

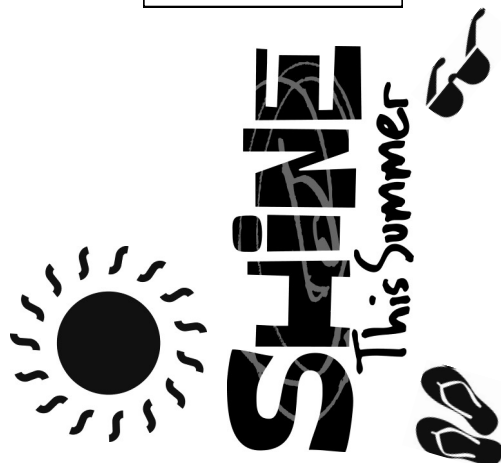
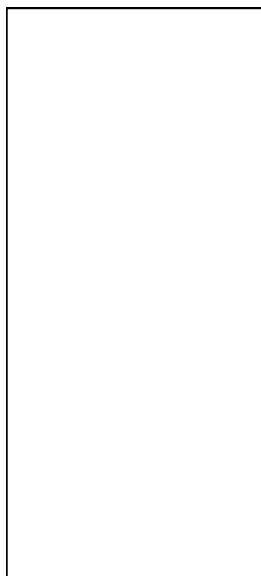
FAITH CONNECTS (Daily Devotion) M-F @ 7:00 pm Online
Weekly Worship, Saturday @ 5:00pm Live Stream
Available Online & on our Facebook Page



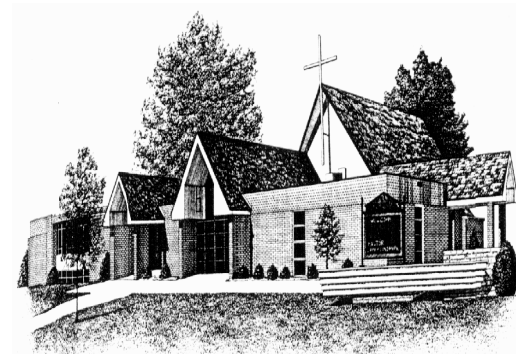
Faith Lutheran Church
 500 W. LeClaire Road
 Eldridge, IA 52748

Non-Profit Organization
 PERMIT NO. 1
 Eldridge, IA 52748

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR

June 2020

Rev. Dr. Carrie Lewis La Plante
Rev. Heather Geest

500 W. LeClaire Road
 Eldridge, IA 52748
 (563) 285-4501

www.faithlutheraneldridge.com

From Pastor Carrie, COVID 19 Update	Page 2-5
Council Notes	Pages 6-7
Vacation Bible School Cancellation.....	Page 7
Calendar of Inspiration	Pages 8 & 9
Council Book Report.....	Page 10
Letter from Bishop Burk.....	Page 11
Lutheran Lakeside Summer Cancellation.....	Pages 11
Way to Grow	Page 12
This is How We Stay Together While We're Apart.....	Page 13
COLORING PAGE	Page 14
Birthdays, Anniversaries, Thanks & Mission Support	Page 15

Grace-Gifted, Faith-Lifted
Called to Share, Seek, and Serve Christ



Dear Friends in Christ,

If there is one thing that I know from these last eleven weeks, it is that, while our building might be closed, the church has not been closed. The church is not a building, but the people who gather in Christ's name. While we have had to gather in new and different ways, keeping our physical distance from each other, we have found ways to still gather socially, to bless one another, and to live our faith in the world, sharing the love of Christ with those around us. We have learned that our oneness in Christ comes not from our gathering, although our gathering is important, but our oneness comes from the one who made us one – God in Jesus Christ. As we heard in our Gospel this past Sunday, on the night before his death, Jesus prayed to the Father for the disciples saying, "Protect them in your name,...so that they may be one" (John 17:11b). Our oneness may have been tested in these days, but the Spirit has been holding us together.

