

St. John's United Church of Christ

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June 2026 Newsletter

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Vincennes, IN 47591

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A Note From Pastor Debbie Jo...

Dear Friends:

Earlier in my ministry, I believe the summer months were a bit slower and less crowded than those during the program year (Sept-May) but that is no longer true. Even though some of our programs (Messy Church, Faith Formation, etc.) take a break until fall, we have other events and ministries that pop up maintaining a full schedule.

We are sharing a bittersweet time with the retirements of Becky and DeEtta. They have worked so tirelessly and devotedly, directing the music ministry of our congregation for decades. It will be impossible to replace their dedication, and we are concerned about what will come. The Board will be busy seeking to find a new organist and choir director, knowing these talents are in very short supply. You can help by praying for God to match us with the right musicians just as God did last summer when we were searching for new Preschool staff and Church Secretary.

The House committee will be overseeing the repairing and replacement of several outside church doors. This work has been needed for some time and was recently approved by the Board. The first on the list for replacement is the outside kitchen door which is rusting and has been leaking for some time. There are some more building repairs that are being addressed as well.

For the first time in years, we will host an evening VBS, the same week as the in-town mission week. You can read more about the program elsewhere in the newsletter. This will allow us to reach out to the community more and share the good news of Jesus Christ with them.

A Confirmation Class is now forming, and I invite anyone in Grades 7-12 to participate. Please see me ASAP so we can organize and begin some of the requirements during the summer months. We will also be welcoming some new members, probably in July.

The Youth will be creating a float for the 4th of July parade, under Will's leadership. Everyone is welcome to help, just let him know. It will focus on all our community outreach ministries. We might also be handing out bottled water along the parade route.

As in years past (the event was cancelled last year), we will have a church informational booth at the PRIDE festival, *Rainbow Over the Bridge*. We will hand out bracelets & pins and information about our congregation.

We continue to recruit students for our preschool. Enrollment has doubled over last year, and we hope to have several more before school resumes in August. We knew last June that we would be rebuilding our program from the ground up and that it would take at least two years before the Preschool would become self-supporting again. Laura, Heather & Renessa have done a fabulous job this past year and we look forward to growing more in the year ahead.

God's work doesn't slow down, which is as it should be since the world needs the good news now more than ever. May we continue to discern God's call to ministry and obediently follow where God leads..

Peace,
Pastor Debbie



Scarlett Speaks!

SCARLETT SPEAKS! Woof! Woof! I am so excited and proud. I achieved a personal doggie milestone that very few short-legged dogs ever achieve. I had even begun to think that the whole thing was a myth started by tall dogs who bragged of their achievements when we gathered at the watering dishes at puppy camps I've attended.

They were so full of themselves and mocked us shorter dogs for not even understanding the mystery of the glorious fountains of which they told amazing stories. They claimed the water in these glistening fountains was sweeter than any water on earth. Their stories came with dire warnings to avoid those with blue water, saying it was dangerous. I thought it was just a rumor. Then, following our last Messy Church, my mom went into a windowless room to do her business before heading home. I of course followed her like I always do. I was shocked and amazed to see a tiny porcelain fountain before me.

It was a though a glorious light shone from heaven and bathed it in glory. It was the perfect size for a little Scottie dog. I drank my fill, hearing the angels sing and feeling my heart swell with pride. I had done it. I could now brag along with the tall dogs. It was a sensational moment of passage for me, although mom was not pleased and told me to "stop that." I don't care. I have accomplished a life goal and can now swagger along with the tall dogs having assuaged my thirst in the mystical fountain. A line from an old gospel hymn echoed in my mind "*O I have found it - the Crystal Fountain, where all my life's deep needs have been supplied.*" Woof! Woof!



Children & Family Ministries

The Children and Family Ministry had an active month in May. On Saturday, May 2, the Children and Family Ministry and any church member had an opportunity to do the Vincennes City Cleanup. The group cleaned up the church neighborhood and Schoolhouse Rd. The CFM group collected 7 bags trash during the activity. The money made will go to the Children and Family Ministry account for future activities. Thank you for all that helped during the cleanup. On Sunday, May 3, the Children and Family Ministry had a cookout at church. Families were asked to bring a side dish/dessert to share with the other families! There were many games and activities for the families at the activity. This event was a great opportunity for the families to invite friends.

Pictures from the City Clean-up and Family Cookout



This past month, the youth group (grades 7–12) finished up the school year with 3 youth meetings in the upstairs youth space. Each gathering included a lesson, an activity, and a community outreach project. Youth meetings will start back up in September.



