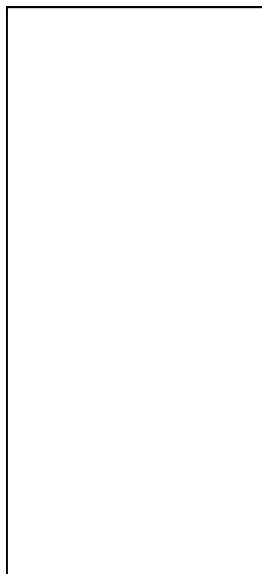


Weekly Worship: Saturday @ 5:00 pm In Person & Live Stream Online, and Sunday at 9am In Person. Worship Updates will be posted on [www. faithlutheraneldridge.com](http://www.faithlutheraneldridge.com) and on our Facebook page.

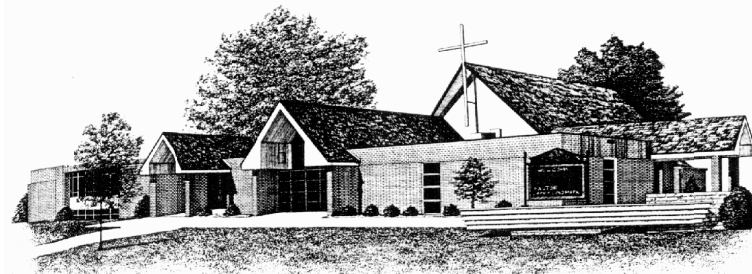
Faith Lutheran Church
 500 W. LeClaire Road
 Eldridge, IA 52748

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Faith Lutheran Church



AMBASSADOR

May 2021

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

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

www.faithlutheraneldridge.com
faitheldridge@netins.net

From Pastor Carrie	Pages 2-3
Council Notes & Poll.....	Pages 4-5
Council Annual Planning	Page 6
Color Page	Page 7
Calendar	Pages 8-9
Lutheran Services of Iowa Article.....	Page 10
Stewardship News & Clean Up Project.....	Page 11
Youth Ministry News	Page 12
Graduation & Summer Camp	Page 13
Adult Mission Trip, Appreciation, New Ministry	Page 14
Birthdays, Food Pantry, Plant Sale & More	Page 15

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

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we have entered into this spring, there is a new sense of hope and promise that is rising within me. Warmer weather and more sunshine which have allowed for more time and activity outside have

brightened my spirits. Watching the beauty of God's creation as the trees have begun budding and the flowers have started blooming have lightened my heart. Seeing the farmers back in the fields, busy with the work of planting, is a sign of new life in this year. Add to that the season of Easter in the church with the promise of resurrection and new life from a God who loved us enough to give everything, even Jesus' own life, for us, and spring is a beautiful time.

Beyond those things that are always symbols of hope in the spring, this year also has the promise of getting closer to a sense of normalcy in life. With more vaccines available, more people who are fully vaccinated, and more opportunities to gather outdoors, many of us are moving toward activities that feel more normal than what we were experiencing a year ago, even a few months ago.

These signs of hope are also appearing in our planning here at church. We have been able to worship in-person again, even celebrating Easter and Confirmation together on beautiful mornings at the outdoor chapel. We have been able to begin in-person Bible study on Tuesdays and gather for Confirmation and Youth Group on Wednesdays. Some of our ministry teams have begun meeting in person again as well. We are planning an in-person Vacation Bible School, and we are looking forward to taking 36 youth and several adults to Lutheran Lakeside for camp and mission work toward the end of the summer. As we look toward fall, we are hopeful that we will continue to add activities to the calendar, both ministries that might look more like what we have been used to and new ministries that are growing out of needs that have become clearer during the pandemic.

As we continue to look to what worship and other ministries will look like in the weeks and months ahead, we want to assure you that we will continue to seek to provide worship and spiritual

Pastor's Page



May
BIRTHDAYS

Birthday wishes are extended to the following members who are celebrating birthday number 70 or above.

