



LCMS Stewardship Ministry

What Do You Want?

Originally published June 2023

One of the best-known and most-beloved psalms is Psalm 23, the “Shepherd Psalm.” There we learn that the Lord is our Shepherd. And since He is our Shepherd, we will not want. We will not suffer want because the Lord, our Shepherd, will lead us to green pastures and beside still waters. In other words, the Lord, our Shepherd, will provide for all that we need in both body and soul.

Yet, we live as though this is not the case. We live as though we actually suffer from want, that the Lord, our Shepherd, will not provide for all that we need. And thus, we live as though the Lord is not our Shepherd. And that means that we live as though we are not the Lord’s sheep.

When do we live as though the Lord is not our Shepherd? When we put anything else before Him and His provision for us. When we think that going to work is more important than receiving His gifts in church on Sunday (in violation of the First and Third Commandments). When we fail to give generously of the first fruits of what the Lord has provided for us because we don’t know what the future will bring (even though He has promised that He will lead us to green pastures and still waters).

We live as though we are not the Lord’s sheep when we think that the Lord is only in the business of helping those who will help themselves. We act this way because our minds are set on earthly, temporal things and not on heavenly, eternal things. We act this way because we have stopped hearing the call of our Shepherd, which comes through His Word.

Through the Word of God, the Shepherd calls us to Himself. Through the Word, the Holy Spirit gathers and enlightens us with His gifts. Through the Word, we are kept holy and nourished in the one true faith, the faith that follows our Shepherd wherever He leads us. He promises to lead us to our true home, to the land flowing with milk and honey, to a better country, not of this world, but a heavenly one.

And so, here’s the Good News: the Lord is your Shepherd, even and especially for wayward sheep. For Jesus seeks and saves those who are lost. He finds the lost sheep and carries them back to the fold. He is the Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. The Lord is your Shepherd. Let us live as His sheep.

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On “Hamlet”: What It Means “To Be”

A literary reflection by Mary Henrichs
on William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

This is one installment of a [monthly series](#) providing reflections on works of literature from a Lutheran perspective.

“To be, or not to be —”

You can finish the sentence. It's Shakespeare's most famous line, and possibly the most quoted in all literature.^[1]

Hidden in those words, Shakespeare captures something fundamental to our language: There is no unique word for the pure opposite of “to be.” You have to slap a “not” in front of “to be” in order to achieve anything close to “not being.” All possible synonyms for “not to be” — to die, to stop, to cease, to perish, to disappear — imply an initial state of being from which one departs. You cannot die without first living, you cannot stop without first starting, and so on. “Not being,” then, and the contemplation thereof, is only possible from the perspective and language of “being.” Existence is necessary to contemplate non-existence.

Tom Stoppard exposes the difficulty of imagining “not being” in his 1967 play about Hamlet's friends, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*. Try as he might to comprehend death as an utter lack of existence, Rosencrantz cannot capture an image that expresses “not being”:

Do you ever think of yourself as actually dead, lying in a box with a lid on it? ... I mean one thinks of it like being alive in a box, one keeps forgetting to take into account the fact that one is dead ... which should make all the difference ... shouldn't it? I mean, you'd never know you were in a box, would you?^[2]

Rosencrantz later continues his impossible quest to comprehend “not being,” asking Guildenstern: “Do you think death could possibly be a boat?”

Guildenstern brushes him off: “No, no, no ... Death is ... not. Death isn't. You take my meaning. Death is the ultimate negative. Not-being. You can't not-be on a boat.”^[3]

You can't not-be on a boat, or in a box — not with a fox, not in a house and certainly not with a mouse, since being “on,” “in,” or “with” something inherently implies a state of being, of existence.

Even Hamlet, who first spoke the famous line, is repeatedly reminded throughout Shakespeare's play

ON "HAMLET": WHAT IT MEANS "TO BE" continued

that "being" continues, even after death. He is visited by the ghost of his father, whose spirit continues to exist despite separation from the body. He holds in his hands the skull of a former friend, Yorick the jester, palpably witnessing that Yorick's decaying body continues "to be" despite separation from the soul. This evidence pointing to the continued existence of body and soul after death ought to show Hamlet a flaw in his "not being" proposal. Even after death, being continues. Soul and body may be temporarily separated, but they do not cease to be.

In fact, for us beings created by the "I AM," there has never been a time when we have not been known by our Creator — He knew us intimately, even before we were born: "Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in Your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them" (Ex. 3:14; Psalm 139:16). We existed to our omniscient Creator long before we drew our first breath.

Likewise, we confess that after death, though our bodies return to dust, our souls will be with Christ in Paradise until the Last Day, when we are resurrected in our glorified bodies (Gen. 3:19; Luke 23:43; 1 Cor. 15:51–53).