Children & Family Ministry Age Groups

M & M (Mini-Marvels) Age 4-2nd Grade

KFC (Kids For Christ) 3rd - 6th Grade

Youth 7th Grade - High School



Children & Family Ministries

The Children and Family Ministry Mission Week is returning for its 9th year! The CFM will host an in-town mission week from June 29 through July 3, featuring a new format. This year will include a mix of exciting new opportunities along with some favorite “classic” activities.

The week is designed for all ages to come together, serve the community, and participate as they are able with other summer activities. Stay tuned for more details and upcoming announcements about Mission Week!



KFC (grades 3-6) and Youth (grades 7-12th)

Tuesday, July 7 @ 9:30am---Please RSVP by Sunday, July 5

St. John's participants: \$35 ticket. Friends/family: \$45 ticket. Please send each child with \$25–\$30 for food and a return-trip supper stop. Holiday World is cashless; purchases must be made with a card or a “ReadyCARD,” which children may load with cash and use anywhere credit cards are accepted.

RSVP by Sunday, July 5, by signing up on the nursery bulletin board or texting Will at (812) 887-5303.

Ticket money may be turned in the day of the trip. A current 2026–2027 medical form is required for all children attending and is available on the nursery bulletin board and Facebook group page.



The group may also stay for Holiday World's 15-minute drone and fireworks show featuring 500 LED-lit drones. If the group stays, return time will be about 11:45 p.m.; otherwise, about 10:45 p.m. Contact Will with any questions. The Children and Family Ministry group will be a part of the Isaiah House Lemonade Challenge for Knox County on Friday, July 17th from 10am-2pm and July 18th from 10am-12pm for the Red Skelton Parade by the parking lot along Hart Street. Please let Will know if your family can help with the lemonade challenge. Please anyone come to enjoy and support the Isaiah House.

Prayer & Post

We ask for continuing prayer requests for friends and family:

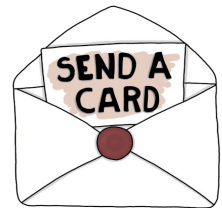
We ask for continuing prayer requests for: Tom Nowaskie, Marilyn Houchins, Rhonda Webber (Brenda Fillingim Niece), John Mineo, Cindi Gilmore, Kim Godare's daughter Mallory, Jeremy Carpenter, Dale Linneweber, Chris Sanders, Caden Utley and Kelsey Pepmeier Oladubu (Janet Daniels' niece), Lynn Simmons, Nina (Pastor Debbie's granddaughter) and Ruth (Pastor Debbie's sister) in the death of her husband, Luis.

Shut-in Addresses:

Susie Milligan - Colonial Assisted Living, Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

Leona Conway - Aperion Care, C Wing Room C-35, 3801 Old Bruceville Road, Vincennes, IN 47591

Marge Beamon - The Villages at Oak Ridge, Room 303, 1694 Troy Road, Washington, IN 47501



At Home:

Gary Meyer
Mike Lankford

Prayer requests or updates can now be relayed to the church office during regular office hours and Pastor Debbie during the evening/weekend.

Email: st.johnsuccoffice@gmail.com or call 812-882-2720 M-F, 9 am - 1 pm.

Email Pastor Debbie: revdjatkins@gmail.com Text or phone call: 812-760-2226



KIDS HOPE USA END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

THE KIDS HOPE USA PROGRAM in partnership with St. John's United Church of Christ and Riley Elementary held their end of year celebration at KCARC 1972 on Saturday, May 9, from 4:30-6:30. Families of each of our students were invited to attend as well as their individual mentor and prayer partner. Fun was utilized, with basketball courts, three bounce house activities, rock wall climbing and various ball games and video games. Pizza, cookies, chips and drink was served to all participants attending.

Our program included: 6 Riley students along with 6 mentors and prayer partners from St. John's. Appreciation is extended to Larry and Betsy Marchino, Jill Lopez and Pastor Debbie Jo. Linda Gilbert and Jerri Johanningsmeier, Eric Meyer and Janet Goodman, Brett Summers and Pam Summers, Cheryl Meyer and Brenda Cummings.

**HAVE A SAFE AND RESTFUL SUMMER,
WE WILL SEE YOU IN THE FALL.**

Please be sure to pick up a tax exempt form from the office when making a purchase for the church.

THANK YOU to all who planned and implemented the joyous recognition and farewell celebration for Becky and DeEtta on May 17!!! And THANK YOU, Becky and DeEtta, for almost one hundred years you two contributed to the St. John's music ministry. What memories we can share with future generations as they "make a joyful noise"!

Words cannot express all that I want to say to all of our members and friends at St. John's. Sunday was a wonderful and joyful day for so many of us. Thank you for many wonderful years. Also, a big thank you for the monetary gift. It is much appreciated.