Jim Weibel	May 5	Roger Baustian	May 19
Sandra Knoche	May 5	Janice Sanders	May 26
Pam White	May 9	Barb Mohr	May 27
Kris Schwein	May 12	Ann Kuehl	May 28
Leonard Hanson	May 15		



FOOD
PANTRY

Food Panty Needs

Food Pantry Needs for the month of May are canned fruit, jelly/jam, and tomato soup.



Women of Faith Plant Sale

The Women of Faith are looking for donations of perennial plants for the Eldridge City Wide Garage Sales on May 15 from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. If you need pots for splitting plants or have any extra 9" pots, please call Joni Schneider (285-5829). You can also sell your household items in the church parking lot on May 15. Come join the fun.

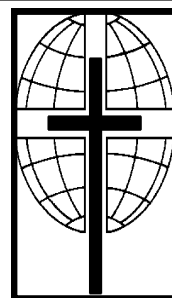
AFTERNOON

BIBLE
STUDY



Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study

Join us on each Tuesday afternoon for a Bible study that looks at the lectionary texts for the week. **Tuesday afternoons at 1 pm.** Masks will be required and spacing will be implemented. We look forward to studying the scriptures together again.



MISSIONARY SPONSORSHIP

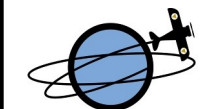
Thank you to Pam and Rob White for sponsoring the Bencke family, John Chima and Denisse Grefa in May.

The cost for sponsorship is \$40/month each for our Compassion Children John and Denisse and \$45/month for the Bencke family. You can sign up online on Faith's web page, or by calling the church office at 285-4501.

Thank you for your support!

Adult Mission Trip to Lutheran Lakeside

All adults attending the Lutheran Lakeside Mission Trip, July 18-23, must complete a Volunteer application. The applications are located outside the east (Main) entrance to the church in the clear plastic bin. They can be returned to the Plastic bin or the Church office. If you choose to leave it in the clear plastic bin, please let Tom Bauer or the church office know for retrieval. **These forms need to be sent to Lutheran Lakeside prior to our arrival.**



MISSION TRIP

Please don't delay! Any questions or concerns, please contact: Tom Bauer at tebauer33@gmail.com or 563-505-5776 Tray Tables UP!!!!



Lutheran Lakeside Camp



With Appreciation...

Thank you to our faithful Ambassador Folding Crew: Carol Marten, Carol Strobbe, Sue Braack, Donna Benskin, and Mary Moore.

Worship Technicians

The Evangelism and Worship and Music Team have a joint need for audio and video help. If you are gifted in these areas, please contact Matt Peck at 285-8447



NEW: Mary Martha Ministry

The church council has approved a new ministry to help our friends at home. The goal of our new Mary Martha Ministry is to share our love for one another by visiting those in need to do light housekeeping and by sharing in fellowship and the gospel. If you are in need of a little light housekeeping help and fellowship, or if this type of ministry speaks to your heart as something you would enjoy helping with, contact Mary Moore (285-7223) or Carol Marten (285-4424). Once we know what needs and interest exist, this ministry can begin.

growth opportunities for all those who wish to be a part of the body of Christ in this place. As Paul writes in his letter to the Ephesians, we are always called to live the life to which God calls us, living "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:2-6)

While we are increasingly able to have in-person gatherings, there are many that cannot or choose not to join in person. While so many people are receiving the vaccine, there are some that cannot or choose not to receive it. While precautions will eventually be lessened, there are some people that will need to or choose to wear face coverings. Thus, we will continue to provide online worship, study and fellowship opportunities. We will not ask for vaccine information as a condition to participate in our ministries. And, we will be welcoming to those who continue to use precautions like face coverings.

We are thankful for the ways that you have all helped us to keep one another healthy and safe throughout this pandemic by following the precautions that have been in place and looking out for one another, providing for the needs of those around you. We are also excited for all of the possibilities that lie ahead, and we hope that you are, too. We thank you in advance for the ways that you will continue to participate and support the mission of Christ to which we, as a community of Christ, are called, and we encourage you to share with us the places where you believe that we have the gifts to make a difference in the lives of those around us.

