

# REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH LCMS

## FOLLOW ME!



**AUGUST 2025 PUBLICATION**  
**VOLUME 18 ISSUE 8**

Redeemer *Reflection* Newsletter

*Making Jesus Known In The  
Places Where We Live*

Redeemer Lutheran Church 3637 Spring Arbor Road, Jackson, MI 49201  
Phone: 517-750-3100 Fax: 517-750-4590  
Email: [office@redeemerjackson.org](mailto:office@redeemerjackson.org)  
Visit our website at: [www.redeemerjackson.org](http://www.redeemerjackson.org)



## FOLLOW ME!

by Pastor Zachary Holdorf

Following Jesus is hard because He asks much of us! But it's so very good.

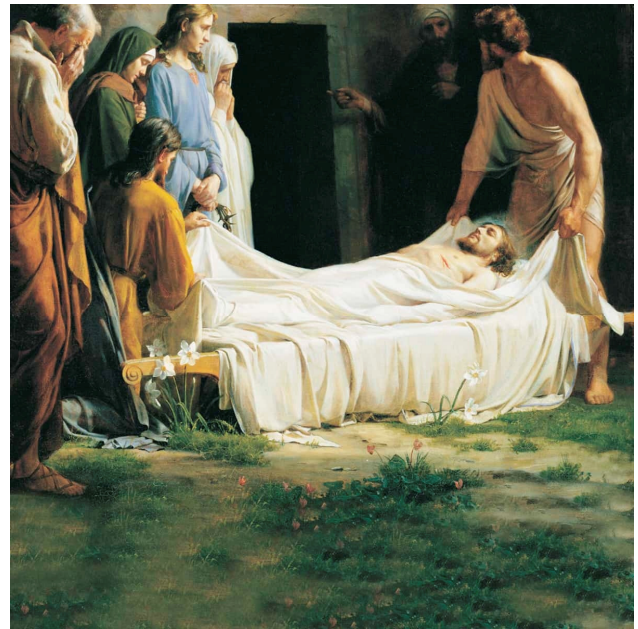
We are to deny ourselves and take up our crosses. Mark 8:34 states, "And calling the crowd to Him with His disciples, He said to them, 'If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.'" This means that there will be times when we will have to give up our own interests for the sake of Christ. We will also have to bear whatever burden comes our way with faith and trust in Christ.

Denying oneself and bearing the burden of our crosses is never easy. Thanks be to God for the promise of Jesus in Matthew 11:28, "*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*"

Yes, following Jesus is very good. There is no one better to follow. I think about the hard things Jesus endured. God took on flesh and lived as one of us; He fulfilled every component of the law perfectly. He was horribly mistreated. Beaten, bloodied and bruised. He was flogged and then

forced to carry the cross to the place where He would die.

Jesus was then nailed to that cross, the sin of the world placed upon Him, and suffered excruciating pain. All this led to His death, and He was laid in a



tomb.

What's beautiful is that He did this for you and me, to forgive our sins. He rose from the dead, lives, and reigns. We have help in any "hard" we experience. He promises to lead us on paths of righteousness for His name's sake and tenderly cares for us as He leads.

His mercies are new every morning and His grace is sufficient. Jesus will

lead us home. And on that day, there will be no more “hard,” just perfect peace with Christ. This is the One we follow. Thanks be to God, for He is good!

In Christ,

*Pastor Zach*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

☺ **Coffee with Pastor Bible Study** Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m. in the church library. **No Bible study on August 21 or 28.**

☺ **Sunday Multigenerational Bible Study** at 9:30 a.m. This study will meet in the lower-level Community Connection Room. **No Bible study on August 24 or 31.**

☺ **Saturday, July 26, Mobile Food Pantry** at Trinity downtown, from 10:00–11:30 a.m. Volunteers should meet at Trinity Lutheran downtown and be available from 9:00 a.m. until Noon.

☺ **Sunday, July 27, Fellowship and Fun Night.** Bring a favorite picnic/potluck passing dish to share. Hot dogs, s’mores, a bonfire, and an activity will be provided. These special fellowship Sundays will continue through the summer on these

remaining dates: **July 27 and August 24. Rain or shine!**

☺ **Monday, July 28 at 9:00 a.m. in the RAC,** setup for the Rummage Sale will begin. **Ongoing through July 31!**

☺ **Friday and Saturday, August 1 & 2, Annual Rummage Sale in the RAC** beginning at 9:00 a.m. both days! See you there!