FROM THE PASTOR

However, for many of us, coming back together for in-person gatherings like worship is something that we would love to be able to do. I know that it is hard for Pastor Heather and me to be in the worship space week after week, leading worship with our small team and not seeing your smiling, singing, praying, peace passing faces. We think of you often and hold each of you in prayer. There is nothing that we would like more than being able to come back together for worship. And yes, we are aware of other congregations who have begun or will begin gathering in person for worship in the next few weeks.

The Congregation Council of Faith Lutheran Church has talked long and hard about what coming back together will look like for this congregation. We have decided that we will follow recommendations and guidelines set forth by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) as our criteria for how we will be coming back together in worship. While these criteria do not provide us a start date for when we will gather in person again, they do provide decision criteria which will help the Congregation Council determine when to gather in person again. These guidelines also provide guidance for how the church building will be prepared and the restrictions that will be in place to attempt to keep everyone as safe as possible.

I know that there are questions about why some congregations are coming together in person again while we will continue to gather on-line for a time. As Paul wrote in his first letter to the Corinthians, "All things are lawful, but not all things are beneficial. 'All things are lawful,' but not all things build up. Do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other" (1 Corinthians 10:23-24). While it may be lawful for us to gather for worship at this time, because worshipping together poses a greater risk to the health of those who gather than many other activities due to the number of families from different households gathering, the longer amount of time that we are together sharing the same air, and the practices that we use in worship that have the potential to be super-spreading activities, we do not feel that it is beneficial for the health of all for us to gather in-person at this time. However, because we do have the outdoor chapel available to us and being out in the open air does reduce the risk somewhat, we are hoping to be able to have outdoor worship in person sometime this summer. We want to assure you, however, that even when we do begin to gather for in-person worship again, we will continue to provide worship online and through our Worship-At-Home materials for those who feel more comfortable worshipping in those ways.

More information about the criteria for decision-making and what precautions will be put in place can be found below. As the Congregation Council makes decisions about

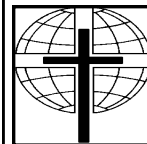
Gloria Hamann	June 1
Jan Hartwig	June 2
Don Rathjen	June 4
Earl Kuhl	June 13
Donna Darnall	June 13
Bob Bainter	June 15
Darrell Weltzin	June 15
John McCamant	June 18
Norm Harvey	June 22
Dennis Schmidt	June 28
Ron Meyer	June 30



Faye & Norm Harvey	June 4, 1965
Linda & Duane Miller	June 8, 1968
Mary Ann & Dan Anderson	June 22, 1968



Thank you to Dean Engelbrecht for getting the area ready for pavers in front of the outdoor sanctuary. It will be so nice when we get to worship together on the lawn! Thank you for your help on this project.



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP Thank you to Karen O'Flaherty for sponsoring our missionaries, the Bencke family in Japan and to Christian Keppy for sponsoring John Chima; and to Dan O'Flaherty for sponsoring, Denisse Grefa, our Compassion Children. The cost for sponsorship is \$40/month each for John and Denisse and \$45/month for the Bencke family. Your sponsorship can be placed in the offering plate, in a pew envelope marked appropriately for the person you are sponsoring.



when we will begin the different phases of gathering in person again, we will send letters to everyone in the congregation and communicate in as many ways on our website and social media as possible so that everyone will know the date we begin worship (and other in-person gatherings) and the precautions that will be in place so that everyone can be prepared.

One additional change that can be made at this time is that Pastor Heather and I will begin making home visits using physical distancing recommendations. This means that our visits should be done outside or through a window or door so that we can reduce the risk as much as possible. If you would like to set an appointment with one of us to come for a visit, please contact the church office (563-285-4501), and we will be glad to make a time.

What we do know is that worship (and other in person-gatherings) will look different for a while. What we also know is that whenever we worship and gather together, whether in person or in our homes, God is glorified and that spark of the Spirit within each one of us burns just a little brighter. Thanks be to God!