There is light at the end of the tunnel. There is resurrection being born out of the dark moments of this last year. There is new life being born among us. And God continues to call us, all of us, into mission and ministry together following the one Lord in one faith through one baptism in the care of the one God and father of all.

Blessings in these spring days,

Pastor Carrie



CHURCH COUNCIL



We Give Thanks!

We are thankful to welcome Dennis Kelly back to work, as he was very missed!

Praise be to God! We couldn't have asked for better weather on Easter Sunday for the over 100 people who joined us outdoors for worship.

We offer gratitude to our pastors and worship leaders who gave so much extra time and effort to provide meaningful worship experiences for Holy Week and for Easter Sunday. We also would like to offer thanks to those who helped to decorate, fold bulletins, and take care of logistics for Easter services. A special note of thanks goes out to Neal Becker and the Chime Choir for the special music for Easter worship.

As he leaves the Audit Committee, we thank Darin Anderson for serving for the past two years. We thank Josh Rasmussen for accepting the role of Audit Committee Chair for 2021.

I would like to thank the council for the extra time and careful thought put into our annual planning retreat on April 18. This is the first time that council has met in person in over a year.

With Compassion Sunday just behind us, we want to take time to thank all of the Compassion Child sponsors from our congregation throughout the year!

Confirmation Candidates

The council was happy to approve the fifteen Confirmation Candidates presented to us by Pastor Carrie for this year. Congratulations go out to each of the candidates and to their families!

COVID-19 Update

The council approved a change to our policy which enables the pastors to remove their face coverings for the sermon and the communion liturgy during indoor worship. The goal of this change is to improve the pastors' ability to communicate the Word. While the community risk is still high, the pastors will preach the sermon from the altar when their face coverings are removed. The sub-committee continues to work on plans to return to more normalcy.

New Ministry

The council approved the job description for a Mary Martha Ministry Team. This is a new ministry that will offer light housekeeping and fellowship to

comfortable surroundings! Thanks be to God! Confirmation of these 8th grade students was held at 10:30 on Sunday, April 25.

High School Youth numbers are continuing to increase as we meet live in the Youth Room. Included are several High School Seniors, who are experiencing the thrilling final days of High School. It is so nice to hear excited voices in the Youth Room again! The High School Youth look forward to their time together, and have decided to continue meeting until the end of the school year.

Although Mission Trips have been put on hold this year, we are referring to those doing Mission work at Lutheran Lakeside Camp as "Mission Camp" kids. They will participate in the fun camp activities, but also will be doing painting and odd jobs (i.e. Mission work) at the camp.

The Mission Camp kids sold Easter Breakfast boxes to support their trip - 36 breakfasts were sold, netting \$360. Thank you for supporting the Youth!

Joni King, Youth Chair



Congratulations to our graduates - High School, Trade School, Associates, Bachelors, Masters, and Doctorate candidates! Blessings to each of you as you begin the next chapter in your lives. We will celebrate our 2021 High School graduates at worship on **Sunday, May 23, at 9am**. Please send the office your plans for next year and a senior photo we can post on a recognition board by **May 19th**.



Summer Camp Registration is Here!!

Registration for summer camp at Lutheran Lakeside, Spirit Lake, Iowa, is **now open**. We will be going the **week of July 18-23**. There is Junior Camp for those who have completed grades 3-5, Confirmation Camp for those who have completed grades 6-8, and High School Servant Trip for those who have completed grades 8-12. Everyone needs to register on the Lutheran Lakeside website (www.lutheranlakeside.com). Faith will pay \$150 of the registration fee for every youth registered through Faith.



Wow! It's hard to believe that Wednesday, April 14, we had our last Confirmation Conversations for this year! To say it was a challenging year is definitely an understatement, but the kids were troopers, enduring Zoom classes and the

uncertainty of the Pandemic. We have all learned to appreciate the joys of in-person learning and being with friends, even if it involves wearing a mask and social distancing.

