



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

505 N C STREET | FREMONT | NE | 68025

402-721-1265 | OFFICE@FREMONTFBC.ORG

WWW.FREMONTFBC.ORG



his message will be told. Eventually, it narrows down to the one person who accomplishes that God's salvation: Jesus, the Messiah...the narrowest point in the hour-glass, if you will. That Jesus, worked primarily with 12 individuals called apostles, and in particular, three of those. But once he has accomplished, suddenly the hour-glass reverses course as described in the books of Acts. As Jesus described it in Acts 1:8, the message was carried to Jerusalem...but not only Jerusalem, but all Judea and even Samaria...not considered part of the chosen at the time. Then, Jesus stretches their plans even further to "the ends of the earth." In the book of Acts, the story is recounted how God had to open the minds of the chosen Jewish believers to understand that "the ends of the earth" did not mean merely to the Jews scattered from one end of the earth to the other; rather, it is to include even the Gentiles! Once again, descendants of Ham, Japheth, the Ammonite, the Moabites, the Arabs, the people who for generations had been at the margins are invited once again to be part of the fold.

Sometimes, one can learn a great deal about God's purpose while reading the Bible by taking time to notice what is NOT included, and to consider why. Or to notice when they ARE included, and ask why. Such as the moment we catch a glimpse of Philistine worship when the ark of the covenant ends up in the temple of Dagon, or when Jonah preaches to the Assyrians, or Esther encounters the opposition of the Medes and Persians. It makes a difference when we recognize that the Bible is not a record of world history...it is the record of God's work of redemption throughout history. On the cusp of Easter, we are about to remember and celebrate the moment the hourglass reversed. That reversal is how you and I as Gentile believers entered the timeline of redemption, that redemption which we are now entrusted to communicate in our moment of history!



Lead Pastor- Richard Crooks | Music Director- Sasha White | Youth Leader- Jesse Kracht

APRIL 2026

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Fremont, Nebraska



PASTOR'S NOTES

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, --Deuteronomy 30:19 esv

And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. --Joshua 24:15 esv

This year, for Holy Week, we are focusing on the importance of our choices, and the example Jesus set for us with the choices he made. But the Bible is filled with stories of people being invited to make choices for or against God, and about what happened in their lives as they did. The verses above are two very famous biblical examples when God challenges people to make a choice: Moses challenging God's people to obey the law, and his protégé Joshua later challenging people to choose to be faithful to the Lord. People sometimes chose well, sometimes poorly; some chose life, some chose self. And the history of the nation and of the individual people demonstrates the consequences of the path they chose.

Each day we all make choices, and choices reflect priorities and values. If we value good health, we do certain things: eat the right foods, exercise, take vitamins and follow the doctor's orders. If we value our jobs, we show up for work on time and do our best at assigned tasks, right? Similar lists can be made for valuing money, fame, success...or in another vein, if we value friendship, compassion, family and, of course, honoring God.

When two options arise, both of which we value, we decide which we value more and make the hard choice of letting a desired opportunity pass in favor of a more important one. The call of these challenges through Moses and Joshua encourage us to choose wisely when it comes to the things of God. Jesus puts that challenge ever more strongly:

Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. --Matthew 10:37-38

"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

--Matthew 7:13-14

It seems that these days, there are so many things that can interfere with our choice



to love the Lord the way we are called to do. In fact, I suspect that is the design by which our spiritual enemy seeks to distract us away from the things God desires of us. For example, when feeling fatigued a desire for sleep tempts us to skip worship, or our morning prayer time (or for others, evening prayer time).



But there are so many things that can interfere with a priority of a commitment to Christ, to following him first, to choosing the narrow road. Things like simple distractions, limitations on our time, financial distress, conflicting schedules or, as Jesus pointed out, even family relationships can interfere and cause us to pursue something else and choose to make following the Lord a second tier priority.

It is important that we take the time to examine our lives and our commitments regularly, lest we wander off the narrow path, because the other route is so much easier. Do you know what the traps are that seek to distract you from the narrow path? What things can pull you away from the things you know God desires from you? When do you cave into other demands and make God wait? We have a crafty adversary who will use whatever he can to pull us away from following Christ... sometimes simply by convincing us that "one time won't matter" or "this is not a big deal" or "I can make up for it later." And those are the things that become the first steps upon the easy path that, in the end, leads away from Christ and replace God on our heart's throne.