Blessings,

Pastor Carrie

Our Response to COVID-19

As things around us begin to open up again, the Congregation Council has been discussing how it is that we might begin to gather together for worship and other gatherings in person again. The Council appointed a subcommittee to look at recommendations for the Center for Disease Control, the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and numerous epidemiologists and researchers who have looked into all things worship as they have sought to put forth recommendations that keep the health and safety of our congregation at the forefront as we consider the steps forward. The COVID-19 Subcommittee gave its recommendations to the Congregation Council, and on May 27, the Council approved the guidelines that the Subcommittee set forth.



Our plan for coming together again for in-person gatherings has four phases. There are criteria that must be met before transitioning from one phase to the next, and the timing of meeting the criteria is unknown to us. When the criteria are met, the COVID-19 Subcommittee will make a recommendation to the Congregation Council to begin the process of moving from one phase to the next, and at that point, plans for when and how to begin the next phase will be made. One thing that must be clear is that it is possible that, depending on the circumstances, we might not only move forward by phases, but should there be an outbreak or a resurgence of the virus, we could also move back to a previous phase.

We have the good fortune of having an outdoor chapel which might afford us the opportunity to gather for in-person worship outside sooner than we would be comfortable gathering for worship within the church building. **This will be our first phase.** The criteria for beginning outdoor worship includes 14 days with a rolling average of no more than two new cases per day in each of Scott County and Clinton County, and the hospitals in the Quad Cities must be able to treat all patients without crisis care.

In this phase, the building will remain closed for worship, and we will also continue online worship. The following health and safety precautions will be put in place:

- Face masks will be required.
- Worshipers will be expected to bring their own seating.
- Seating will be placed following physical distancing guidelines (places for placing seating will be marked on the lawn).
- Bulletins will be provided and then recycled or taken home.
- RSVP for worship will be required, both to be sure that we are not overcrowded and to provide information in case we would need it for contact tracing.
- Maintenance of physical distancing will be required while on church grounds.
- We strongly encourage you to stay home if you are in the vulnerable population.
- Stay home if you or anyone in your household are ill.

Changes to the liturgy will include:

- No group/congregational singing as this is a super-spreading activity.
- Congregational spoken liturgy will be limited as this is also a super-spreading activity.
- We will utilize a no-touch passing of the peace.
- Offering plates will not be passed but will be located at the entrance to the worship area.

During this phase, all small group classes and gatherings will be continue to be online only. The church building will be open only to those on staff and those who need to access the building for essential services as is the case today following existing measures and precautions.

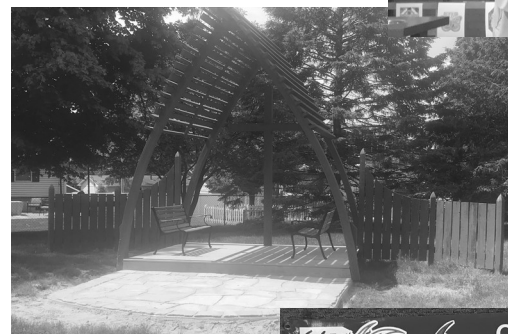
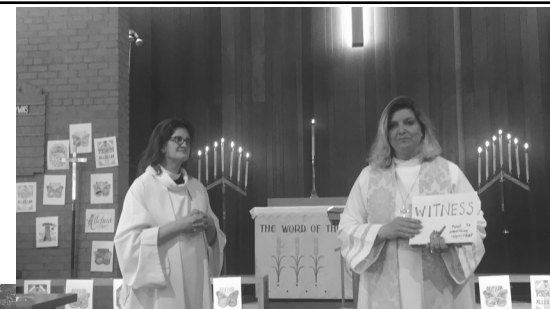
While we have detailed plans for Phases 2 and 3, we are only highlighting the main points here as this will not be an immediate reality for us.

