

# Faith Lutheran Church \* November 2025





I'd like you to consider three scenarios. As you picture these scenes, you might wonder how they exemplify Thanksgiving. They may seem like the opposite of Thanksgiving. But I think they capture this verse from Thessalonians and what it means to be thankful in all circumstances.

The first is the story of Job. Job has come to represent the epitome of suffering and how people deal with it. All his children are killed in an accident, his possessions are destroyed, he is facing financial ruin, his health is failing, and his wife tells him to curse God. His so-called friends blame him for his tragedy. If anyone had a reason to say, "Let's skip Thanksgiving this year," it would be Job. Yet in the midst of his suffering, God comes to Job and says, "Hear this, O Job. Stop and consider the wondrous works of God" (Job 37:14). From all the outward circumstances, it seems as though Job has nothing at all to be thankful for. Yet God essentially tells him, "It's time to count your blessings."

In the second scenario, the Apostle Paul finds himself squarely in the middle of a dingy Roman prison facing serious charges for preaching the gospel. Things seem pretty bad for him and he didn't have any reason to think it would get better considering his track record. He had been shipwrecked, nearly beaten to death, nearly stoned to death, and persecution followed him wherever he went. Trouble with the authorities had become commonplace. Seemingly, his life was going a whole lot better before Jesus appeared to him and changed his heart. Ever since then, it was trouble after trouble. Now he faces the prospect of death again, this time by a sentence of execution. But in the middle of this situation, Paul writes to the Christians in Ephesians, "Thanks be to God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing." How could Paul count his blessings in these circumstances? Like Job, what does he have to be thankful for?

The third scenario comes from our American heritage. It is the story of the Pilgrims. The picture is quite different than the quaint and happy scene of the Pilgrims dining with their native brothers at a huge feast stuffing themselves full until they were ready for a lazy afternoon nap. The more factual scene is one of deprivation, hardship, suffering, and pain. At the first Thanksgiving, you likely would have found over half of the 101 settlers dead from lack of nourishment, harsh weather, and a host of diseases. They were people without a country. They could only look ahead and see famine and disease. Yet in the midst of this hardship, they set aside a time to give thanks to God for all of his blessings. As in the first two scenarios, their outward circumstances begged the question, "What did they have to be thankful for?"

Job, Paul, and the Pilgrims understood thankfulness quite differently than the average American today. Typically, we talk about what we are thankful for. We look at all of the things we have and

our level of appreciation rises as the list increases. Certainly, we ought to be grateful to our God for the blessings he gives to us. We can especially be thankful that through faith we recognize where all these blessings come from ... our good and gracious God. But what if, like Job, like Paul, like the Pilgrims, these things just vanished from our lives. No more home, family, health, or freedom. Would that mean you have no reason for thanksgiving?

If we understand thanksgiving the way they did, then we see it, not just as being thankful for something, but being thankful *in* something...specifically in all circumstances. In the midst of everything and anything – in death, loss, hardship, plenty, want, sickness, health, failure, success—the Christian faith has a common theme ... we turn to God in praise. We praise God from whom all blessings flow. Sometimes those blessings come in the difficult times we experience or the lesson we learn from the things we have that are taken away. Our dear Heavenly Father knows best how to care for his children. That doesn't mean spoiling us with everything we want ... although we often get that ... but it means giving us what we need. He has proven this grace and mercy in giving us a Savior to redeem us from all our selfishness and greed.

You and I have a Savior in any and all circumstances. Job and Paul learned that no circumstance could change what the Savior had done for them. In fact, every circumstance served to focus them on what that Savior did. Your circumstances serve to focus you on this fact too: the victory is yours through faith in Jesus Christ. Give thanks in all circumstances.

From a Biblical perspective, this gratitude is to be expressed in thankful lives, not just thankful voices. We can look at gratitude as having good manners. One of the first things we teach children when someone gives them something is to say, "Thank you." That's a very good thing. But Biblical gratitude is more than writing a "Thank You" note or setting aside one day a year to reflect on God's gifts. We need to be careful so our talk doesn't become cheap. Instead, we ask the Lord to direct our lives so that they reflect our thankful hearts in words and actions. So, Job and Paul and the Pilgrims pressed on in their difficult situations with trust in God that he would bless them. He did bless them in different ways. That's what God does for his people in every circumstance. So, we can live in thankfulness in every circumstance too.

