

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
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MARCH 2025 PUBLICATION
VOLUME 18 ISSUE 3

Redeemer *Reflection* Newsletter

*Making Jesus Known In The
Places Where We Live*

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Redeemer



Reflection

Redeemer



Reflection

MARCH 2025



GRACE AND PEACE...

by Pastor Zachary Holdorf

be unto you from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

I can't believe the month of March is here. This month, I would like to focus on three things: **Lent, prayer, and encouragement.** The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and will carry on for five weeks until we reach Palm Sunday. During the penitential season, I encourage you to join us, not only for Sunday worship but also Wednesday night services. On Wednesdays, we will have a sermon series titled "The Hand of the Lord."

I also encourage you to come to Bible class on Sunday mornings. We will dive into the Gospel of John beginning at chapter 15. In this study, we will explore the events of Holy Week and end with Jesus' resurrection.

This month, I would like us to focus on prayer. The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:16, "*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is*

the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

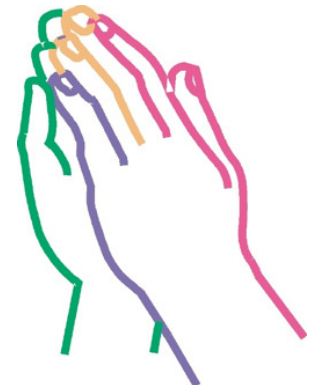
Please let us know your prayer requests that we may rejoice, give thanks, and pray and walk with you through whatever you are going through.

In the meantime, please pray for leadership as we work through strategic planning, our congregation as we contemplate a new sanctuary, and for the staff for their continued work among us. Thank you for being a church who prays!

Lastly, let's encourage one another. The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:11: "*Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.*" Maybe by sending a note of encouragement to someone you don't know in the congregation. Perhaps, write a thank you to someone in the congregation because of their service. Or maybe, go up to someone and say, "I thank God for you!" Could you imagine what encouragement can do?

March is here! Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, worshiping through Lent, growing in faith while praying, and serving one another by encouraging!

In Christ,
Pastor Zach





☺ **Coffee with Pastor Bible Study** every **Thursday morning** at 10:00 a.m. in the church library. We are studying the Gospel of John, beginning with chapter 15.

☺ **Ash Wednesday Lenten Supper Potluck** at 5:30 p.m. No sign-up necessary. Bring food to share at the Wednesday potluck supper in the RAC in the lower level. Soups, sandwiches, and salads are suggested fare for these meals.

☺ **Ash Wednesday Worship** at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary.

☺ **Wednesdays in Lent** will consist of a fellowship supper at 5:30 p.m., followed by worship in the sanctuary at 6:30 p.m.

☺ **Women of Redeemer Bible Study** monthly every third Thursday at 10:00 a.m. in the lower-level Connection Room. We use the current **LWQ** (*Lutheran Women's Quarterly*) for this study.

☺ **Sunday morning Adult Bible Study, Children's Sunday School, and Youth Bible Class** at 9:30 a.m.

☺ **March 13th Leadership Board Meeting** will meet in the church library at 6:30 p.m. We will be discussing

building options for our Sanctuary, as well as other church business. Anyone is welcome to attend.

☺ **Mobile Food Pantry at Trinity** Downtown from 10:00–11:30 a.m., **Saturday, March 22**. Volunteers should be on site from 9:00 a.m. until noon. This is a great way to serve our Lord and our community. Redeemer shares in this community ministry with our sister congregation here in Jackson, Trinity Lutheran.



Dear Partners in Mission,

In January, Joyce and I traveled to Nairobi, Kenya. We spent a week with our small group of pastors from Kenya, South Sudan, Uganda, and Ghana. I have been working with these men for almost three years. They are studying in the online Master of Arts in Theology



degree through Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Apart from this January one-week, in-person class, we meet in Zoom sessions over the computer every Tuesday throughout the rest of the year.

Getting everyone in the same place at the same time and to have everyone ready for intensive studies is a definite logistical challenge. But with a lot of help under God's care, we succeeded!

The pastors in this group are all



senior men. Some of them are already instructors in Lutheran seminaries in their own countries. Some of them are responsible for the other pastors in their districts. Some of them serve as assistants to their church presidents and bishops. This is to say, they are a special group of men who are very influential in the churches in their own countries.