The emphasis on Holy Week reminds us that, in obedience to the Father, Jesus chose to make us... you, me...and providing the opportunity for our salvation THE priority choice of his life. We are called to follow his example and make obedience to God THE priority of our lives as well. What choices do you face right now? I encourage you to choose life, to choose obedience, to choose the narrow path...the hard path...that Jesus chose for you.

WORTHY IS THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN –REVELATION 5:12

MARCH BIBLE HISTORY ANSWER

Important early church leaders and writers from Africa include: Tertullian (a champion of the faith), Athanasius (who helped shape and define Christian orthodoxy), Augustine (who wrote several classic books such as Confessions and City of God and other writings that profoundly impacted the 1500's Reformation and Baptist theology), Clement of Alexandria and Cyprian of Carthage who further clarified Christian doctrine against unscriptural influences, and Origen whose scholarly work on the text of the Bible was highly important in biblical studies in the original languages.



APRIL HISTORY PUZZLE

Paul wrote several of his New Testament letters while sitting in prison. There were other Christians who wrote great works while in prison—Bonhoeffer, Solzhenitsyn...but one Christian author wrote one of the greatest and very popular books prison that has become a worldwide classic. Who might that author be and what is the book?



Previously we have discussed in this column the scripturally intended purposes of the various biblical writings, such as how John points out he didn't record everything that Jesus did, but provided enough that one could have faith in Christ. In this article, I'd like to lead you to consider a core purpose you may already be familiar with, sometimes referred to as "The Thread of Redemption," or a similar phrase. In this perspective, one emphasizes the narrowing presentation that is given as the verses reveal God's work of salvation bit by bit through its pages. I want to offer you a general outline of this concept through some specific examples. As we do so, it might be helpful to think of the Bible as being designed in the shape of an hour-glass. You will see what I mean as you read further.

The story of God's work begins with the creation...the creation of all things. The creation story of Genesis one describes all that God makes, and then chapter two zeroes in specifically on the creation of human beings, highlighting that Eve is the mother of all living people. Everyone is included at that point, right? But then, in their children, Cain kills Abel, is banished, and for all intents and purposes falls out of the narrative. It is Adam and Eve's next son, Seth, whose lineage is followed. Following the story further, we come to the time of Noah, in which Noah's family is delivered...kept in the narrative...while all the rest are judged. After the flood, reference is made to the heritage of Noah's sons Ham and Japheth, but the narrative focuses down once again through the lineage of Shem. The story continues until we come to Abraham, who is the focus of the story, not the relatives he left behind in Ur and Haran. Lot comes along, but the story of his descendants, the Moabites and Ammonites, only are mentioned in reference to how they impact Abraham's descendants. Even then, though, it isn't all of Abraham's descendants, but the descendants through the line of Isaac, nor Ismael. Of Isaac's children, it not Esau, but Jacob whose line is chosen...Jacob who is renamed Israel. Jacob has the sons who are the roots for the 12 tribes of Israel, with two tribes, Levites and Judah, receiving special attention. The Levites are selected as the tribe to manage the earthly temple, and Judah is selected through David to preserve the royal line of the nation.



The story continues to narrow and define the salvation work and plan of God. People rebel, but there always remains a remnant, some who are true believers. The kingdom of Israel splits into the northern kingdom of Israel, and the southern kingdom of Judah, and once again, the work of God moves forward through the southern kingdom in Babylon, not the northern Kingdom in Assyria. After the exile, once Ezra and Nehemiah return to the land, even though there remain many Jews far afield in Egypt, Babylon and elsewhere, it is through the people who return that the story continues. The Bible tells us very little, almost nothing, of those who remained in the other locations.