☺ **Sunday, August 10 at 2:30 p.m. Ice Cream Social and Annual CCBB Concert** in the pavilion. Ice cream will be served beginning at 2:30 p.m., with the concert starting promptly at 3:00 p.m. Free to all. Will accept donations for CCBB support.

☺ **Saturday, August 16—Pray Jackson** prayer focus. **Meeting place TBA. 5:30-7:00 p.m.** Watch the bulletin and/or check with Craig.

☺ **Saturday, August 23, Mobile Food Pantry** at Trinity downtown, from 10:00–11:30 a.m. Volunteers should meet at Trinity Lutheran Church downtown Jackson and be available from 9:00 a.m. until Noon. All are welcome!



**REDEEMER RUMMAGE SALE**  
August 1 and 2



by Kathy Voss

The 2025 Redeemer Rummage Sale will be held **August 1 and 2**. Please have your items to be donated into the church by the last week of July. We need clean, paper bags for the sale as it will be a "\$5.00 per bag" sale, the same as last year.



Once again, proceeds from this sale go to support "Water Mission" ministry, where Jake and Jenna Voss "are doing the Lord's work." **Water Mission** help provide for sanitation and safe water for people and areas in dire need of clean water and water systems.

#### **CAN YOU HELP? Contact:**

**Kathy Voss** at 517-740-3660 or  
**Gay Alcenius** at 517-795-0302

If no answer, please leave a message.

Please plan to donate, volunteer, and attend! Volunteers will be needed the week of the sale to set up and sort donated items. See you there!

**REMEMBER:** Only clean items in good repair can be accepted. **No electronics, please!** We cannot use or sell old electronics. Recycle or dispose of them as they are **NOT** reusable and are of **NO** benefit for the sale!

Set up for the sale will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, July 28. We would appreciate any and all help with the setup of tables and sorting of items for the sale.

#### **SALE TIMES:**

**Friday. August 1, 9:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.**

**Saturday: August 2, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.**

We plan to have lunch and snacks available for our volunteers, so if heavy lifting or sorting is not your forte, consider volunteering to donate meals or meal items, and/or snacks and drinks for our workers. Contact Kathy Voss or Gay Alcenius if you can help with this much appreciated portion of sale team volunteers.

### **"FOLLOW ME" IN HIS FOOTSTEPS**

P. L. Bennitt

They don't do it for glory. They don't



do it for recognition. They are simply obeying Jesus by following His example.

Every fourth Saturday of every single month of each and every year since the 2020 pandemic, a group of dedicated,

hearty, caring people from both Trinity and Redeemer churches gather at our sister congregation, Trinity Lutheran



Church in downtown Jackson. They gather, sort and package donated food items and load them into the cars of people in our community temporarily in need of food.

There is a wonderful feeling of shared camaraderie within this group of people. They all care deeply about people and take Jesus at His word to “feed My lambs,” literally, as well as spiritually.



Some in this group are there every single time. Some come as their schedules allow. Some have made this a personal commitment to ministry within the community. All are dedicated to

helping those in need, just as Jesus did. These are the hands and feet of Jesus in our Jackson community.



Come and be a part of this service to our neighbors. Any fourth Saturday, please feel free to join us when you can; come and be the hands and feet of Jesus in this place. All are welcome. Come serve with us!



**Allan & Nyla Arvy**

08/28/1965

**George & Wanda Williams**

08/20/1966

**Blair & Peggy Bennitt**

08/23/1968

**John & Andrea Niehaus**

08/15/1970

**Donald & Debora Moyer**

08/06/1977

**Craig & Kim Britton**

08/07/1982

**Russ & Janet Jean**

08/08/1992

**Larry & Sue DeSimpelare**

08/06/1994

## SEPTEMBER WRITING PROMPT

The writing prompt for **September** is **Mercy**. As our Lord has mercy on us daily, may we extend that mercy to those around us. Share your knowledge of mercy demonstrated by others, or your own personal experience with God's mercy in your own life.

Articles on prayer, family life, or outreach and evangelism are encouraged as well. We all enjoy hearing how our members have seen God working in their own lives and in the Jackson area.

Send comments, information/photos, and/or articles by the 15th of the month to the NL editor at [bennitt49@yahoo.com](mailto:bennitt49@yahoo.com), to be included in the following month's newsletter. All submissions are appreciated and prayerfully considered.