In God's Service Becky

BLOCK PARTY

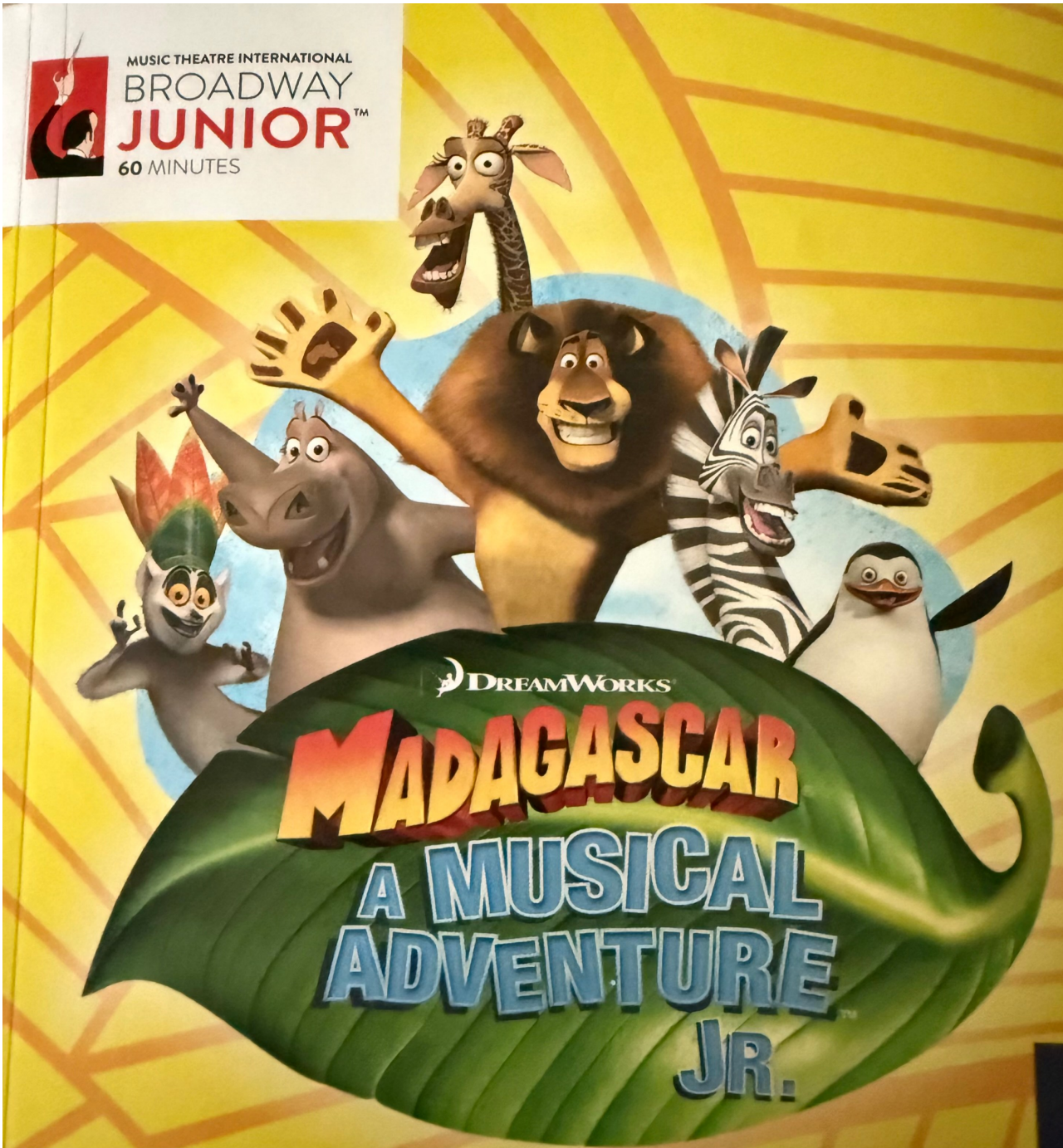
Our St. John's United Church of Christ annual B:OCK PARTY was held on Sunday, April 26, in the church parking lot from 4:00-6:00 p.m. The weather provided an exceptional atmosphere for a successful, and satisfying evening of peace and joyful hearts. Larry Marchino's band "Wood and Wire" provided an ongoing background of musical numbers that set a tranquil and soothing evening highlight. Mark Schutz, Steve Cooper, Brayton Cummins and Dave Culp kept the grilled hamburgers and hot dogs ready for eating served with chips, lemonade, and ice cream sandwiches for evening delights. A bounce house, corn hole, tattoos, rat game, photo booth, raffle baskets, our playground and more provided an extended choice for entertainment activities.

