J. Towey)
 Andrew Schronick (D. Zaharick)
 Ken Lewis & family (S. Tice)
 Lisa Metzinger (D. Zaharick.)
 Artz Family

December 10 – Elaine Stone (G. Marquardt)
 Kelly Kline (D. Price)
 Tarene Yoder & Family (B. Yoder)
 Loretta Berner (K. Berner)
 Ann Helwig (P. Lute)

Family of Arlene Chillis

December 3 – Rose Varndell (C. Varndell)
 Gary Witmier (C. Varndell)
 Peggy Dallabrida (C. Varndell)

Families of John Rumble & Raymond Friel

Please continue to pray for: Corrine & Josh Coward, Rick Fritz, Jim Gruber, Annette Houser, James Houser Sr., Barbara Liem, Gail Lorady, Pearl & Carl Lute, Dianna Monaghan, Irene Morgan, Cheryl Varndell

Remember our Home-bound: Leroy Berner, Diane Heidlebaugh, Jim Hepler, Nancy Kessler, Marlene Lucas, Gail Marquardt, Anna Neumeister, Richard Shoup, Karen Smith, Dot Zangari, Linda Zerby

And Friends: Michelle Ambrose, Robert Beecher, Mark Bennyhoff, Donald Bulla, George Dornsife, Joe Ferraro Jr., Harry Fishburn, Bob Griffiths, Dan Grow, Minah Horan, Tracy Maurer, Angie Romberger, Elizabeth Smith & family, Pastor Sunny, Karyssa Wenrich



- 1 Jamie Johnson
- 2 Katelyn Bechtel
Barbara Pennypacker
Nathan Smith
- 3 Emily Reichwein
- 4 David Hepler
Margaret Koons
- 5 Miles Hudock
Kevin Wright
- 7 Katrina Economy
Brenda Knorr
- 8 Craig Troutman
- 10 Laray Klinger
Luke Young
Liam Young

- 11 Harry Hepler
- 12 Richard Knorr
Jennifer Lettich-Snyder
- 13 Jesse Cascarino
Trevor Wilson
- 14 Ron Andrews
Cheryl Neumeister
- 15 Karen Green
Hannah Lisowski
- 16 Rylee Nagle
- 17 Jim Gruber
Debbie Hall
- 18 Bill Burke
- 19 Deb Zaharick
- 20 Ian Bendinsky
Nathan Hepler
Jennie Kosmisky
- 21 Karen Schweinhart
Bryce Weikel
- 23 David Chuplis
- 24 Katherine Bixler
Rachel Hostetter
- 25 Steven Wagner
- 30 Allen Johnson
Caleb Steinbauer
Amanda Sterling



- 01/08/11 Douglas & Lindsay Fetterolf
- 01/13/72 Leroy & Deb Berner
- 01/20/05 Allen & Keri Johnson
- 01/30/82 Craig & Penny Troutman



HAPPY NEW YOU!

Changing the calendar each January is a reminder that God makes all things new.

Directions: Use the clues and the calendar code to complete 2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV.

JANUARY 2024							
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
		1	2	3	4	5	6
	God	night	word	in	love	Jesus	
7	glory	therefore	speak	give	light	Christ	a
14	saw	beginning	anyone	waters	help	is	many
21	he	again	through	earth	made	while	back
28	new	if	and	creation			



- The second Monday _ _ _ _ _
- The last Monday _ _
- The 16th _ _ _ _ _
- One day before the 20th _ _
- The day before the first Friday _ _
- The last weekday of the second week _ _ _ _ _
- The day after the 20th _ _
- The day after 18th _ _
- The first day of the second weekend _
- The last Sunday _ _ _
- The last day of the month _ _ _ _ _



There will be no WELCA meeting in January. The next meeting will be on February 7th at 6:00 p.m. All women are invited to join us.

LUNCH BUNCH

Thursday, January at 1:30 the Lunch Bunch is headed to Two Guys From Italy in Shamokin. Everyone is invited. Please sign up on the bulletin board so reservations and carpooling can be arranged.



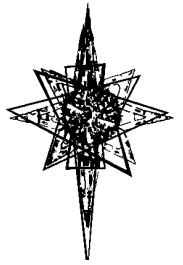
Two ships

The year like a ship in the distance
comes over life's mystical sea.
We know not what change of existence
'tis bringing to you or to me.
But we wave out the ship that is leaving
and we welcome the ship coming in,
although it be loaded with grieving,
with trouble, or losses, or sin. ...

The new ship comes nearer and nearer,
we know not what freight she may hold.
Hope stands at the helm there to steer her;
our hearts are courageous and bold.
Sail in with new joys and new sorrows.
Sail in with new banners unfurled.
Sail in with unwritten tomorrows.
Sail in with new tasks for the world.



The Meaning of Epiphany



Epiphany, which comes from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, means “an appearance” or “a revealing.” Centuries ago, the church set aside January 6, the 12th day after Christmas, to mark the revealing of Jesus as Christ to the wise men, who were Gentiles. Jesus’ first followers were Jewish, so the revelation of the divine Christ to the non-Jewish magi reminds us that Jesus came to earth to save the whole world.

Symbols of Epiphany include light, a star, a crown (or three crowns) and a globe or stylized portrayal of the world. The color of Epiphany is green to symbolize life, growth, hope and eternity.

On the church calendar, the Epiphany season lasts until Ash Wednesday, which is determined by the date of Easter.