## LEADERSHIP BOARD MEETING AUGUST 27

The next Leadership Board meeting will take place on August 27 at 6:30 p.m. in the church library. More information and tentative renovation/building specs and ideas are expected at that time. Please keep the prayers going as we place this project into God's hands, waiting for Him to make clear the direction He has planned for our future.

The meetings are always open to all members to attend. We encourage you to come and observe the decision-making process and all that entails.



## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Samantha Anderson	08/02
Blair Bennitt	08/02
Abigail Bahr	08/03
Kevin Herrick	08/03
Janet Gamet	08/04
Charles Kapp	08/04
Robert Bohm	08/05
Robert Rice	08/07
Dawn Schuen	08/08
Darlene Wilkinson	08/08
Ronald Rockwell	08/09
Kay Burger	08/11
Brock Potter	08/11
Craig Britton	08/12
Larry Lotridge	08/13
Bruce Leib	08/14
Elsie Lyn Walsh	08/14
Dana Farley	08/15
Dennis Leach	08/17
Fran Althouse	08/19
Michelle Potter	08/19
Harlow Elbert	08/20
Ronald Ellison	08/21
Andy Biegner	08/23
Adelaide Heffner	08/23
Craig Wingle	08/23
Nelda Hoffer	08/24
Madison Brandt	08/25
Allan Arvy	08/28
Stephanie Herrick	08/30
Alexis Nickles	08/30
Sophia Kane	08/31
Annabelle Mead	08/31



## CCBB CONCERT & ICE CREAM SOCIAL



Sunday, August 10 at 2:30 p.m., the annual Redeemer Ice Cream Social and CCBB Concert will again be held in the pavilion. Ice cream will be served beginning at 2:30 p.m., with the concert starting promptly at 3:00 p.m.

Please bring your own chairs or blankets and sit and relax as you enjoy a sweet treat of ice cream and the added refreshment of wonderful music played by the talented Capital City Brass Band.

There is no charge for this event, but donations are always welcome for the ongoing efforts of the CCBB's musical contributions to our community.

## ONE SIMPLE WORD THAT BREAKS DOWN BARRIERS

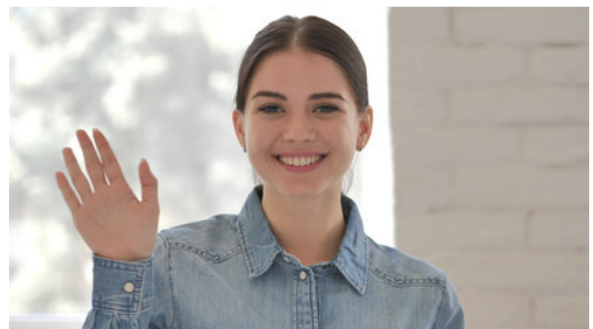
by Meredith VanDerWeide. *This article was originally published June 6, 2025, on The Washington Stand.*

When you spend most of your life in a place like Jackson, Michigan, saying “hello” to everyone—including

strangers—is the most normal thing. You never really think about the impact such a simple greeting can have until you’re somewhere else, or dealing with uncertain circumstances.

I really began to appreciate why “Midwest Nice” matters in 2019, on a trip with my church youth group to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota. That’s another place with a reputation for being nice, but still an adjustment going to such a big city for an event with nearly 20,000 other teenagers — enough to fill the Little Caesars Arena back in [Detroit] Michigan.

When I realized how easy it was to spot the attendees by the bright purple backpacks we received at registration, the big downtown suddenly felt a lot smaller. Plus, everyone was eager to share greetings, from “hello” to high-fives—and not just the kids. Regular Minnesotans saw the purple backpacks, too, and could pick out who was there for the event. Restaurant and hotel workers not only commented about how nice everyone was, but would ask why we seemed so happy and what made our big Gathering so different.



I was grateful to be a part of this experience because it illustrated how a friendly “hello” goes such a long way, not only to making new friends, but also to actually reaching people in their

times of need. It meant a lot to me as a small-town kid experiencing the big city for the first time. That experience helped prepare me for the work I do with a vulnerable population near where I go to college.

For the last three years, I've lived in another close-knit Michigan community: Hillsdale College, a school of about 1,600 students where "Midwest Nice" is the everyday norm. In college, I've become part of Hillsdale College for Life, a student-led organization that promotes the dignity of human life and helps women in need. I'll be president of the group this fall; we work directly with pregnancy resource centers like Helping Hands in Hillsdale that provide ultrasounds, housing assistance, diapers, and education support to women who are facing difficult pregnancies—often alone, and often with few financial resources...