Phase 2 will allow us to begin worshiping indoors, and small groups will be able to meet outside on the church property. We will consider this phase once we have had 14 days of declining cases in Scott and Clinton counties, and the Quad City hospitals must be able to treat all patients without crisis care. In this phase, there will continue to be strict health and safety precautions observed, and RSVPs for worship will be vital as the number of worshipers allowed for any service will be limited to allow for adequate physical distancing. Online worship and gatherings will continue to be available for those who need or choose to remain at home.

Phase 3 will allow us to begin thinking about reducing some of the restrictions on worship, and small groups will be allowed to gather inside of the building. We will consider this phase once we have had 14 more days of declining cases in Scott and Clinton counties, and the Quad City hospitals must be able to treat all patients without crisis care. In this phase, we will reconsider restrictions and our ability to celebrate the sacraments, and we will continue RSVPs, if necessary. Small groups will be able to make reservations for space in the church so that we can adequately clean before the next group uses the space. Online worship and gatherings will continue for those who need or choose to remain at home.

THIS IS HOW WE'RE STAYING TOGETHER WHILE WE'RE APART...

Children's Sermon
With Pastor Heather
& Pastor Carrie



Outdoor Chapel with
new pavers in front.

Pentecost
flames done by
congregation...



?? ? Bible Quiz ? ??

Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." Which of the following are mentioned in the list that follows?

- A. a time to teach, and a time to learn
- B. a time to mourn, and a time to dance
- C. a time to fast, and a time to eat
- D. a time to work, and a time to rest





**“Even if tomorrow would go to pieces,
I would still plant my apple tree.”—**

Martin Luther

I am not exactly sure what inspired me to plant my first vegetable garden this year, but it finally is in the ground! Initially I was waiting for perfect weather. It never arrived. The forecast didn't help.

I enlisted family members for assist. My husband asked jokingly, “where do you want to plant your weed patch?”

Weeds. The enemy of the gardener. Hmmm. How was I going to tell the difference between a weed and a plant? I knew this was going to be an issue. Starter plants is what I needed. At least a couple inches of green would give me a fighting chance to tell the difference between a weed and a plant. I'd also cover the ground with landscaping fabric and try to keep the garden small with just a few hearty plants that can handle neglect.

However, I do need to keep in mind that I would have three very helpful children learning alongside me. Together we will tend this little plot, watch things grow and take delight in the process. I want them to know where food comes from and all the labor that goes into feeding the world. I'd also secretly like to expand their diet beyond macaroni and cheese, waffles, and pizza. Maybe this is the summer they will learn to love cherry tomatoes, crunchy cucumbers, or kale chips?

My son's favorite part of gardening this far has been drilling the holes in the bottom of an old stock tank, so we could have plenty of drainage for the spinach, lettuce, kale and cabbages. He also is a big fan of digging holes and shoveling black dirt, especially if it involves using the skid loader. He takes a special interest in picking up earth worms and catching toads.

My oldest daughter Violet has taken the lead by planting her own garden complete with a sign to let you know it's hers. She is also working on a journal to record all the details, so that planting next year will be easier as she remembers the whole process. She is full of hope for all that will grow in the future. Personally, I am not sure how things will go this summer out in the garden, but I trust that God will take care of it and it will be a fruitful learning adventure! We'll keep you posted...

Pastor Heather & Helpers



12

Our final phase would be **Phase 4**, which would be resuming of all the former functions of the congregation in our “new normal.” The requirements and the impact on ministry for this phase will be reviewed by the COVID-19 Subcommittee and the Congregation Council once we enter Phase 3.

We strongly encourage you to take the time to review the full Guidelines for Returning to In-Person Gatherings as this document also contains answers to Frequently Asked Questions and provides links to the resources that were used to develop these guidelines. The full guidelines can be found on our website (www.faithlutheraneldridge.com), in the boxes on the bench outside of the church, or can be mailed to you at your request.