Thus, Hamlet's question offers a false choice: "Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's," writes Paul (Rom. 14:8). In both life and death, we abide in and are upheld by the eternal "I AM." There is, therefore, no "not to be."

"Let be."

If there is no "not to be," can we take a lesson from Hamlet in being?

In act five, Hamlet offers an answer to his famous question, landing on the side of "to be." When Horatio advises Hamlet to postpone an ominous fencing match, Hamlet answers: "There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come. The readiness is all. ... Let be."^[4]

Although some interpret this speech as Hamlet giving in to fatalism, his actions in the following scene are not those of a man who has given up: he asks forgiveness of Laertes, fights with all his might and exposes the treachery of his uncle, taking the action which he had long postponed.

Hamlet's "let be" demonstrates a newfound trust in the Lord. Up to this point in the play, Hamlet has questioned the idea of an omnipotent, loving God. In his first soliloquy he refers to the world as "an unweeded garden / that grows to seed," implying a kind of deistic faith, which holds that the Creator has abandoned His creation to rot — winding up the watch only to stand idly by as it breaks down.^[5]

By confessing God's hand even in the fall of the sparrow, though, Hamlet attests to the truth that the Lord is actively at work in the world, caring for the greatest down to the least of creatures: "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" (Matt. 6:26).

Earlier in the play, Hamlet might have been scandalized at the idea of taking a lesson from a bird, enamored as he is with the "infinite" faculty of man.^[6] Yet, Jesus commends the simple bird as an example in the Sermon on the Mount, and as Hamlet nears the end of his "mortal coil,"^[7] he implicitly takes a lesson from the sparrow on what it means "to be."

ON "HAMLET": WHAT IT MEANS "TO BE" continued**"The rest is silence."**

Hamlet's dying words often come as a relief to audiences (and actors!). Finally, the character who speaks almost 40% of the play's 4,000 lines can stop talking. Hamlet, ever occupied with worry, doubt and anxiety, has a problem keeping his "godlike reason"[8] (or, rather, "words, words, words")[9] to himself. His thoughts shoot out of him like a firehose until he mercifully pronounces: "The rest is silence." [10]

A popular interpretation of this line is that Hamlet is confirming the absence of existence after death — he is looking into the afterlife and announcing that the rest is nothing but silence, nothingness, non-existence.

For Søren Kierkegaard, a real-life Danish philosopher, silence is the first lesson offered by the birds (and lilies). And silence may be the lesson that Hamlet, falling sparrow that he is, finally learns at death's door. "Make yourself nothing, become nothing before God, learn to keep silent," writes Kierkegaard. "As the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, so is silence the beginning of the fear of God." [11]

Silence, he writes, "expresses respect for God," [12] and when we go to meet our Maker, in one sense we will certainly be silent: Any attempt at self-justification utterly melts away before His righteousness. Our sinfulness leaves us at a loss for words, and our small pile of good works do not have the power to cover our mountain of sin.

Thanks be to God that one Traveller did return from "the undiscovered country" [13] of death: Jesus triumphed over sin and the grave and, having taken all our sin upon Himself, He does not keep silent but "indeed is interceding for us" to the Father (Rom. 8:34).

"Flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

Silence, Kierkegaard suggests, is a first step towards obedience, but it is not the end point. And Horatio does not let Hamlet's "silence" be the last word, either, responding to him with a direct contradiction: "Flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!" [14]

As a starting point, silence allows us to recognize the presence of God: "Out there with the lily and the bird you perceive that you are before God, which most often is quite entirely forgotten in talking and conversing with other people." [15]

How easily are we caught up by the cares of this world, which make us forget who we *are*! We *are* God's beloved, baptized people. He has chosen us, called us by name and made us His precious children through our Baptism.

Being a child of God is not something we *do* — *being* a child of God is a free gift, given to us in Baptism. We aren't children of God because we "seem" holy due to any outward piety or other "actions that a man might play." We have "that within which passeth show" — we have "it is." [16] We *are* beloved sons and daughters of our heavenly Father through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

After silence, Kierkegaard explains, the sparrow teaches obedience and, ultimately, joy, which he defines

ON “HAMLET”: WHAT IT MEANS “TO BE” continued

as being “present to oneself.”^[17] Being present to oneself, for a Christian, is simply remembering who we *are* — created, sustained and redeemed children of God. We cannot remember who we are without remembering *who He is*.

As fallen sinners, we often forget who He is, forgetting ourselves in the process. We need constant reminding of His glorious deeds on the cross — we need to constantly return to the Lord, finding Him where He promises to be found: in His Word and Sacraments. When we receive these gifts, we richly participate on earth in our true life, which is “hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). This true life, true being, cannot be found apart from Him.