The most important thing I hope to leave with women at Helping Hands isn't a lecture, but instead the feeling of being loved. I start by saying "hello"

HELLO!

to these women, refusing to allow the politics of abortion to obscure the humans who are at the heart of the issue. When the politics of abortion clouds society's conversations, we forget about the insecurities, vulnerabilities, and basic needs that lead a woman to [even] consider abortion. But if we can drown out the political noise, we just might help

change two lives with a "hello" and a loving smile.

That warmth and friendly greeting is what I'm looking forward to later this summer, when I head to New Orleans for my third Youth Gathering.

This time it will be as a Young Adult Volunteer to help teenagers navigate things and make their own connections like I did. Just like in Minneapolis, I expect the kids coming this year will make a positive impact on the city by letting their faith show as they interact with businesses and residents, and also give back through participation with local community service projects.

Living our faith involves a lot more than just worshiping on Sundays—we're also called to serve our neighbors. Whether we're serving expectant mothers, preparing meals for the hungry, or cleaning up neighborhoods, we open up the door to truly reach someone when we start with a friendly greeting that lets someone else know



that he or she matters.

Most of all, I hope the teens at the Gathering see that in me, and it helps



them understand that “Midwest Nice” can spread the love of Christ, and is just as relevant in Louisiana as it is in Minnesota and Michigan.

## MAKING A STAND

by Craig Britton, Director of Ministries

*“Indeed, it is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I have you in my heart, and you are all partners with me in grace, both in my imprisonment and in the **defense** (emphasis mine) and confirmation of the gospel.”*

Philippians 1:7 (CSB)

This summer our adult Bible class, both the Thursday and Sunday installments, have had a decidedly different focus than usual. We have a hungry core of students, nearly 50 each week during the school year. While attendance drops just a bit in the summer, we thought it necessary to visit the idea of defending the faith. The field known as “apologetics.” Now, just to be clear, apologetics does not mean apologizing for being a Christian. It means, as referenced by Paul above, making a defense of the message of the Bible. Even the Bible itself.

I’m not content with 50 in attendance. Thankful, yes. Content? Nope. And by virtue of the subject we’ve chosen for the summer, our prayer is that the ideas learned will be “leaked” to the larger congregation and have its effect drawing more to investigate all of Scripture taught throughout the year. If you’re reading this and you’re a regular attender of Bible class at Redeemer, the onus is on

you. “Word of mouth” is still the best form of advertising.

So, this summer, Pastor Zach and I have touched upon trusting the Bible, the first Christmas, the crucifixion and resurrection, the early church, and various other topics. Some may ask, “Does the Bible need a defense?” Well for years, many Lutherans have thought not. And the reason for that idea stems from our view of the efficacy and power of the Word of God. Lutherans believe the Word is the active power of God and accomplishes all the will of God. I believe that, too. Defending the Word of God and its contents is not done from a position of weakness, but from a position of God’s strength. The very strength of His Word. And from a point of the church’s mission, giving a defense of the Scriptures is done, in part, with an open ear to both objections and genuine inquiry.



**Martin Luther**

One caveat taken from the pen of Paul above: Make note, dear Christian, that defense and confirmation of the gospel, taken on by any believer, may come at a cost.

Paul is writing from imprisonment precisely because he is faithful under God to open his mouth and declare

what God has given him to say. And by extension, what God has given us to say, as well. Not just pastors, church workers, or Bible college graduates; all believers. Since that includes anyone reading these words, why not make the commitment from this Sunday onward to join our adult Bible class either on Thursday mornings at 10:00 am in the library or in the Connection Room below the sanctuary between worship services on Sundays.

The church cannot be sustained without God's people treasuring, declaring, and defending His Word. It is a treasure given to all God's people. And not just for us, but for all those on the outside looking in. Join us.

## TALKING WITH GOD

From: *My Personal Daily Prayer Book* by Christine A. Dallman and Margaret Anne Huffman

There are times when death seems like an attractive alternative to having to face certain things in this world. Lord, I don't mean to be ungrateful for my life when I say that, but I am crying out for Your help and for a new measure of strength from You in order to press on.