Pastor Debbie Jo passed out church literature to our newcomers and welcomed each with enthusiasm. Multiple members helped set up and monitored game and refreshment booths. Approximately 100 ± were in attendance. Just a great and wonderful fellowship time together, and a blessing for all who attended. Thanks to all who provided their time and /or talent for the evening.

NEED HELP WITH HOUSECLEANING? Hannah Lewis, our new custodian and Preschool Assistant is looking for homes to clean whether on a one-time or Regular basis. You can reach her at 812-910-9137 if you are interested.

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Several young people you will likely find familiar from our church family ties will be busy in June! Included in the Vincennes Community Schools' elementary musical theatre camp will be EJ and Rose Jones, Avery Sanders, Cora Schlag, Elliott and Elyse Schotter, and Amelia Schutz. The grand finale of the week-long camp will be the approximately one hour performance at 6:00 pm on Friday, June 26, 2026, of "Madagascar: A Musical Adventure Jr." Audience members will be welcome for that performance at Lincoln High School's Ader Auditorium.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALLING ALL CONFIRMANDS: If you have a young person entering 7th or 8th grade (or above) who is ready for Confirmation, please contact Pastor Debbie Jo ASAP. We would like to get the class organized and some of the requirements completed over the summer. Regular classes will begin in the fall with Confirmation taking place on May 2, 2027.

UNITED STATES OF KINDNESS is a movement to complete 250 acts of kindness in celebration of the 250th birthday of the United States. We encourage everyone to perform one act of kindness per day for the rest of the year.

JUNE MOVIE NIGHT is June 14th featuring *Remarkable Bright Creatures* starring Sally Field and Alfred Molina. *Each night at the Sowell Bay Aquarium, 70-year-old custodian Tova Sullivan quietly tends to her routine work. She's recently bonded with the giant Pacific octopus, Marcellus, despite the language (and species) barriers between them.* A light supper will be served and everyone is invited.

GALAXY: Launching Kids on a Mission of God's Love VBS will take place on June 29-July 2 from 5:30-7:00 each night for those entering Kindergarten-6th Grade. Grades 7-12 will assist with the rotations. A light supper will be served and following our Opening Music & More, students will move through various centers featuring Out-of-this-World Bible Adventures, Projects with a Purpose, and Have-a-Blast Games before the evening ends with our Mission Send-Off. Pastor will lead a Bible Study for adults during the event so watch for more announcements and details in the Sunday bulletin. Help post flyers and plan on attending!

RAINBOW OVER THE BRIDGE: As part of PRIDE month, we will be hosting a booth at Rainbow Over the Wabash on Saturday, June 13th. We will be handing out rainbow bracelets and buttons and providing free PRIDE temporary tattoos, as well as providing information on our church and outreach missions. The event is from 4:00-9:00 p.m. so please sign up for a shift or to help set-up/clean-up.

PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT UPDATE: To date, we have doubled our enrollment for next year and currently have 17 students registered. We continue to add more students and hope to have another 9-10 before the new school year begins in August. Share a flyer with someone you know who has 3 or 4 years old children.

NOTICE IS GIVEN OF A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING following worship on June 14th for two items of business: 1. To decide which Association of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference to covenant with now that the Wabash Valley Association has been dissolved and 2. Hear an update on Preschool Enrollment and possible shortfall for the 2026-27 academic year. More details will be sent to each member in the coming week as part of our two-week notification of a called meeting.

CHURCH PARADE FLOAT: Will and the youth will be developing a float for the July 4th city parade promoting our various missions to the community. It will be built on July 2nd & 3rd if you would like to help. Please see Will for details.

DINNER & CONVERSATION: Everyone is invited to join us on Thursday evenings at 6:00 for *Dinner & Conversation*. Each week we visit a different restaurant and enjoy an evening of food and conversation. It's a great way to get to know our fellow church members better. A reservation sheet is in the back of the sanctuary each week or you can call the church office. We'd love to see you there. Our schedule is as follows:

June 04	Dragon 2000	June 11	Coco's
June 18	Carriage Inn	June 25	Bobé's Washington
July 02	Ponderosa	July 09	Cowtown
July 16	Kelso's	July 23	Off the Square
July 30	Café Moonlight	Aug 06	Hobb House
Aug 13	American Table	Aug 20	El Corral
Aug 27	Procopio's	Sept 03	Log Inn

NEW MEMBERS will be welcomed into full church membership in late June or early July. If you would like to formally unite with the congregation, please see Pastor Debbie Jo.