Think about how narrow the focus has become. It has gone from all of creation to all humanity narrowing generation to generation until the focus has come down to the Jewish people in their homeland. There is no recounting of the history of not only Moab and Edom, but also not the descendants of Ishmael (the Arabs), nor the Egyptians (Ham's descendants), nor the history of Greece or Rome (descendants of Japheth)...not the Canaanites nor the Philistine nor the Midianites, let alone the far-flung kingdoms of the Nabateans, the Hittites, the Sumerians, the Akkadians, so many cultures simply left out of the mix, because the story is about what is called the "salvific" work of God. Time and again God chooses through whom his work will be accomplished and through whom



FBKids | FBYouth | Salt & Light

FBKids (K-6th) | Wednesday Nights | 6:15p Meal | 6:45p Groups

FBYouth (7-12th) | Sunday Nights | 6p Meal | 6:30p Groups | with Youth Leader Jesse Kracht

Salt & Light (College Age) | Wednesdays | 7pm Groups | With Pastor Richard

Hello everyone!

The Lord has truly blessed us throughout the month of March. At the beginning of the month, our youth had the opportunity to attend the Weekend Retreat at Camp Moses Merrill. Originally, Pastor Blake from Arthur Baptist Church was scheduled to bring the Word, but due to the wildfires affecting parts of the state, he was unable to attend. Even in that change of plans, the Lord provided an opportunity for several of us youth ministers to step in and share. I was blessed with the opportunity to preach during the Saturday evening session, where I spoke on having the Mind of Christ.

As we return to our regular rhythm of life, our youth group is wrapping up our study of the book of Ephesians over the coming weeks.

Also, be on the lookout for our upcoming Easter Egg fundraiser! If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to reach out to either Jesse Kracht (myself) or Lacey Pilkenton.

Once again, all of us at FBC Fremont Youth want to thank you for your continued love and support. May the Lord bless you in every step you take!

-Jesse Kracht

When we trust and let Jesus lead the way – BIG things happen! We're building connections at Midland University with the softball team and launching our NEW college-age Bible study: Salt & Light.



There is no better way to spend a week of your summer than SUMMER CAMP @ Camp Moses Merrill. Campers of all ages enjoy fun activities, making new friends, and growing in faith. Get away this summer and come to Camp Moses Merrill.

FAITH * FUN * FRIENDS

JAM Camp: May 31 - June 2

1st - 6th grade fall of 2026
Cost: \$175

Junior Camp: June 7-12

4th - 6th grade fall of 2026
Cost: \$385 (\$360 before May 1st)

Mid High Camp: June 14-19

7th - 9th grade fall of 2026
Cost: \$385 (\$360 before May 1st)

Senior High Camp: June 21-26

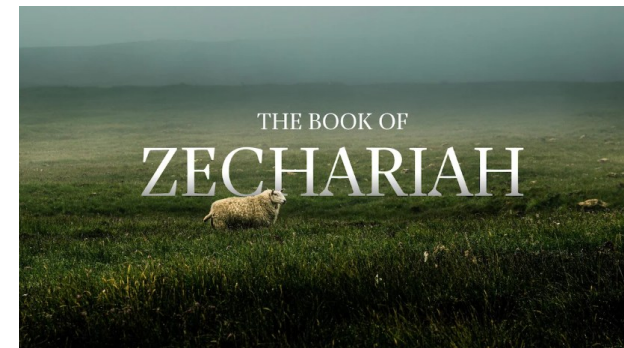
9th - 12th grade fall of 2026
Cost: \$400 (\$375 before May 1st)

Family Camp: June 26 -28

Bring the whole family
Cabins or lodge room options
Check our website for pricing



Huge thank you to our Team Pastor Richard and his team at First Baptist +❤️🧡💙

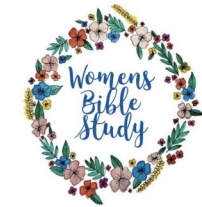


Monthly Meetings

Esther Circle - April 13th - 11:00a

Hannah Circle - April 14th - 11:30a @ Gambino's

Naomi Circle - April 23rd - 12:30p



Saturday
April 18th
9:30a

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL LUNCHEON!!



American Baptist Women's Ministries

MEMORIAL Luncheon

THURSDAY **APRIL 2** 12:00 PM

JOIN US IN THE PARLOR
HOSTESS: NAOMI

EACH CIRCLE PLEASE
BRING 2 SALADS

I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep



John 10:11

We are collecting items for our Maple Crest missionary project! We are looking for prayer scarves, lap robes, bingo prizes, and used greeting cards (for repurposing). If you would like to contribute, please bring your donations to the church. Your support will help bring comfort and joy to the residents of Maple Crest.