While we are putting all of the precautions into place in order to reduce the risk of being exposed to COVID-19 when gathering in person, please know that we cannot reduce the risk to zero, so you are assuming some amount of risk if you gather in person. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to do what is right for yourself and your household. We strongly encourage you to stay home if you are in the vulnerable population as defined by the CDC until we are at our last phase - our “new normal”. To protect one another, we also ask that you stay home if you or anyone in your household are ill.

One last note: if there is anything that we have learned in the midst of this is that things can change at any time along the way. Therefore, there might be changes to how we reopen, including going back to a previous phase if cases spike, closing the building if a person with COVID-19 enters the building, or reassessing our guidelines based on new guidelines set forth by other authorities. Please be patient with us as we work to provide safe and healthy worship for those who gather as Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church.

We know that you may have questions as you digest this information and look at the Guidelines document. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the pastors or members of the Congregation Council.

In the midst of all of this, we remember that we are all one in Christ Jesus, and we continue to lift praise to God however it is that we are gathering in Christ's name.



The North Scott Community School District is currently feeding more than 970 children 12 meals a week, each, for a total of 11,690 meals a week! This program is set to expire June 30. North Scott Community Feed Our Children Ministry is working with the District to develop a plan to continue Faith's summer sack lunch program in areas the District has seen the greatest need. However, due to the current pandemic, we do not anticipate being able to actually make lunches together as we have done the last 3 years. In order to prepare the best we are able, we are seeking donations of prepackaged peanut butter crackers (such as Ritz, Keebler, Lance - sometimes called Toasty crackers - 6 cracker sandwiches to a package), Crackers and Cheese Dip (such as Ritz Handi-Snacks or Breadsticks and Cheese Dip), Koolaid Jammer's Pouches, applesauce and fruit cups, and Rice Krispie Treats.

We will begin collecting these donations the week of June 22. There will be a collection tote outside the church doors. We will check it daily by dusk. If for any reason we are unable to distribute lunches through our program, the items collected will be distributed to the children of North Scott this summer through the NS Food Pantry, NS Cares, and the Blessing Boxes. Thank you for your continued support and help feeding our children.

5

Thank you!

We give thanks to everyone who supports our ministry in so many ways, which allows us to continue to do the work of Jesus through our ministries!



Thanks for your continued financial

giving! We have been able to support the added spend on technology that is needed to support our virtual work and ministries.

The outdoor worship space continues to be enhanced as we now have a paved area at the front. We are grateful for the work of the volunteers who installed the paved area as well as the financial giving to purchase the materials!

It was awesome to see a 'Jubilation like' worship service in May. Thanks to our music leaders for making this happen and giving us an opportunity to keep things as 'near normal' as possible!

We continue to give thanks for the spiritual and relational gifts of our pastors that give us peace and hope during this uncertain time through their actions, worship and prayer.

Council Update

The council met using Zoom web conferencing for our May meeting. Pastor reminded us all that all ages may participate in coloring flames (on facebook post and outside church door) that will be put up in the Sanctuary for Pentecost.

We continued our monthly discussion of the book *Growing Young, 6 Essential Strategies to Help Young People Discover and Love Your Church* with Chapter 3. *Empathize with Today's Young People, Why 25 is the New 15, and 15 is the New 25*. This is the second core commitment of churches who are growing young. See the separate article in this Ambassador where I share what we took away from this chapter.

Ministry teams continue to work together to enhance our worship services. Matt Peck is working to provide a more sustainable audio/video solution for live streaming and recording worship. Amy Murray is working to provide a portable keyboard with supporting audio equipment for future outdoor worship.

Finally, we spent a fair amount of time reviewing resources and discussing HOW we will gradually return to in-person gatherings, in accordance with recommendations from our synod bishop. We launched a COVID-19 sub-committee that worked to develop the guidelines and phases along with preparations for the grounds and building as well as health and safety



Southeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



May 11, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

In a time when so many aspects of life can seem overwhelming, I am writing to **thank you** for the ways you are rising to the challenge of adapting, changing, and reaching people with the good news of Jesus Christ. Please share my thanks with the members of your congregation.