One of the best parts for Joyce and me was to stay with these men, to have all our meals and evenings together at a nearby Catholic convent guesthouse.

Our instructor from the St. Louis seminary was Dr. Benjamin Haupt. He taught a great course on Law and Gospel. This was not a new topic for our pastors. Yet, they really enjoyed and appreciated spending the week



going into depth in the Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, Luther, CFW Walther, and holding a lot of practical ministry discussions.

My role is to make sure all the dynamics work for the program and each individual course. Even just getting textbooks to these men was a challenge. I make sure the men understand what the instructor is talking about and make sure the instructor also understands what the men are saying. These men hold a special place in our hearts.

This course in January was the last regular course for their degree work. These men have now started the process of writing the required M.A. thesis.

Thank you for your prayers and support!

David and Joyce Erber

APRIL WRITING PROMPT

The writing prompt for **April** is **New**. What is new to you may not be new to someone else. What are some things that are new to you recently? Maybe

something you've just learned how to do? Something you read that you never knew before? An idea or place that is new to you? What is new to you in this new year and new season? Can you write about it?

Share what you discover in remarks or an article for our April newsletter. Send comments or articles to NL editor at: bennitt49@yahoo.com.

The *Redeemer Reflection* newsletter is provided to encourage and inform our members and our community, supply learning tools and educational insights, as well as give updated information to help you through the next month and beyond. Our newsletter highlights ways in which we, as a faith family, interact with our local community and within the church itself.

Send comments, information/photos, and/or articles by the 15th of the month to bennitt49@yahoo.com, to be included in the following month's newsletter. All submissions are appreciated and prayerfully considered.

KNOT JUST FOR QUILTERS!

by Donna Zastrow

All Women of Redeemer, and men too, if you can tie a knot!

We are in need of volunteers for our quilt group to help assemble the quilts and tie them together with yarn knots. **No sewing required!**

We meet at church in the sewing room downstairs on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Come join us from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. We hope to see you at our next KNOT party, to help assemble quilts for people in need.

If you like to sew or cut and assemble squares for quilts, we would love to have you share that talent in this ministry, too. But anyone



who can tie a knot is encouraged to come lend a hand as we assemble them. **Knots** are **not** without value, particularly in this ministry.



To my brothers and sisters of faith at Redeemer and beyond,

I wish to express my deepest gratitude for the countless ways you supported my family; not only with Ron's passing, but throughout our entire journey with his illness. In the spirit of community, there are layers of support you provided that gave us the strength to face each day with courage and dignity. I am blessed beyond

measure, and I know the opportunity to pay it forward is there for the taking.

With sincere appreciation,

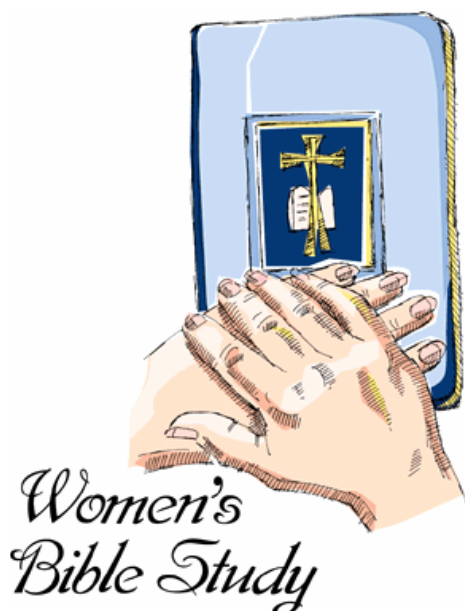
Eileen Spangler

WOMEN'S MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY

by Donna Zastrow

Women of Redeemer/LWML offers a monthly Bible study the third Thursday of each month, from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon in the lower level. We use the *Women's Quarterly* as our study guide, and these are available on the table outside the church offices. The Bible studies and leader's guides can also be accessed online at: [LWQ Winter 2024 - Lutheran Women's Missionary League](#)

If you would like to be a part of this ongoing Women's Bible study, please join us March 20th at 10:00 a.m. in the lower-level Connection Room. Hope to see you there!



MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Chad & Shannon Elbert 03/01/2008

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Danielle Allore-Taylor	03/01
Laura VanDerWeide	03/01
Christopher Wingle	03/01
Sean Anderson	03/02
Michaela Biegner	03/02
Kaitlynn Nehring	03/03
Kevin Smith	03/04
James Rose	03/05
Dale Stevens	03/05
Joshua McFarland	03/06
Jacob Voss	03/07
Sophia Ernst	03/08
Nickoli Nowak	03/09
Bob Melton	03/10
Dawn Reaume	03/10
Rev. Walter Schmidt	03/10
Grant Schuen	03/10
Shannon Lockwood	03/11
Pat Eichenberg	03/13
Andrew Bahr	03/14
Anna Coon	03/18
Kaden Primm	03/18
Dustin Farley	03/23
Rebecca Huhn	03/25
Allen Eichenberg	03/26
Julia Gales	03/28
Matthew Heffner	03/28
Mackenzie Holdorf	03/30
Lynette Luksan	03/30
Naomi Drake	03/31

LOOKING AHEAD!



REDEEMER RUMMAGE SALE 2025! SAVE THE DATES!

by Kathy Voss

The 2025 Redeemer Rummage Sale will be held **August 1st and 2nd**. Start saving the items you'd like to donate now and start asking for brown paper bags when you do your grocery shopping. We need those clean paper bags for the sale as it is a "\$5 per bag" sale as last year.



Once again, we will donate the proceeds from this sale to "Water Missions" ministry, where Jake and Jenna Voss work "doing the Lord's work."

SAVE THE DATES, please, and plan to donate, volunteer, and attend! Volunteers will be needed the week of the sale to setup and sort donated items.

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!

DANCE AND WHISPER

by Kimber Walsh, Director of Family Life Ministry, DFLM, FLE

Just add water. This is a key piece of parenting advice I've heard and read over and over again. When kids are grumpy, or arguing, or moods are generally sour, just add water. Whether it be splashing in the bathtub or running through the sprinkler, or even playing with cups and measures at a water table or the kitchen table, adding water has a way of calming what needs to be calmed, and cheering what needs to be cheered. This sage advice has proven true.



Another piece of advice that I learned from my kids is: just have a dance party! There can be weeping and fighting and whining and complaining,

but they get the bug to turn on their favorite songs and pretty soon, they are dancing all over the living room and jamming and singing and full of glee. All that was feeling stressful is quickly forgotten. Music and water are similar blessings to us in their ability to relax us. When the tenor of our home has changed, I often whisper a prayer of thanks to God for this gift.

I was reflecting on what a simple song and dance can do to lift our spirits, both in the doing and in the watching. It somehow seems to push the pause button on life for a few minutes. I don't know about you, but I could sure use a few more "pause button" moments. I could use a few more moments of reckless abandon. I could use a few more opportunities that remind me so obviously to whisper a prayer of thanksgiving to God. (The moments are there, but sometimes I don't see them as readily.)

Life's simple joys are something we can all be looking for, seeking ways that God is at work blessing us through the ordinary. And when you start to look, you'll surely see, His blessings are all around us!

DANCE

by P. L. Bennitt

"Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the LORD with all his might, while he and all Israel were bringing up the Ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets."

2 Samuel 6:14-15

As the Ark of the Covenant was returned to Jerusalem, King David

danced before the Lord as an act of personal and communal celebration and worship as God's chosen Leader for Israel, God's chosen people. His dance was a spontaneous expression of joy and reverence, rooted in his deep relationship with God and his desire to lead the nation in honoring the Lord.

Despite criticism, David remained steadfast in his commitment to worship



God with all his might, setting an example for believers throughout the ages. His dance before the Ark of the Covenant is a good reminder to us to set aside pretenses, and concentrate our worship with eyes turned to God and to pleasing Him in all that we do.

The "linen ephod" he wore was a type of apron worn by the High Priest of Israel in the Old Testament to show service to Almighty God, here also an act of reverence and joy on David's part. The ephod garment was part of the ceremonial rules of priestly preparation for times of worship in the tabernacle and temple. This garment represented the holy status of the priesthood to the people, a choice of God, even as King David was chosen by God.

All through the Scriptures, we see examples of people dancing for joy in the Lord or celebrating their God-given

victories with dance. What a jubilant form of expression God has blessed us with!



"Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine and led all the women as they played their tambourines and danced. And Miriam sang this song: 'Sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously...'"

Exodus 15:20-21

Do you ever dance with joy? With your children? Does music fill you with so much happiness that standing still is not an option? Do you feel God's presence as you dance? The joy of the Lord is a wonderful part of life!

I can remember many times snatching my children, and later my Grands, up in my arms and dancing around, giggling and laughing with them, praising God for these incredible blessings I held tightly to my heart. Dancing was not an option. It was a spontaneous act of praise and worship of God, joyful thanksgiving for all He has given me. This is the same God who has caused kings to fall to their knees before Him, the same God who blesses us daily with beauty, laughter, and love.

Does He expect us all to dance? What do you think? Is His Body, the Church, only gifted in dance? If so, who would

keep the books? Or preach the sermons? Or teach the children? Or fix the food? Or clean and repair and organize? Or... well, you get the picture. There are many ways God's people show their joy in the Lord, and dance is one of them. God loves a cheerful giver, so whatever you do, do it well for the Lord. That is *His* gift to you, and yours to Him. Using *His* gifts for *His* service is the height of sacrifice for the love of God. And if you dance...
Dance with joy for the Lord!

*And when you get
the choice
to sit it out
or dance...
I hope you dance
...*

BEING FRIENDS WITH GOD

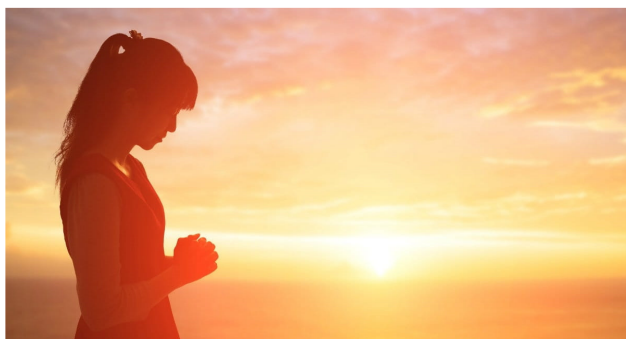
by Tim Hetzner, Ambassador for Spiritual Growth, Lutheran Church Charities. Used with permission.

Moses said to the LORD, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but You have not let me know whom You will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' (Exodus 33:12)

Moses talked with God like a friend, sharing what he felt and thought. And God wanted it that way. Here is how the conversation went: *'Moses said to the*

Lord, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,'...You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favour with me.'"¹ Moses is mirroring back to God what God had previously said to him. Remember saying to your spouse or your best friend, 'You were the one who said...?' That's what Moses is doing here: reminding God of His own words. And God wants you to remember His Word and to speak it back to Him (see *Isaiah 43:26*). Not because He needs to be reminded, but because you do! And because His Word is the *only* Word that He is committed to fulfill (see *Matthew 24:35*).

When you pray using God's Word, you are praying in His will, and you're guaranteed to get a hearing. So, learn and memorize Scriptures that touch on



your needs and desires, and when you talk to God, recall them, and pray them back to Him.

For example, when you pray, 'Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours' (*Mark 11:24*). God will acknowledge it! The more you learn of His Word, the more your prayer time will conform to His will and the more you will feel aligned with Him. Keep your Bible handy when you talk to God so that He can direct your thoughts to the words He wants you to pray.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, let Your Word guide me – and let me listen to where in that Word You will guide me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



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The 5 Finger Prayer

Thumb: Those closest to you, your family.

Pointer: Those that point you in the right direction (teachers, doctors, priests) ask for wisdom & support.

Index: (tallest) Those that lead us, (Government) ask for guidance & wisdom.

Ring: (weakest) Those that are weak, in trouble, or in pain. We cannot pray too much for them.

Pinkie: (smallest) Our prayers for ourselves & our own needs.