The hymn, "Now Thank We All Our God," was written in 1607 by Martin Rinkert. He wrote the hymn in one of the most difficult circumstances you could imagine. Over 6,000 people in and around his town had died of the plague. He was performing dozens of funerals a day. The funerals included that of his wife and children. In the middle of this catastrophic loss for him and his people, Rinkert penned this hymn of praise:

Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices, who wondrous things has done, in whom his world rejoices; who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way with countless gifts of love and still is ours today.

Jesus knows your circumstance too. He cares deeply, so deeply that he took all your sin and pain and suffering and he promises you the hope of life with him forever no matter what the circumstance. Trust that he has the final word when it comes to your final victory. Counting your blessings starts there and it never ends. So, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.



Asst. Ministers	Lectors	<b>Communion Servers</b>	Power Point	Ushers
2nd: Roderick	2nd: Pat A.	2nd: Karla	2nd: Candy	2nd: Annie
9th: Candy	9th: David	9th: Debbie	9th: Mike	9th: Gina
16th: Marlene	16th: Danielle	16th: Joanne	16th: Bill	16th: Judy Ad.
23rd: Joanne	23rd: Bill	23rd: Diane S.	23rd: Mike	23rd: Becky
30th: Roderick	30th: Diane M.	30th: Kandie	30th: Marlene	30th: TBD
Attendance	Greeters	Altar Guild	Sound	Live Stream/Video
2nd: Kandie	2nd: Walli	2nd, 9th, 16th:	2nd: Marlene	2nd: Madeline
9th: Shirley	9th: Dave	Kandie, Kay	9th: Marlene	9th: Madeline
16th: Pat O.	16th: Jean	23rd, 30th:	16th: Candy	16th: Madeline
23rd: Joanne	23rd: Walli	Marlene, Debbie	23rd: Marlene	23rd: Madeline
30th: TBD	30th: Jean		30th: Candy	30th: Madeline

# Evening of Gratitude

The Menifee Interfaith and Community Service Council will hold its 12th Annual 'Evening of Gratitude' and Food Drive to benefit the Menifee Valley Community Cupboard on Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. It will be hosted again this year at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 29725 Bradley Rd. Menifee.

Please join us for a wonderful evening of inspirational messages and music from local faith and community leaders. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Please share this information with members of your friends and family. What a wonderful way to celebrate the Thanksgiving season!







Our Fellowship Committee invites you to the Food with Friends Pizza Party on November 19<sup>th</sup>at 5:00pm! Pizza will be provided...bring your friends...all are welcome! If you are able, please bring a salad or dessert to share. Sign up in the Narthex!



## **Hunger Never Rests!**

The Menifee Valley Community Cupboard is in need of Stuffing and Mashed Potatoes for November!

Most of us have not experienced food insecurity, but many locally do experience it, both seniors and families. Let's remind ourselves to do all we can to help those in need here in Menifee! As you are able, be Christ in action, add the monthly item to your shopping list and add it to the collection bin by mailboxes!





### November 9th is Women of the ELCA Thankoffering Sunday!

Each year our congregation is invited to participate in Thankoffering by giving a special gift, over and above our regular giving, in support of Women of the ELCA ministries here in the U.S. and abroad.

Look for the Thankoffering envelope in your church mailbox. Please make your check out to Faith W-ELCA, with the MEMO: Thankoffering, and bring it to church or pop it in the mail. Thank you!



WELCA's Christmas Tea will be on Saturday,
December 13, 2025, 2:00 – 4:00!
This afternoon of wonderful fun and
fellowship is not to be missed.
Watch for more details!!