Arts Sunday

January 7th will be CULC’s first Arts Sunday. Our theme is stars. Matthew 2:2 states “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

We invite any one who has a craft, whether it is knitting, crocheting, painting, drawing, coloring, weaving or any other handicraft to bring it in for display. We also request that if you have a craft with a star or have the time and feel like making a new craft please incorporate a star. Please have your craft here by Saturday January 6 for display on January 7 so everyone can look at this display during our social hour.

We hope to make this a yearly occurrence with a different theme each year and are excited to have everyone participate. As it states in Isaiah 64:8, But now O Lord, you are our Father, we are the clay and you are our potter, we are all the work of your hand.

Dear Christ's United Family,

Thank you so very much for your generous Christmas gifts.

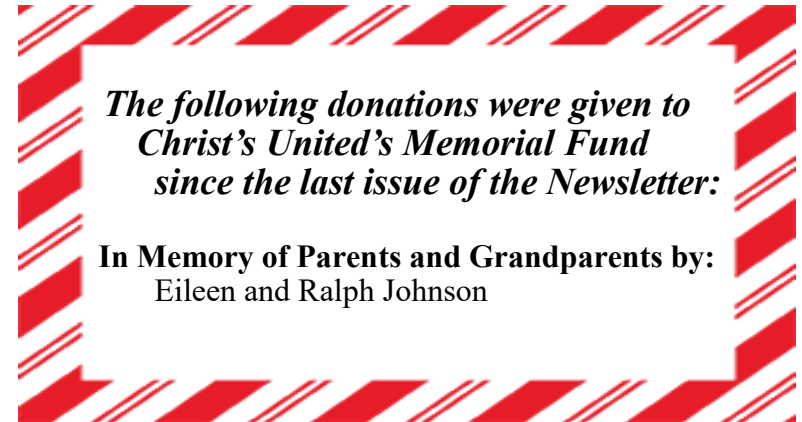
Your kindness and support are always so greatly appreciated by all of us.

Wishing everyone a very happy, healthy New Year filled with many blessings.

Sincerely,

Christ's United Staff:

*Ann Ray, Chris, Ann Marie, Debbie,
Pastor Mindy, Jamie & Dennis*



Resolve to go micro

Most New Year's resolutions are so major they seem made to be broken. Maybe that's why "micro-resolution" is the latest January buzzword. Setting smaller goals is more realistic and helps ensure follow-through, according to experts. People who try setting micro-resolutions say that approach is more positive and leads to longer-lasting change. For example, instead of attempting to lose 30 pounds this year, make a micro-resolution to walk 10 minutes twice per day and to snack on fresh fruit at least once a day.



Micro-resolutions can also be helpful in matters of faith. If aiming to read the entire Bible in one year feels overwhelming, take five minutes each morning and evening to read a brief devotional or pray. If joining your church's missions committee isn't possible, try to talk to one new person each week about your faith or church. May God bless you as you take small steps that add up to big impact this year!



"Follow your heart" has ended more marriages, caused more addictions, mutilated more bodies, destroyed more souls, and ended more lives than Satan imagined.

Its one of hell's most effective slogans.

Don't follow your heart...follow The One who created it.

-author unknown

SOCIAL MINISTRY



Fellowship Hour will be held after worship on only the first Sunday of each month September through May. See schedule below for your committee's turn to serve. Please sign up on the bulletin board to help.

~ 2024 ~

- January** - WELCA
- February** - Church Council
- March** - Social Ministry
- April** - Evangelism/
Endowment/Stewardship
- May** - WELCA
- June/July/August** -
No Social Hour

We will be collecting the following items for January:

Cereal & Oat Meal

Please place your donations in the shopping cart.

Thank You!

The next food distribution date is
Thursday
January 11, 2024



Serving Our Community of Faith in January:



Date	Supply Pastor/ Worship Leader	Congregational Rep/ Announcements	Lector	Ushers	Communion Assistants	Acolyte	Acolyte
January 7 Baptism of Our Lord	Kay Berner	Ken Dengler	Angie Berger	Donna Wallace b Allen Johnson c/d Virgil Smith so	Erik Tice AM Barb Stepanchick Ken Dengler	Kaitlyn Werner	Marisa Seritsky
January 14	Pastor Ben Scott		Donna Lassen			_____	Nathan Berger
January 21	Pastor Mindy Heppe		Deb Hubler			Eli Pennypacker Tag-a-long	Jacob Tice
January 28	Pastor Mindy Heppe		Vivian Brown			_____	Ava Hubler



January 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 Epiphany of Our Lord
	New Year's Day		10:30 Seniors	6:30 Choir Practice		
7 Baptism of Our Lord	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:30 Worship w/Holy Communion 10:30 Fellowship Hour 10:45 Sunday School	7:00 Church Council		10:30 Seniors	10 - 11:30 Christ's Cupboard 6:30 Choir Practice		
14	15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	16	17	18	19	20
9:30 Worship	Newsletter Deadline	9:00 Knaughty Knotters	10:30 Seniors	1:30 Lunch Bunch 6:30 Choir Practice		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:30 Worship 10:30 Worship & Music 10:45 Sunday School	6:00 Social Ministry	9:00 Knaughty Knotters	8:30 Newsletter Assembly 10:30 Seniors	6:30 Choir Practice		
28	29	30	31			
9:30 Worship		9:00 Knaughty Knotters	10:30 Seniors			