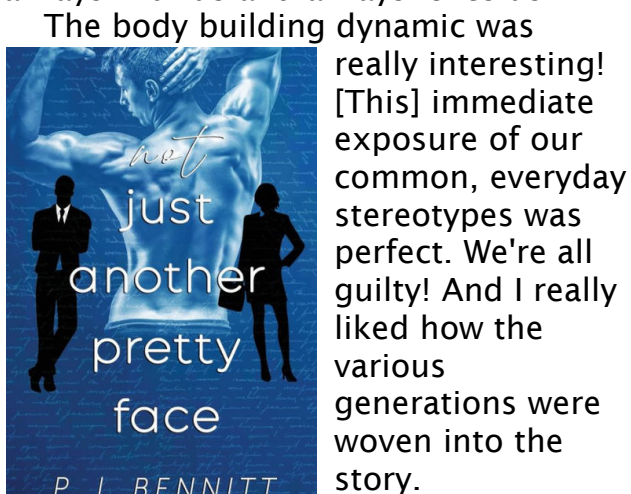
BOOK REVIEWS

...NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE

Reviewed by Reverend David Erber, mission field—Africa.

"... Great book! ... A really great Christian witness!

I really liked how *Not Just Another Pretty Face* presented everyday people living their lives in Christian faith. Being a Christian doesn't mean you always have the answers or that you never have any problems or never make mistakes. However, Jesus is the Rock in our lives that never changes. He is always with us and always loves us.



The body building dynamic was really interesting! [This] immediate exposure of our common, everyday stereotypes was perfect. We're all guilty! And I really liked how the various generations were woven into the story.

My mother loves to read story books by Christian authors. However, in my mind, [this] book isn't simply a good story for Christian readers. I really hope [it] helps our fellow Christians to see how they too can and must share Christ in their everyday lives. Randy consistently shared his faith. Jesse's father courageously shared his story and faith, the message in the church by one of the members was loud and clear. And there were other Christians along the way. And, the story didn't need a pastor! Without all of this, Jessica's life simply would have gone on in emptiness and grief to her own miserable end. Without Jessica's change of heart and faith, there wouldn't have been a story to tell.

Speaking first for myself, we all have family, neighbors, friends and random people we meet that need Christ as much as we do! This book certainly encouraged me in my thinking about the people in my life.

And, may God guide people who normally aren't attracted to Christian literature to read this story so they too may benefit as Jesse did!

... I hope the story is helpful and inspirational to many, many people... I look forward to reading the story again and sharing it with others!"

Reviewed by Mary Jo Bell—Jackson, MI reader

"Reading Peggy Bennett's first published novel brought a smile to my face. As you read the engaging storyline, you find unexpected



surprises as you turn the pages. It was a fun read, especially when you can have a conversation directly with the author about this book, *Not Just Another Pretty Face*.”

This novel is now in Redeemer’s library, along with a wide selection of Christian fiction in many genres: fantasy, romance, historical romance, graphic novels, devotionals, family life and living, and prayer, just to name a few. DVDs and audiobooks are also available, as well as reference and church history volumes.

Welcome to the adventure of reading! Check ‘em out!



MASTER CRIMINALS

Not So Nice Bible Stories

Author: Jonathan Schkade

Did you know that stories in the Bible are not always about nice guys? Did you also know that even the nice guys (and gals) in the Bible often do bad things? Does that sound kinda like your own life? Yes? Guess what? That’s real life for us all—even Mom and Dad.

“In heist [robbery] movies, the bad guys and girls have all the fun. Exotic places, elegant hotels and decked-out mansions, high-tech toys for robberies—who wouldn’t want that?

Even better, they seldom get caught. Add in designer clothes, souped-up cars, and priceless treasures; it’s clear that movie crime is tons of fun... Robbing a bank, punching someone in the face, making up a nasty lie about that kid you don’t like...

“Not all the guilty criminals in this book are what we think of as villains though. Abraham, Rebekah, King David—those are heroes of the faith, right? But at times they all failed to trust God. That’s *sin in a nutshell: lack of trust in God*. It never starts well and it *never* ends well.”

A few of the criminals included in this book are: Adam and Eve, King Saul, Jezebel and her husband King Ahab [a very gory story], Rahab, Haman, Pilate, and more.

This is a great book that can easily be used as a family Bible study or devotion. The stories are short, with Bible quotes and connections to history that support the truth of the stories. Literature and word definitions are interspersed to verify and help us understand what the story means. It even includes the “why” for the story to be in the Bible in the first place.



What a fun way for a family to study the Bible together! Check it out!