# FINANCIAL REPORT September 30, 2025

#### 1. Comments

- a. PTD Member giving dropped to the <u>lowest level in over 2 years</u>. YTD Member giving is 18% below budget and below 2024 giving.
- b. Expenses continue substantially below budget because, while we budgeted for a half-time Pastor, that position is currently vacant. Our Pastoral expenses will contain only payment for Supply Pastors during the Call processes.
- c. While our overall budget will likely run a surplus due to the low Pastoral Expenses, the Congregation should pay attention to Member Giving as a measure of our overall financial health. It is possible that we would continue to see monthly surpluses even as Member Giving runs under budget. If so, this would result in an unhealthy trend that would adversely affect our Church once we fill our vacant Pastoral position.
- d. The Park Land Sale has entered the escrow phase & proceeds will be deposited to the existing account at Provident Bank at the close of escrow. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) insures up to \$250,000 per depositor, per bank. The Church Council approved splitting the funds between US Bank, Thrivent, and one additional ELCA financial institution. Finance Committee has started the process to open the new accounts.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Actual	\$ 9,541.00	\$ 9,978.00	\$13,127.00	\$10,208.00	\$14,631.00	\$11,979.00	\$10,391.00	\$11,460.00	\$ 8,670.00			
Budget	\$ 13,154.00	\$13,154.00	\$14,496.00	\$13,154.00	\$13,154.00	\$14,054.00	\$12,860.00	\$13,665.00	\$ 13,417.00			
Expenses	\$ 11,598.00	\$11,057.00	\$10,941.00	\$12,531.00	\$11,383.00	\$13,536.00	\$11,433.00	\$11,255.00	\$13,976.00			



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2025	\$ 9,541.00	\$ 9,978.00	\$13,127.00	\$10,208.00	\$14,631.00	\$11,979.00	\$10,391.00	\$11,460.00	\$ 8,670.00		87	
2024	\$10,325.00	\$11,538.00	\$12,862.00	\$11,070.00	\$11,580.00	\$17,721.00	\$ 9,984.00	\$10,310.00	\$12,922.00			



#### 2. Financials Review

- a. Offering Envelopes
  - i) For the month, below budget at 64.62% (\$8,670 vs \$13,417).
  - ii) **Year-to-date,** still below budget at 83.42% (\$99,754 vs \$121,032).

#### b. Total Income

- i) For the month, above budget at 79.42% (\$12,245 vs \$15,418).
- ii) **Year-to-date,** below budget at 92.55% (\$132,991 vs \$143,695).

#### c. Expenses

- i) For the month, well below budget at 85.75% (\$13,976 vs \$16,298).
- ii) **Year-to-date,** well below budget at 73.89% (\$107,000 vs \$144,815).
- d. Net Operating Income (Total Income minus Expenses)
  - i) For the month, a deficit of \$1,731 vs the expected deficit of \$880.52.
  - ii) Year-to-date, a surplus of \$25,991 vs the expected deficit of \$1,120.
- e. Checking balance
  - i) Balance at Month-end is \$39,577.43.

Previous Month-end balance was \$41,436.90.

Submitted by Madeline Puccio, Treasurer

## Volunteer for Coffee, Conversation and You!



We have moved to a shared responsibility for Coffee Hour. We need teams of two (2) volunteers on a Sunday to help with serving and cleaning up. As we are able to get 5 teams of 2, we will develop a schedule with teams helping one Sunday a month. Coffee Hour ends at 11:30am, although people are welcome to stay and talk. With 5 teams we can assure coverage without a large task on just a few generous souls.

Additionally, we are gladly accepting home-baked goods for Coffee Hour. We ask that no more than two (2) people bring home-baked goods on any Sunday. There will be a sign-up sheet in the kitchen for bringing home-baked goods and a sign-up sheet for coffee hour volunteers.

Please sign up to be a team of two (2)!



On Sunday, November 9th, Claire Sefufetz from San Bernardino Community Wellness Campus is coming to give a temple talk and share a video about the good news of the new buildings that are almost to completion! SBCWC was the recipient of our donations of men's hygiene items we collected for God's Work. Our Hands, Don't miss it!



How well do you know God? Has God called you to be in a relationship with him? What have you done to understand the nature and love of God, of His son Jesus Christ? All of us are called to know Him. The way to do that is to study His Word, the Bible. Here at Faith, WELCA gives you 2 wonderful opportunities to study God's Word in a community of believers, a safe space to question, learn and grow.

- Mary's Circle uses studies from Gather Magazine. They meet on the second Wednesday of the month (November 12) at 10am in the library. The lesson will continue our wonderful series on stewardship. We tackle the easy and difficult biblical principles together.
- ➤ Lydia Evening Bible Study is studying women of the Bible. They meet on the third Thursday of the month (November 20) at 6pm in the library. Women and men currently attend this study.