This past month, Confirmation dove into Paul's letters and his impact on the early church. We finished this year, appropriately, with the final book of the Bible, Revelation. Although confusing and sometimes scary, Pastor Carrie explained that Revelation was really a message of hope to all Christians.

Revelation was actually written from a prison island, by prisoner John of Patmos. Followers of Jesus were kept in captivity on the island of Patmos, in order to prevent the spread of Christianity. Although they weren't allowed off the island, they were permitted to write letters to their friends and families. Knowing that these letters would most likely be intercepted by those trying to prevent the Good News of Jesus to spread, the letters were written in code - the "sevens" referred to throughout the book actually refer to the seven Christian churches in existence at that time. Although Revelation does have references to the end of time, it also provides encouragement to its readers to live a life centered with God and to believe in God's promises.

Once again, our prayers were answered! The day before the Wednesday, April 21 Confirmation Meal, Natalie Kruse, owner of Tradition Event Center, offered her facility for our use. This was a very welcome suggestion, as our original plan to hold the meal outside on the Church lawn promised to be way too cold, and our Fellowship Hall was not large enough for adequate Social Distancing. If you see Natalie, please thank her for her generous offer! The 8th Grade Confirmands and their families all enjoyed a box chicken dinner and ice cream in very

congregation members in need. We thank Carol Marten and Mary Moore for co-leading this new ministry and welcome members who are in need or who wish to serve to contact them or the church office.

Additional Insurance

In support of the new Mary Martha Ministry, the council approved an increase in insurance coverage for about \$350 a year to protect property in the church members' care.

2018-2020 Audit

Deanna Nielsen is working with the Audit Committee and the Finance Committee to make plans for an audit for 2018-2020. The council approved their recommendation to rescind the decision made in September last year to use an external auditor since this would delay the audit further and since it was not added to the budget.

Audit Committee 2021-2022

Josh Rasmussen was appointed as chair of the Audit Committee. The council is looking for someone to join the Audit Team to complete the last year of a three year term. If you or someone you know may be interested to serve, please contact Deanna or the church office.

Respectfully,
Linda Golinghorst
Council President



Due to low response in April, we are running this poll a second month. Please help us plan by taking a minute to answer the poll. Your feedback is important!
Thank you to those who already provided feedback.

May Poll Question

Are you interested in attending Vacation Bible School this summer?

- Yes, I would like my child(ren) to attend.
- Yes, I would like to serve as an adult VBS Guide.
- No, I am not interested in attending VBS this summer.

Please share what precautions are needed for you to feel safe at VBS. Due to the pandemic, we may still need to take precautions to reduce the risk to children and guides who attend VBS. We would like to know what precautions are needed for you to feel safe at VBS. You may participate in our poll online or by emailing or calling the church office.
Thank you for your input.

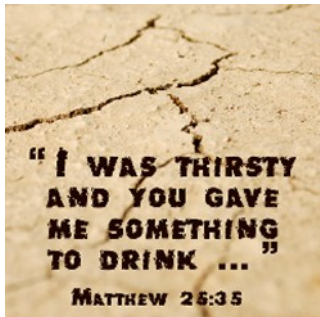
Annual Planning

The church council met in person on Sunday, April 18 to do annual planning for the congregation. There was high engagement and teamwork to develop our theme, to update our top priorities, and to set goals for the year. As always, we would like to hear any questions or feedback you have! Feel free to contact any of the council members or the church office.



2021 Theme (unifying idea)

Serving Christ. Serving God's People.



Matthew 25:35-36, 40 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

2021 Top Priorities (more important than other things)



Build and strengthen relationships with Jesus and others through worship, prayer and bible study.

Engage and empower children, youth and young adults by strengthening intergenerational relationships.

Expand community involvement and outreach by understanding our neighbors' needs and by seeking to be instruments of empathy, unity and peace.

YOUR GIVING MATTERS!