VISION TEAM MINUTES: MARCH 14, 2026

In Attendance: Bea Peterson, Betty Laughlin, Eileen Cash, Randy Cash, Terry Woodman, Joel Foreman, Mary Weldon and Pastor Richard.

Mary Weldon opened the meeting with a devotional about self-centeredness in worship and led an opening prayer.

* Randy presented the treasurer's report, indicating that we ended the month better than had been anticipated, especially as some special donations came in toward the stained glass restoration project. In the upcoming month or so, there are a number of expenses coming that may be challenging. He also provided some details on where we are in the stained glass repair.

* First 1/4ly payment of approximately \$19,500 has been completed, of which \$8,750 has been donated this year. He pointed out that the remaining approximately \$10,000 is paid, but out of funds we would normally be using for other expenses. Additionally, with the stained glass repair about to begin, we will soon be making the next payment. There was significant discussion about the various options as we move forward, and what portion we might be seeking through the endowment.

* Richard shared information from a recent Endowment Team meeting, in which this topic was discussed and their recommendation that the next payment (or at least a portion of it) could be drawn from the Memorial Funds, especially since the windows were originally done through memorial gifts. We might even make a plaque to go along with the old ones mentioning the use of memorial funds in the restoration.

* After discussion and some consensus, Eileen Cash made a motion that we draw the next stained glass payment out of Memorial Funds (approximately \$19,500) and then recommend a withdrawal of \$10,000 from the Endowment to reimburse that much of the general funds that were used to supplement donations to start the stained glass project. Randy 2nd. Motion carried.

* Mary expressed concern she discovered in conversation with Amity about difficulties with a couple of our monthly bills arriving in time for payments (which we suspected had to do with the current mail concerns). She asked if there was a way some of these things could be handled online. Richard and Randy went over our current security procedures in terms of the checking and credit cards, and how we want to continue to maintain caution. The idea was presented to consult the companies involved to see if we could simply get the bills available online so that we get them quicker, but continue to make the payments using checks for security purposes. Terry Woodman moved that Pastor work with Amity and/or Randy to find a way to set up email or online statements.

Joel seconded. Motion carried.

* Joel reported that the ABMen are on track for the Easter pancake breakfast before the first service and between services, with Alan and Lee Holzerland working the griddles again. Papers have also been signed for our Fremont Days booth to be in the breezeway again. He and Richard also shared the report received from Walt White about a new "Fat Cow" project in Bangladesh that our ABMen had provided seed money for.



**Behold the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.
-John 1:29 esv**

The Shepherd & His Sheep April Bible Reading Plan



- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 1 - John 10:11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 16 - Psalm 78:52 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2 - Psalm 23:1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 17 - John 21:17 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 3 - John 10:27 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 18 - Zechariah 10:2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 4 - Isaiah 40:11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 19 - Psalm 79:13 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 5 - 1 Peter 5:4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 20 - Mark 6:34 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 6 - John 10:14 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 21 - Ezekiel 34:23 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 7 - Ezekiel 34:11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 22 - Luke 12:32 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 8 - Hebrews 13:20-21 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 23 - Isaiah 53:6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 9 - Psalm 95:7 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 24 - Jeremiah 23:3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 10 - Micah 5:4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 25 - Psalm 23:4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 11 - John 10:3-4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 26 - John 10:16 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 12 - Matthew 9:36 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 27 - Psalm 23:3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 13 - Psalm 100:3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 28 - Isaiah 49:9-10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 14 - Revelation 7:17 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 29 - Psalm 23:6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 15 - Matthew 18:12-13 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 30 - John 10:28-29 |

2026 Western Nebraska Fires Disaster Relief Giving



Use our ABC Nebraska Tithl.ey & donate to "Disaster Relief." All funds collected in March will go toward supporting recovery in Arthur & Western Nebraska.



December 22, 1964
March 6, 2026

Vicki Anderson



Happy Birthday!