PEN TO PAPER

by Craig Britton, Director of Ministries



Last month, in the newsletter, I encouraged you (and myself) to become more aware of our surroundings as avenues for

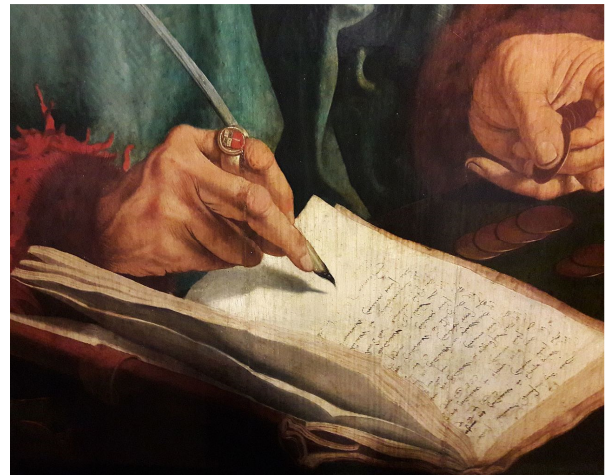
prayer. Open your eyes and ears, (even your nose). Those are magnificent tools from our LORD to take in smells and sounds, sights and voices. You may hear laughter or cries for help. You may smell the “char” of a burning home or stand at a distance taking in the grandeur of the Lake Michigan shoreline. Our senses are given for just that: to *sense* what is around us and to, at times, translate those to prayer.

This month I want to encourage another “help” for prayer. This one takes some effort, and it may feel completely unnatural. At least at the beginning. But what I am going to suggest is writing your prayers down as you pray, or after you pray them. Just write. People have been writing prayers for millennia. Someone either heard and copied every prayer recorded in Scripture or wrote them down themselves as part of their discipline. Again, it may seem a bit unnatural, but you write a grocery list, or a note to your children tacked on the front of the refrigerator. It doesn’t have to be any more unnatural than that. And, unlike a grocery list, it can be an ongoing blessing. What would the world have missed had David not penned Psalm 23 or Psalm 51 or any of his inspired cries to God? And while your prayers and mine do not have the divine stamp of

inspiration behind them, they do come from redeemed hearts and minds made new by God’s grace.

The other day, I wrote a devotion that highlighted how clarity comes to us when we get a strong glimpse of Jesus. Clarity and focus might be wonderful byproducts of writing our prayers, too. No need to be profound or wordy. But honest expression is important. Because our focus is aided and recalled by words made “permanent.” One of the joys, for example, of praying the Psalms is that we can recall emotions appropriate to each one whenever we read. And that can come from our own prayers as well.

And just one other thought: begin with a prayer for someone you hold close to your heart, because emotion and thought about someone you treasure can help you put down on paper thoughts that might be more difficult over a more general petition.



So, pick up a pen or pencil, and when thoughts of Christ and a loved one next come to mind, jot them down. Begin to garner the gift of prayer to be kept and made more permanent for you and those you love.



The Kids' Page



My Prayer Journal date _____


Confession

Things I'm Thankful For

Prayer for Others

Prayers for Myself

MARCH 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
C-Denotes Communion						1
2 Divine Worship 8:00 a.m. Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship 10:30 a.m.	3 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	4 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m. Choir 6:30 p.m.	5 Shared Supper 5:30 p.m.  Service 6:30 p.m.	6 Coffee with Pastor Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	7	8 
9 Divine Worship-C 8:00 a.m. Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship-C 10:30 a.m.	10 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	11 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m. Choir 6:30 p.m.	12 Shared Supper 5:30 p.m.  Worship Service 6:30 p.m.	13 Coffee with Pastor Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	14	15
16 Divine Worship 8:00 a.m. Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship 10:30 a.m.	17 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m. 	18 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m. Choir 6:30 p.m.	19 Shared Supper 5:30 p.m.  Worship Service 6:30 p.m.	20 Coffee with Pastor Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Women's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A.	21	22 Pantry @ Trinity 10:00-11:30 a.m. Need Volunteers 9 'til Noon
23 Divine Worship-C 8:00 a.m. Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship-C 10:30 a.m.	24 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	25 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m. Choir 6:30 p.m.	26 Shared Supper 5:30 p.m.  Worship Service 6:30 p.m.	27 Coffee with Pastor Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	28	29
30 Divine Worship-C 8:00 a.m. Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship-C 10:30 a.m. Youth Mtg-3-5 p.m.	31 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.					