Come when you can and grow in faith!







# Get Your Free Family Holiday Photo!

Your Outreach team has a new initiative for November! This project will allow new visiting families and individuals across Menifee to get one (1) free Family Holiday Photo of their family by attending worship service with us on Sunday Nov. 9 or 16. Flyers are now available in the Narthex with more details.

Outreach will be promoting the photo opportunity at the Menifee Fall Festival, via Menifee Union School District, the Boys and Girls Club of Menifee and across the many public Menifee Facebook sites. Please take flyers and share them with everyone you know! Invite friends, families and neighbors to church for a free family holiday photo!

Current Faith Lutheran families will be able to get a free family photo as well, by appointment only. Appointments start Sunday, Nov 2 after the 9:30 am worship service. Watch your email and announcements for more info and sign up for your photo slot in the Narthex!



### BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS To

November 2 November 10 November 13 November 26 November 29 Lucas Concepcion Madeline Puccio Dick Olsen Mike McGavran Ava Holmes Kandie Hulme



## ANNIVERSARY BLESSINGS

To

There are no official wedding anniversaries in November, so feel free to celebrate your own regardless of when it is! You can never celebrate too often, right?!



If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please notify the church office so we can add you to our list!

Your Outreach Committee is sending another big THANK YOU to all who were able to donate and help separate the men's hygiene items, snacks and bags for San Bernardino Community Wellness Campus! They were very appreciative and thankful!

We passed our goal of donating more than 150 of each of the needed items! Thank you all for sharing your love with so many others!

- Your Outreach Committee

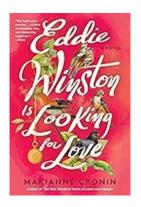






Menifee Reads! (a book club) is reading "Eddie Winston is Looking for Love" by Marianne Cronin. The November meetings are Wednesday, November 12, 7pm and Thursday, November 20 at 2pm in the library. Join in the fun as you can! ALL ARE WELCOME! Come and join us.

The author of the beloved international hit *The One Hundred Years of Lenni and Margot* returns with a funny, uplifting story about the power of friendship and finding love in unexpected places.



Eddie Winston is 90 years old. He has lived and he has loved, but he has never been kissed.

A true gentleman and incurable romantic, Eddie spends his days volunteering at a charity shop, where he sorts through the donations of the living and the dead, preserving letters and tokens of love along the way. And it is here that he meets Bella, a troubled young woman who, at 24 years old, has just lost the love of her life.

When Bella learns that Eddie is yet to have his first kiss, she resolves to help Eddie Winston finally find love, sparking an adventure that will take them to unexpected places and, they hope, bring Eddie Winston to the moment he has waited for all his life.

A tale of friendship and kindness that reminds us that those we love are never forgotten and it is never too late to try again.

Faith Lutheran Church had a booth again this year at the Menifee Fall Festival on Saturday, October 25th. We all had a wonderful time! We handed out candy, glow bracelets, flyers of our church activities, Christmas cards to sign for MilVet, and had a free drawing for a



handmade quilt. The event was great exposure for our church and the many groups, activities and events we offer. Thank you to everyone who helped!



## Grace, Not Judgment

Even in the midst of His arrest, when Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, Malchus, Jesus responded by healing an enemy. This extraordinary act of grace during His own crisis demonstrates that showing kindness to opponents isn't just for convenient moments but should characterize our response even in times of personal difficulty. It teaches us that grace isn't limited by circumstances or determined by how others treat us.



©Image Credit: LUMO-The Gospels for the visual age / Lightstock.com



In His most agonizing moment on the cross, Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." This ultimate expression of grace toward His executioners sets the highest standard of forgiveness and love. His words remind us that grace isn't just for those who deserve it or ask for it, but can be extended even to those who harm us, showing that true grace transcends human logic and reflects divine love.

©Image Credit: The Visual Folk / Lightstock.com

Our Bible study focuses on events in Jesus' life where He could have judged but didn't. See how these themes can apply in your life.