Kelsi Castillo (Anderson)	402-727-0740	03
Kelly Regier	308-458-7906	03
Paul Foreman	402-719-4316	07
Tom Scott	402-525-6937	08
Dorothy Charleston	402-720-5238	14
Everett Moerker	402-721-4290	17
Mike Raasch	402-727-6854	22

Happy Anniversary!

Tom & Jessica Peterson	402-719-5408	29
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MARCH BIBLE PUZZLE ANSWER

Women in the Bible whose actions prevented or ended a military conflict include: Deborah (Judges 4-5) led in victorious battle). Jael (Judges 4:17-22) killed the enemy leader Sisera in her tent. A woman in Thebez (Judges 9:50-53) who ended the assault on her city by dropping a millstone from the wall down upon Abimelech. Abigail (1 Samuel 25) headed off an attack by David's men upon her husband. The wise woman of Tekoa (2 Samuel 14) gave advice that brought some resolution to the dispute between David and Absalom. And Esther was instrumental in turning the tables so that instead of being attacked and destroyed, the Jewish folks were able to defend themselves.

APRIL BIBLE PUZZLE

Paul refers to Jesus as "our Paschal (or Passover) lamb" in 1 Cor. 5:7.... What was a "paschal lamb" and what were the necessary features of one that makes it symbol of Jesus? Can you think of another who made a similar reference?

* Eileen reported that tonight the ABW is having a special evening with Missionary Carmella Jones as she moves into retirement. They also have scheduled their quarterly lunch meeting on April 2, 12:00, and that in April 12:00 luncheon with a speaker from the Foster Closet project.

* Betty indicated that the various greeting cards are still being sent, and Mary raised discussion about the times cards have also been sent to people mentioned in prayer requests. Pastor and Betty will follow up on that discussion.

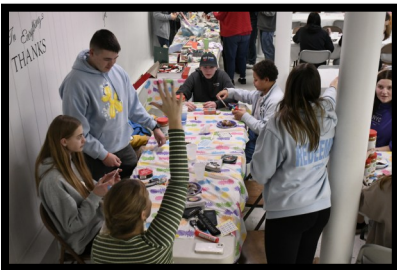
* Pastor shared Alan's report from Property team, that the Parlor heater and the ductwork extensions on the east side have been completed, as well as the sound updates in the Family Center. The streaming service has also been repaired, and the sound people will be back to complete the last of the sanctuary work, including the replacement and wiring for the monitor in the overflow room.

* Pastor also shared on behalf of the youth/children that we have 3 youth out a MMCCC this weekend for the spring youth conference, and our youth minister, Jesse, is the leader/speak for it. Then tomorrow, there are a van load of youth with 4 adults heading to the WinterJam Concert in Des Moines tomorrow (weather permitting). Youth are also offering the Easter Egg hiding as a fundraiser again, and we will pursue the Easter Egg hunt for some Regency Families again. There also will be Easter baskets provided for client families of The Bridge, as well as some neighborhood children. Kids club will be ending, with May 13 the last night scheduled, details to be determined.

* Pastor also reported that at this time, connecting with Milliken Elementary is probably on hold, with the loss of Vicki Anderson, and will be pursued at a later date. In addition, the developing relationship with the Midland University Softball Team has been growing and much appreciated.

Meeting Adjourned with a prayer led by Pastor.

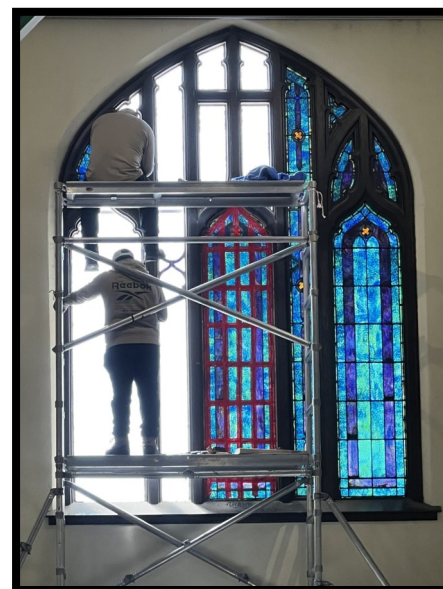
Pastor Richard, substitute recorder.