With the first quarter of 2021 now complete and select in-person activities again occurring at Faith Lutheran, it is a great time for a check of the financial health of the church. Through the first three months of 2021, general operating contributions to the church totaled \$76,238.73 from 148 giving units and other loose offerings, with expenses during that same time period totaling \$74,371.99. A very heartfelt THANK YOU to all of our Faith Lutheran family for the continued support of the amazing work being done even during the ongoing pandemic, and to our church leaders for effectively managing finances and expenses during this time.

The current financial health of the church is even more impressive when you factor in that most activities have been virtual during that time period. When looking back at the same time frame in 2020, contributions totaled \$92,808 from 188 giving units thanks to a significant number of additional in-person services before the start of the pandemic. As more in-person activities return and activity at the physical church building increases, so will expenses associated with these activities.

In addition, as we anticipate the end of the pandemic and the ability for more normal activities, Faith teams are actively planning for new and exciting programs and activities that will expand the impact of our church family and spread God's word. Please prayerfully consider your current and future support of Faith Lutheran by utilizing the many options found at <https://faithlutheraneldridge.com/give-to-flc/>.

~ Ryan Harms, Stewardship Team Leader



Service in the World Litter Walk

Service in the World committee invites our congregation and NS community members to join a clean up in conjunction with the Sheridan Sluggers 4H club. The clean up will be on Sat., May 22nd at 9am. Park at the High School and meet at the bike trail across from the high school. We will be picking up trash and litter on the southern part of the bike trail. Come join us!

May 2021, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story

Happy Mother's Day!

Mother's Day is a time to celebrate the strong, loving women in your life. At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we see thousands of Iowa moms through their journey to build the brightest future for their children.

We see moms turning to LSI Behavioral Health Intervention Services to ensure their child is receiving the coping skills and behavioral supports they need to thrive. In our Early Childhood Services, we see first-time moms who are eager to join our parenting education classes and support groups. In 2020, LSI's Early Childhood programs provided support to more than 1,097 families of young children. We are so inspired to hear their stories and see their hard work pay off as they raise our next generation.

As you celebrate Mother's Day this year, remember how many Iowa moms are being empowered because of your support. If you are looking for a way to honor your mother this year, please consider making a gift in her name to LSI. For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and Facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Wrapping Care Around Iowa Children

Martha and Marti first became foster parents in September of 2018, after their biological children expressed that they wanted to provide foster care as a family. They decided to become licensed through LSI Foster Care and Adoption and soon after, they welcomed a sibling group of three into their home.

"Our kids really wanted to look into foster care as a way to be able to help others as a family," Martha says. "Everybody had to sacrifice and pour in, and everybody was needed and brought something to the table."

The siblings stayed with the family for almost two years, until the opportunity came for them to find a forever home through adoption. Over the years, the siblings had become bonded to Martha and Marti, as well as their extended family and friends. The siblings are currently in the process of officially being adopted by a family close to Martha and Marti, so they can continue to stay connected to the important relationships they built in foster care.

The family has found a passion they can all share, and it's making a difference in the lives of Iowa children. "We always explain fostering as 'good' and 'hard.' You never want to take one away from the other, because it's both. It's the hardest thing we've ever done, but it's the best thing we've done," Martha says. "We've had the privilege of having the kids in our home and you have the responsibility and the privilege to take care of them in their time of need."