When people say that the church has been "closed," I remind them that buildings may be closed but the church is open for business. To be sure, this time calls for a new sense of purpose and a renewed conviction that Christ is with us as we share the forgiveness, grace, and love of God. And while it is tempting to be anxious, even afraid when looking at finances in a time of such uncertainty, we remain confident that God's gift of resurrection life calls us to respond as generously as we are able.

We will get through this. The church will have changed but the work of feeding hungry people and contributing to the healing of a weary world will continue. Your continuing financial support of our shared ministry here in the Southeastern Iowa Synod, and with our churchwide partners, is itself a statement of our faith that the God who brings life out of death is doing just that even now.

With deep gratitude for your partnership,

Bishop Michael L. Burke

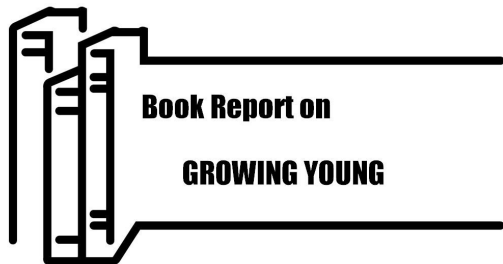
Summer Camp Update

At a meeting of the Lutheran Lakeside Board of Directors on April 30, 2020, the very difficult decision was made to cancel all summer programming for the 2020 season. Our primary concern was the health and safety of the campers; however, we also came to realize that, with all of the precautions that would need to be in place to hold camp this summer, the experience would simply not be the same. All youth who were registered for camp should have received a letter from the camp with information about how to donate or receive a refund for the amount that you had already paid for the summer. If you have not, please contact Pastor Carrie, and she will help you.

The camp will still be available to individual families and small groups who would like a place to get away for a few days this summer, so, if you are looking for a place to go, check the website (www.lutheranlakeside.com) for more information about rental.

We are hopeful that next year, we will be able to return for "the best week ever!"





Council Book Study:
Growing Young, 6
Essential Strategies to
Help Young People
Discover and Love
Your Church

In May, it was my turn to lead the book discussion for *Chapter 3. Empathize with Today's Young People, Why 25 is the New 15, and 15 is the New 25*, which is the second of six core commitments needed for a church to grow young. This chapter seemed deeper than previous chapters, and was exceptionally enlightening. I realized that I lacked a good understanding of the challenges facing young people today - even though I have kids that are between the ages of 15-29.

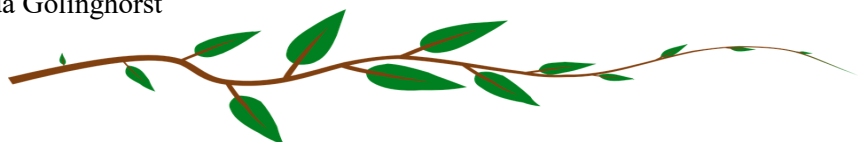
We learned that young people wrestle with three ultimate questions: Who am I? (identity), Where do I fit? (belonging), and What difference do I make? (purpose). These questions are not unique to teens and emerging adults, but they generally feel them more intensely than older generations. The church can be very important during this stressful time with the right adult involvement and by helping them to make a connect and to find answers to these questions through God's grace, love, and mission.

Most eye opening was the fact that young people today go through an 'extended adolescence'. The journey from puberty to adulthood (spouse, family, degree, steady job, financial independence) is longer due to an earlier start and a later finish. It's true in many of our families that kids have mobile phones at age 15, but parents still pay for the phones at age 25!

We agreed that our high school youth program is a good example of how we are providing youth with necessary support. We felt that we struggle to maintain that connection with young people once they graduate from high school and before they may return in adulthood.

We welcome your thoughts on how we could better understand and connect with young people. Please don't hesitate to call or send an email to the church!