FATHER'S DAY will be celebrated in worship on June 21st. Invite your fathers, grandfather's, uncles, and anyone who has been like a father to you so they may be recognized.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ. We will collect the offering on June 7th.

TAX-WISE WAY TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH from Mackenzie B. Jones, CPA: If you are age 70.5 years or older, you can give directly from your IRA to our church through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). This type of gift can count toward your required minimum distribution (RMD) and may help reduce your taxable income. It's a simple and tax-efficient way to support the ministry you care about. Please consult your financial advisor or IRA custodian to learn how to make a QCD.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Church Board is calling a Congregational Meeting June 14, 2026 immediately after the morning Church Service. Two items are on the agenda.

- The Wabash Valley Association has dissolved. St. Johns needs to decide which association we will join. They are Lincoln Land (by Jasper) or Evansville Tri-State. The Church Board supports Evansville Tri-State. We want congregation vote.
- Preschool is anticipating a shortfall of funds for the 26-27 school year. Registration is still in progress. Shortfall lessens with each registration. At this time shortfall is \$17,500 over the academic year for salaries. The shortfall would be divided over 2 church board budget years.

Other Factors:

___ Congregation members that support Preschool program could gift funds

___ A fund raiser to be held

___ Church Board ask for support of shortfall for the 26-27 Preschool Year

Thank you for your review of these upcoming issues. Sandra Lange, President

June 2026 Birthdays

Norma Meyer
Eric Meyer
Will Meyer
Jeremy Coomes
Jake Alexander
Grady Cummins
Gary Meyer
Jonathan Lange
Terry Goodman
Bill Lathrop

Anniversaries

Jonathan & Chrissy Lange
Terry & Janet Goodman
Brian & Brenda Fillingim

Dinner & Conversation



Everyone is invited to join us on Thursday evenings at 6:00 pm. Each week we visit a different restaurant and enjoy an evening of food and conversation. It's a great way to get to know our fellow church members better. A reservation sheet is in the back of the sanctuary weekly or you can call the church office to add your name. The schedule is as follows:

June 04th.	Coco's
June 11th.	Dragon 2000
June 18th.	Carriage Inn
June 25th.	Bob's Washington

Church Board Highlights

The Church Board met for their regular monthly meeting April 20, 2026. Below are a few highlights.

Complete minutes are available from Church Office after they are approved.

Treasurer reported preschool short only \$185.04 last month after donations.

A substitute pianist has been found to help us with worship music while our search continues. She is Patricia Swartz.

Christian Education Committee recommended scholarship money for the two high school seniors.

Approval was made for Outreach request: OCWM \$2000; CUE \$500; OGHS \$210; Christmas Fund \$200; Neighbors in Need \$200; Strength the Church \$200; LAM \$500; Friend of Special Athletes \$500; Keta \$500; Keta \$500; Salvation Army \$500; Phoebe's \$500;

Graduation for Preschool May 21st. Fees for next year Caterpillar \$135 and Butterflies \$215 per month.

Donation to church to purchase matching service ware for the kitchen. Board approved purchase with funds.

Full minutes will be available after the approval at the next board meeting. All meetings prior to May 20th are available in the church office.



2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Babe Store 12-5:30pm Evang/Mem. Mtg. @ 5:30pm	2	3	4 Dinner & Conversation - Dragpm 2000 @ 6pm	5 Pastor's Day Off Phoebe's Mission 4:30-6:30pm	6 Ellen Riggs Funeral Service in Chicago
7 Adult SS Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Strength in Church	8 Babe Store 12-5:30pm	9 Visioning @ 5:30pm	10 Christian Education Mtg. @ 6pm	11 Tech. Mtg @ 10am Out./Bene.@ 11am Dinner & Conversation - Coco's @ 6pm	12 Pastor's Day Off	13 Rainbow over the Bridge from 3—9 pm
14 Adult SS Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Congregational Mtg. Movie @ 5pm Remarkable Bright Creatures	15 Babe Store 12-5:30pm Worship Com.@ 5pm Board Meeting @ 6pm	16	17	18 Dinner & Conversation - Carriage Inn @ 6pm	19 Pastor's Day Off Office Closed	20
21 Adult SS Class 9:30 am Fellowship 10am Worship 10:30 am Father's Day	22 Babe Store 12-5:30pm	23	24 Laundry Love 6-8pm	25 Dinner & Conversation - Bobe's in Washington @ 6pm	26 Pastor's Day Off	27
28 Adult SS Class 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am	29 Babe Store 12-5:30pm Bible School 6/29 -7/2 from 5:30—7pm	30				