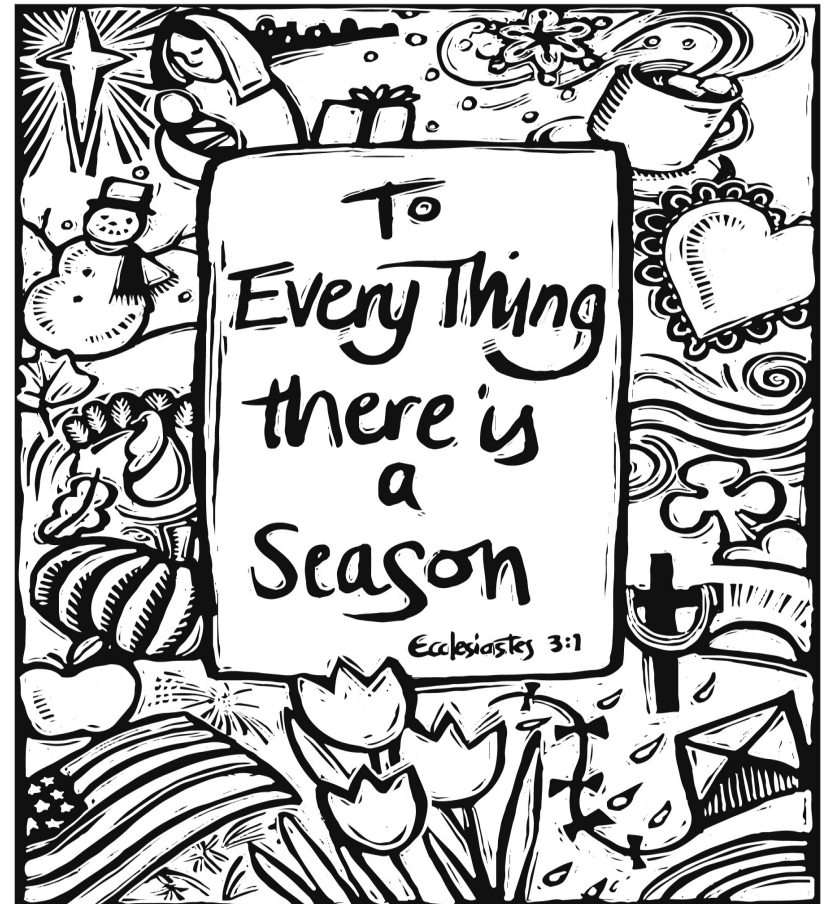
2021 Goals (actions in support of top priorities)



Offer more varied adult educational opportunities to grow people's faith. Start some new activities in the fall and launch a task team by year end.

Re-engage the congregation and the community in our worship and other activities. Council will form a comprehensive plan that can be implemented by Rally Day in the fall.

Define and implement a lay leadership training program to help identify spiritual gifts within congregational members and to empower them for service within the congregation and the larger community. Launch a task team by Feb 2022.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Reminder: Sunday School is available ONLINE every weekend						1 5pm Worship In Person & Online 
2 <i>Compassion Sunday</i> 9am Worship In Person Sanctuary 7pm COVID-19 Sub-Committee on Zoom	3 7pm Faith Connects Online	4 1pm Bible Study Food Pantry 5:30-7pm 	5 10:30 am Chime Choir 7pm High School Youth	6 6:30 pm Team Night In person or Zoom Team Reports Due	7 Food Pantry 9:30—11am 	8 5pm Worship In Person & Online 
11 <i>Mother's Day</i> 9am Worship In Person Outdoor Chapel 	10 7pm Faith Connects Online	11 1pm Bible Study Food Pantry 5:30-7pm 	12 10:30 am Chime Choir 7pm High School Youth	13 <i>Ascension Day</i> 	14 Food Pantry 9:30—11am 	15 WOF Parking Lot Sales 5pm Worship In Person & Online 
16 9am Worship In Person Sanctuary 4pm 4H Mtg. (FH)	17 7pm Faith Connects Online	18 1pm Bible Study Food Pantry 5:30-7pm  7pm Executive Committee Mtg.	19 7pm High School Youth	20 7pm Church Council Meeting Zoom 	21 Food Pantry 9:30—11am  Synod Assembly Online 	22 Synod Assembly Online 5pm Worship In Person & Online 
23 <i>Pentecost</i> 9am Worship In Person Outdoor Chapel and Senior Recognition	24 7pm Faith Connects Online	25 1pm Bible Study Food Pantry 5:30-7pm 	26 10:30 am Chime Choir 7pm High School Youth	27 9am Ambassador Folding 	28 Food Pantry 9:30—11am 	29 5pm Worship In Person & Online 
30 <i>Holy Trinity</i> 9am Worship In Person Sanctuary	31 <i>Memorial Day</i> OFFICE CLOSED 					