You know my limitations and my vulnerabilities when life gets ugly. I know them, too. There are no secrets between us, and for that I am thankful. I can come to you without pretense. So today, it's just me standing here, open and honest before You, longing for Your help. I know You will give it freely in just the right way and in just the right time. I trust You. Let me live boldly with the courage You lend me today. Amen.

Confusion is directing my thoughts like a drunken general ineffectively marshalling his troops. My mind loyally follows its erratic demands and becomes increasingly lost and frustrated. I need a sign, a marker, something to orient myself, to find my way out of this turmoil.

Find me, Lord, for I am wandering in the wilderness of my mind, heading deeper and deeper into despair. Where are You? I call. And then I realize that by describing my lostness, You show me where I am and how to return home.

*When they call to Me,  
I will answer them*

Psalm 91:15

## FOLLOW ME!

by P. L. Bennitt

Jesus never said, "Follow Me and I will explain everything for you." He didn't say, "Follow Me and everything will be perfect." Jesus simply called His disciples by saying, "Follow Me." "Follow Me and do as I do" seems implied. They didn't question Him. They just dropped



what they were doing and followed Him.

That is trust. That is faith! That was God working in them. They were human. They had questions for Him later, but they followed Him when He called. Their steps were sure and their hearts were changed by Jesus. They followed Him.

How quick are we to drop what we're doing and follow the example of Jesus? Do we reply, "I'm coming, Lord?" Or do we say, "I'll be there as soon as I finish what I'm doing?" Or, "Can You wait until next month, Jesus? My schedule won't be as full then." Would you drop everything if Jesus stood in front of you and said, "Follow Me?"

I want the kind of faith we see in Philip. "Finding Philip, [Jesus] said to him, 'Follow Me,' in John 1:43. If you read on through verse 46, you'll find that not only did Philip immediately turn to Jesus and follow Him, but he also told others as he followed. Nathanael was the the first Philip invited with the words, "Come and see."

"Come, follow Me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed Him (Matthew 4:19). Did you get that? At *once* they left what they were doing and followed Him. At once! Not, "Give me a minute while I clean up." Or, "Can it wait until next week?" No. They followed "at once." Wow! What faith. What open trust and acceptance we see here!

"Come, follow Me," Jesus said to Simon and his brother Andrew, 'and I will make you fishers of men.' At once they left their nets and followed Him," we read in Mark 1:17-18. Jesus places Himself in front of us every minute of every day and, with the same words,

invites us into ministry with Him. This is **not** a challenge to your faith. It's a wonderful invitation to do the work God has already gifted you to do in your time here on earth. If you're still here, guess what? He still has work for you to do. His invitation is still out there for you to **Follow Him**.

When I was little and we were living in the mountains of Colorado, we'd have snowstorms that left a foot or two of snow at a time. I can remember going out behind my Dad to "help" him



shovel. As he opened the door to reveal a wall of fluffy white snow, he'd say, "Follow me. I'll take small steps. Put your feet in my footprints." I was never afraid to take those steps. My faith and trust in my Father was complete.

Let's take those steps following the example of Jesus. We step forward into our heavenly Father's footprints, moving forward as He leads. "Follow Me."

## PUT YOUR HEART INTO YOUR PART

This devotion was written/compiled from multiple sources by Tim Hetzner, used with permission.



*From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*  
(Ephesians 4:16)

You have probably heard that unless you're the lead dog, the view seldom changes. The problem is, however, not everybody can be the leading man or woman. And it's better to be a working actor than an out-of-work star; at least you get to be in the play! Besides, most great achievers, if they are honest, will tell you they could not have done it alone; they needed the contributions of each member of the team.

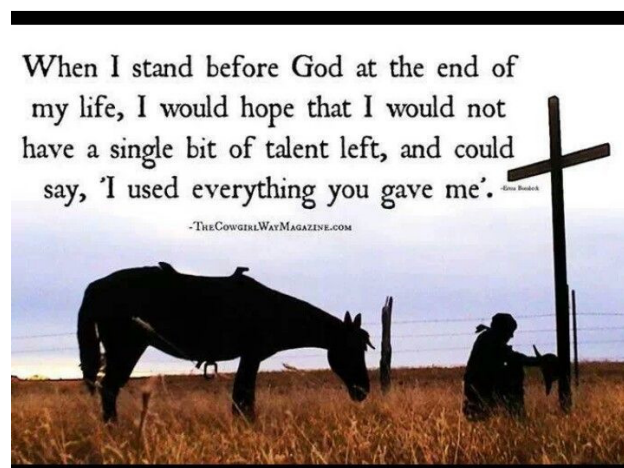
So, if God has placed you in a supporting role today, accept it without complaining. Do your part to make the entire production stronger. Not only will you learn all about team spirit—and that's important for when you do get to lead—you will also learn the Christ-like virtue of *humility*. The Bible says you will “*grow in every way and be more like Christ, the head of the body...[who] holds it together and makes all of its parts work perfectly*” (vv. 15-16). So, put your heart into your part. Stop and think about how you're living your life. Are you giving it everything you've got, or are you holding out, hoping somebody else will recognize your talent?