Meeting via Zoom at 7:00 P.M. on the dates indicated:

Nov. 13: Restoring the Ear of Malchus

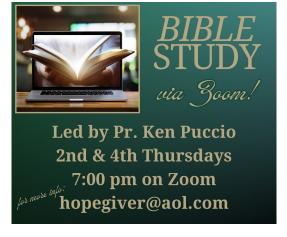
Nov. 20: The Crucifixion Prayer

Log In: 874 9381 9047

Password: 10311517 (think Reformation Day)

Contact Pastor Ken at hopegiver@aol.com to receive a copy

of the lessons.





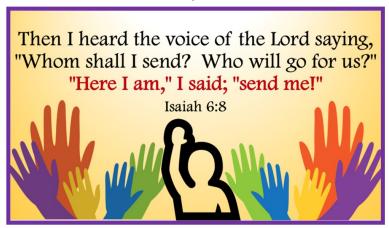
This quarter (Oct.-Dec.) your Outreach Committee is collecting the following items for MilVet:

Chewing gum (individually wrapped packs)
Beef sticks (individually wrapped)

These items will be used at MilVet's monthly packing event, where boxes are packed and sent to deployed military.

Thank you for your love and support!

# November 14-15, 2025 Pacifica Women of the ELCA Annual Convention & Gathering "Here I Am, Send Me!"



Ladies, this year's gathering is at Clairemont Lutheran Church, San Diego!

There will be worship, workshops, keynote speakers and more!

Sign up to attend both days or just one day!

Registration and Scholarship forms are on the table in the narthex, along with suggested hotel information.

Contact Joanne McGavran with questions!

# The Cheer Committee Spreads ... Cheer!

Your Cheer Committee meets with some of our homebound at Pacifica, on the second Thursday of each month. In October we were thankful to have Pr. Rex Wignall join us and give communion!

We also had devotions, snacks, fellowship and fun making a fall pumpkin craft.

We're always looking for others to share some special time with our homebound by way of telephone calls, sending cards and/or visits. Any questions, see Kandie Hulme.







# Donation Drop Off Day!

The next Drop Off day is Saturday, November 1st from 9-12. We continue to collect (new) blankets for Project Linus, eyeglasses for Lions Club, used towels and blankets (no batting) for Animal Friends of the Valleys and shoes for Soles4Soles.

On the first Saturday each month we are open from 9-12 noon, and the public will have access to drop off contributions for these ministries. Please share the information with friends and neighbors, and to your Facebook page as it is posted Flyers are available in the narthex.

## Project 🎔 Linus









# The Giving Tree

It's that time of year again! Your Outreach Committee will be collecting gift cards to give to Menifee Valley Community Cupboard again this year for Christmas! The Giving Tree will be set up in the narthex from November 23 - December 28.

We're looking for your gifts of love to share with those in need in our community in the form of gift cards from:

# \*WinCo - most requested (Family Friendly Gift Card- it's a white card)\* \*Stater Bros.\* \*Vons\*

- Choose an ornament from the tree with your gift card preference.
- Purchase the gift card and keep receipt w/activation code.
- Purchase a card(s), save your receipt w/activation code.
- Bring your gift card back to church and place in baggie in the basket by tree.
- Choose a take-home thank you ornament.

We look forward to sharing our love from Faith Lutheran Church. Giving is Love in Action! Your Outreach Committee thanks you!





Get ready to shout "BINGO!" and win some amazing prizes at this fun event! Bring your friends!

# Free Thanksgiving Meal

The free "Thanksgiving Meals for Menifee" is once again scheduled for Thanksgiving Day at Kay Ceniceros Senior Center. But remember, you need to RSVP!



Thursday, November 27, 2025
KAY CENICEROS SENIOR CENTER
29995 Evans Rd, Menifee, CA 92586

#### RESERVATIONS ARE NECESSARY.

To make a reservation please contact the senior center front desk at (951) 672-9673

1st Seating 11:30 a.m.

2nd Seating 1:00 p.m.