Linda Golinghorst



precautions for each phase. These guidelines include criteria that must be met to determine WHEN we will move into a specific phase. Please see Pastor Carrie's article for more information.

I really appreciate the strong commitment of our 2020 Council. Even though our in-person gatherings are suspended and many things are postponed, the time and effort needed to address current realities is significant.

Together, while we are apart

In addition to online worship, we are continuing 'Faith Connects' for weekday conversations and prayer that remind us that Jesus is always with us, even now. Pastor Carrie and Pastor Heather continue to produce fun videos for our Sunday school students.

Another Virtual Beer Bible Study was held on May 14th. Kudos to the leaders of this bible study for providing a fun environment to connect and discuss scripture and what it means to us today. We also appreciate the people who attend - it is a great way to be together safely!

As always, our greatest hope is that you find comfort and strength in being able to stay connected to the church and doing the work of Jesus through our ministries! If you want to reach out to the council for any reason, please send an email to the church.

Blessings!

Linda Golinghorst, President




















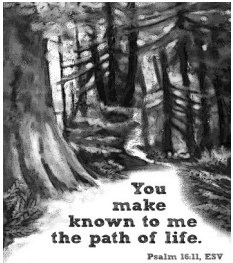





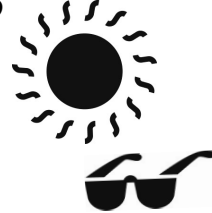



POSTPONED

Dear VBS family,

Our team had planned an exciting VBS adventure for you this June at "Knights of North Castle: A Quest for the King's Armor", however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have decided to postpone our adventure until the summer of 2021. We will be sending a letter in the near future which will include some activity pages that will introduce you to "Knights of North Castle"; we hope this gets you excited for our next adventure! We miss you and hope that you can join us next summer! In the meantime, there will be some other summer fun that we will share with you as plans solidify.

Amy Powell, VBS Chair



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 —STAYING— CONNECTED FAITH CONNECTS EVERY WEEKDAY @ 7:00 pm	2 Drive Thru Food Pantry 5:30—7:00 pm  Pantry	3 	4 <i>The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace. Psalm 29:11</i>	5 Drive Thru Food Pantry 9:30—11:00 am  Pantry	6  Online Worship LIVE ONLINE WORSHIP EACH SATURDAY @ 5:00 pm
7 	8 <i>Apart for a Time,</i>  <i>Together in Spirit</i>	9 Drive Thru Food Pantry 5:30—7:00 pm  Pantry	10 <i>The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; Numbers 6: 24-25</i>	11 8:00 Virtual Beer Bible Study on Zoom  #separate together	12 Drive Thru Food Pantry 9:30—11:00 am  Pantry	13  THANKS <small>TO THOSE ON THE FRONTLINE OF COVID-19</small>
14  FLAG DAY	15 <i>I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing. Ezekiel 34:26</i>	16 Drive Thru Food Pantry 5:30—7:00 pm  Pantry	17 SPREAD  NOT GERMS	18 7:30 pm Church Council Mtg. on Zoom <i>The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it. Proverbs 10:22</i>	19 Drive Thru Food Pantry 9:30—11:00 am  Pantry	20  It's SUMMER!
21  FATHER'S DAY	22  You make known to me the path of life. <small>Psalm 16:11, ESV</small>	23 Drive Thru Food Pantry 5:30—7:00 pm  Pantry	24 <i>And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 2 Corinthians 9: 8</i>	25  SHELTER <i>in Jesus</i>	26 Drive Thru Food Pantry 9:30—11:00 am  Pantry	27  <i>"Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge."</i> <small>Psalm 16:1</small>
28  Until we can hug again BE SAFE!	29 	30 Drive Thru Food Pantry 5:30—7:00 pm	1 	2  Stay Close TO God THIS Summer	3 PEACE BE WITH you	4  4th of July