BINGO!



BINGO!



A BIG project started on March 16th!! Our beautiful stained-glass windows are being carefully removed so they can be restored and repaired. These windows have been a meaningful part of our church for many years, and we're excited to help preserve them for the future. Stay tuned for updates!

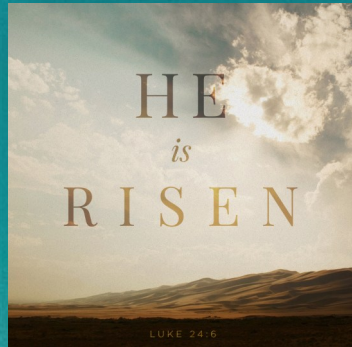


Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time, helped run Bingo, and generously donated prizes. Your support made the event such a success, and we are so grateful for each of you!

Death Could Not Hold Him!

APRIL 2025

It's always a good idea to verify times and places, Thanks!



Scan the QR Code to go to our Website: www.fremontfbc.org
Worship Service, Pictures, Outreach, Giving, Chimes and much more!

Cookies & Coffee

5 - Esther
12 - Naomi
19 - ABM
26 - Hannah

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p>"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." - Romans 10:13</p>			<p>1 April Fool's Day Last Day to Order Eggs from FBYouth!</p> <p>HOLY WEEK No Wednesday Night Activities</p>	<p>2 12p - ABWM Memorial Luncheon NO Kay Circle 7p - Maundy Thursday Communion Service</p>	<p>3 9a - Men's Coffee 10a - Nye Square Bible Study 12:15p - Good Friday Service</p>	<p>4 7a - ABM Bible Study 8a - ABM Breakfast 9a - Property Team 6p - Fun and Fellowship</p>
<p>5 EASTER COMMUNION 6:40a - Sunrise Service 8:30a - Pancake Breakfast 9:30a - Traditional 10a - Pancake Breakfast 11a - Casual Service</p>	<p>6 9a - Men's Coffee</p>	<p>7 7p - AA Meeting</p>	<p>8 10a - Women's Coffee 6:15p - Meal 6:45p - FBKids (K-6) 7p - Bible Study 7p - Salt & Light (College)</p>	<p>9 10a - Pastor Led Bible Study/ZOOM</p>	<p>10 9a - Men's Coffee 12p - Bible Study in Parlor</p>	<p>11 8:45a - Personnel Team 9:30a - Vision Team</p>
<p>12 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service 11a - Bible Study 6p - FBYouth (7-12th) 6p - Brown Bag/Movie Night</p>	<p>13 9a - Men's Coffee 11a - Esther Circle 6p - Woodcarvers</p>	<p>14 11:30a - Hannah Circle @ Gringo's 7p - AA Meeting</p>	<p>15 10a - Women's Coffee 6:15p - Meal 6:45p - FBKids (K-6) 7p - Bible Study 7p - Salt & Light (College)</p>	<p>16 5:30p - Kay Circle Mat Weaving</p>	<p>17 9a - Men's Coffee 12p - Bible Study in Parlor</p>	<p>18 9:30a - ABW Bible Study</p>
<p>19 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service 11a - Bible Study 6p - FBYouth (7-12th)</p>	<p>20 9a - Men's Coffee</p>	<p>21 7p - AA Meeting</p>	<p>22 10a - Women's Coffee 6:15p - Meal 6:45p - FBKids (K-6) 7p - Bible Study 7p - Salt & Light (College)</p>	<p>23 10a - Pastor Led Bible Study/ZOOM 12:30p - Naomi Circle</p>	<p>24 9a - Men's Coffee 10a - Nye Square Bible Study 12p - Bible Study in Parlor</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service 11a - Bible Study 6p - FBYouth (7-12th)</p>	<p>27 9a - Men's Coffee 6p - Woodcarvers</p>	<p>28 7p - AA Meeting</p>	<p>29 10a - Women's Coffee 6:15p - Meal 6:45p - FBKids (K-6) 7p - Bible Study</p>	<p>30 5:30p - Kay Circle Mat Weaving</p>		