#### To help you plan ahead, this is a list of the events that recur each month:

• Snip 'N Stitch: 1st and 3rd Thursday at 9:00

• Worship & Music: 1st Tuesday at 10:00

• Hymn Planners: 2nd Tuesday at 10:00

• Outreach Team: 2nd Tuesday at 2:30

WELCA Bible Study: 2nd Wednesday at 10:00 and

3rd Thursday at 6:00 pm

• WELCA Board: 2nd Tuesday at 12:30

 Menifee Reads!: 3rd Wednesday at 7:00 and the Thursday following the 3rd Wednesday (either the 3rd or 4th Thursday) at 2:00pm

• **4+1 Group**: 3rd Tuesday at 10:00

• Fellowship Team: 3rd Tuesday at 2:00

• Stewardship Team: 3rd Friday at 10:00

Finance Team: 4th Wednesday at 1:00

• Council: the last Monday of each month at 1:00

• Cheer Team: 2nd Thursday at 4:00

• Pr. Ken's Zoom Bible Study: 2nd and 4th Thursday at 7:00

• Food with Friends: 3rd Wednesday at 5:00

Al-Anon: Every Friday at 10:30





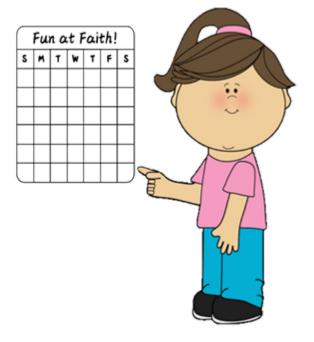
## **Faith Lutheran Church**

28200 Portsmouth Drive, Menifee, CA 92586

Office Phone: (951) 679-1518 | Email: FaithLutheranMenifee@gmail.com

Website: www.faithmenifee.com

Church Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 8:30am-5:00pm | Fri 8:30am-12:30pm



November 2025	ır 2025			November 2025 Su Mo Tu We Th  2 3 4 5 6 9 10 11 12 13 16 17 18 19 20 23 24 25 26 27	Fr Sa Su Mo 7 8 7 8 14 15 7 8 21 22 21 22 28 29 28 29	December 2025  Tu We Th Fr Sa 2 3 4 5 6 9 10 11 12 13 16 17 18 19 20 23 24 25 26 27
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Oct 26	27	28	29	30	31	Nov 1 9:00am Donation Drop Off
2 9:30am All Saints & Pledge Sunday-Pr. Rex	3 1:00pm Council Meeting	4 10:00am Worship & Music 6:30pm VTG Rehearsal	2	6 9:00am Snip 'N Stitch 4:00pm Bingo 6:30pm VTG Rehearsal	7 10:30am Al-Anon	8 11:00am COL-Patsy Loughboro
11:30am Xmas Photos 12:30pm Grace&Mercy	Ç	7	-	5	7	15
9 9:30am Thankoffering	01	11 10:00am Hymn	12 10:00am Mary Circle	13 4:00pm	14   15 Pacifica WELCA Gathering	15 A Gathering
Sunday-Pr. Shane 11:30am Xmas Photos 12:30pm Grace&Mercy		Planners 12:30pm WELCA Board 2:30pm Outreach Team 6:30pm VTG Rehearsal	Bible Study	Cheer/Eucharistic 6:30pm VTG Rehearsal 7:00pm Pr. Ken's Zoom Bible Study	10:30am Al-Anon	9:00am Xmas Photos 6:00pm Big Band Rehearsal
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9:30am Worship-Pr. Shane 11:00am Xmas Photos 12:30pm Grace&Mercy 3:00pm VTG Rehearsal		10:00am 4 Plus 1 Group 2:00pm Fellowship Team 6:00pm Call Committee	1:00pm Finance Team 5:00pm Food with Friends 7:00pm Menifee Reads! Book Club	9:00am Snip 'N Stitch 2:00pm Menifee Reads! 6:00pm WELCA Bible 6:30pm VTG Rehearsal 7:00pm Pr. Ken's Zoom	10:00am Stewardship 10:30am Al-Anon	9:00am Xmas Photos 3:00pm VTG Rehearsal
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9:30am Worship-Pr. Shane 12:30pm Grace&Mercy	Forecaster Deadline 1:00pm Council-In Person & Zoom			Thanksgiving	10:30am Al-Anon	
9:30am First Sunday of Advent-Pr. Shane 11:00am Xmas Photos 12:30pm Grace&Mercy	Dec 1	2	8	4	5	9