It's not about the greatness of the part you have been given; it's about how much effort you put into doing it. If God has placed you in a supporting role rather than a starring one, it's because He recognizes that the team needs your particular strengths and talents. Ask Him to help you accept the role He has given you—whatever it is—

and learn to fulfill it with gratitude and dignity. Contribute from wherever you are today.

### PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, help me do my part the best I can to support the rest of the team and bring honor to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.*



## Book Review

### MARRIED IN BLACK

Reviewed by P. L. Bennitt

Virginia is jilted by a beau, married to her best friend, and then becomes a war-widow; all this happens in the prologue! Whew! And then her life really becomes an adventure! *Married*

*in Black* by Christina Cordaire is Christian romance at its best!

When her beloved friend and husband is killed in the war, Virginia is forced to face a lifetime living under her mother's thumb in stuffy Bostonian society...or take a drastic step and answer an advertisement for...a wife.

Thirty-three-year-old educated gentleman and rancher seeks a wife to share his life and achievements.

A 350,000-acre ranch in Texas with a large, appointed home currently staffed by a cook and housekeeper awaits the woman who answers this advertisement.

My requirements are that my wife be educated, attractive, an able hostess, and Christian.

Please write me a letter telling me about yourself and giving me the reasons for your proposal.

In her wildest dreams, Virginia never would have imagined writing a letter in answer to such an ad. But her life stretched before her, bleak and gloomy. This advertisement may be her last hope for marriage, family, and a Christian home. *Married in Black* is a glimpse into the past and a look at the courage, strength—and yes—the romance of a bygone era. Check it out! It's available in the Redeemer library today.



## MY NAME IS I AM!

Author Unknown

I was regretting the past  
and fearing the future. Suddenly,  
my LORD was speaking:  
**"MY NAME IS I AM!"**

He paused. I waited. He continued:

"When you live in the past  
with its mistakes and regrets,  
it is hard. **I AM** not there.  
My name is *not* **I WAS**."

When you live in the future  
with its problems and fears,  
it is hard. **I AM** not there.  
My name is *not* **I WILL BE**."

When you live in this moment,  
it is *not* hard.  
**I AM** here.  
MY name is **I AM!**"



# 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
C-Denotes Communion Service					1  <b>RUMMAGE SALE</b>  9:00 a.m.- 7:00 p.m.	2    9:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.
3 Divine Worship 8:00 a.m. Multigenerational Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship 10:30 a.m.	4 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m.  Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	5 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m.	6	7 Coffee with Pastor Bible Study 10:00 a.m.  Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	8	9
10 Divine Worship-C 8:00 a.m. Multigenerational Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship-C 10:30 a.m. CCBB Concert & ICE Cream Social 2:30 p.m.	11 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m.  Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	12 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m.	13 Quilters 9:30 a.m.	14 Coffee with Pastor Bible Study 10:00 a.m.  Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	15	16  <i>Pray Jackson!</i> 5:30-7:00 p.m.
17 Divine Worship 8:00 a.m. Multigenerational Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship 10:30 a.m.	18 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m.  Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	19 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m.	20	21 No Coffee with Pastor  Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	22	23  Mobile Food Pantry @ Trinity 10:00-11:30 a.m.  Need Volunteers 9 'til Noon
24 Divine Worship-C 8:00 a.m. No Bible Study Praise & Worship-C 10:30 a.m. Fellowship Fun Night-5:30 p.m.	25 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m.  Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	26 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m.	27 Quilters 9:30 a.m.  Leadership Board 6:30 p.m.	28 No Coffee with Pastor  Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	29	30
31 Divine Worship-C 8:00 a.m. No Bible Study Praise & Worship-C 10:30 a.m.						