Our rest, the Bible assures us, will not be silence. We will join with the “flights of angels” Horatio mentions, singing the praises, not of Hamlet, but of the Lord. We will *be* for all eternity as He means us to be.

[1] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 3.1.55.

[2] Tom Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (New York: Grove Press, [1967] 2017), 64.

[3] Stoppard, *Rosencrantz*, 100.

[4] *Hamlet*, 5.2.197–202.

[5] *Hamlet*, 1.2.135–136.

[6] *Hamlet*, 2.2.270.

[7] *Hamlet*, 3.1.66.

[8] *Hamlet*, 4.4.37.

[9] *Hamlet*, 2.2.189.

[10] *Hamlet*, 5.2.342.

[11] Søren Kierkegaard, *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air: Three Godly Discourses*, trans. Bruce H. Kirmmse (Princeton: Princeton University Press, [1849] 2016), 21–22).

[12] Kierkegaard, *Lily*, 26.

[13] *Hamlet*, 3.1.78–9.

[14] *Hamlet*, 5.2.344.

[15] Kierkegaard, 26.

[16] *Hamlet*, 1.2.76–86.

[17] Kierkegaard, 43.

Cover image: “Ghost and Hamlet,” by Johann Heinrich Ramberg, 1829.

About The Author

Mary Henrichs

Mary Henrichs is a staff writer/editor for LCMS Communications.

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LUTHERANS
FOR LIFE

Life Quotes for June

June 7 “Remember that our Savior was born into a human household ... He is our Friend, our Brother, He will help us in our time of need, especially when we seek Him out in God’s Word and fervently in prayer. As you relate to others in your home, ask God’s Holy Spirit to give you wisdom in difficult situations, mercy in abundance when forgiveness is needed, and love to cover all your family’s interactions.” *Rev. Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, former speaker of “The Lutheran Hour” – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

June 14 “It is important for each of us that we not forget how our country came to be an independent nation. It’s even more important that we individually remember how dependent we are upon God’s provision, protection, and blessing for those liberties we daily enjoy and use. Take the time to turn to the Lord with a thankful heart. Pray also for the willingness to share in the responsibilities and duties that belong to you as a citizen of the United States of America.” *Daily Devotions, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Sister Lakes, Michigan – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

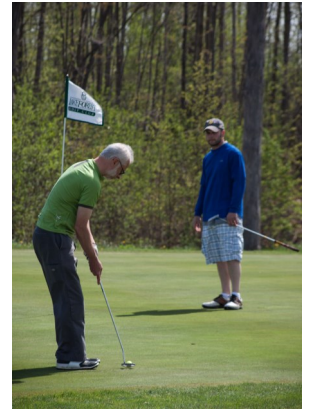
June 21 “Committed, present, and selfless fathers are the antidote to the culture that has embraced abortion. If we want to end abortion and restore a culture of life, then we need men to embrace fatherhood. We need to take on the great mission, the life-long quest of courage, servitude, and faith. So, let’s cheer on fathers for the amazing work they do. They’re shaping the future, one day at a time, with God’s love as their guide.” *Jeff Gunnarson, Campaign Life Coalition – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

June 28 “God always makes life, and He always makes life worth it. The Good Giver of Life also accompanies each one as the Almighty Lord of ‘my power is made perfect in weakness’ (2 Corinthians 12:9). The crucifixion forgiveness of Jesus Christ proves that He constantly populates the adversities themselves with delights.” *Rev. Michael Salemink, former Executive Director of Lutherans For Life – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

Announcements

Our Shepherd Annual Golf Outing

The annual golf outing fundraiser is scheduled for Saturday, June 13, 2026. Registration forms and information should be available at your church, at the school and on the school website - www.oslpainesville.org, if you would like to golf in the event. If you are not a golfer we invite congregation members to be a sponsor or make any monetary donation to offset the cost of outing. This is the only major fundraiser of the year for Our Shepherd. We are raising money for a new student chromebooks and computers. We thank you for your prayers and support. For questions or more information email jdrake@oslpainesville.org.



LWML Northeast Zone Fall Retreat

“Smile Across the Miles”



This the theme of the 3rd LWML Northeast Zone Retreat. All ladies are invited to join us at Jordan Creek Metropark, Concord. Check the Friendship Circle board for the retreat poster and information. Registration blanks for this fun-filled, Christ-centered event are located on the Friendship Circle table. Cost is \$25.00/person which includes breakfast, snack and a light lunch. Registration and payment deadline is September 19th. For further information go to the Northeast Zone > Upcoming Events page at <https://www.lwmlohio.org/>

Lutheran Women's Quarterly

The Summer 2026 edition of the Lutheran Women's Quarterly is now available and can be found on the Friendship Circle table and the table at the back of the sanctuary.



Old-Fashioned Church Potluck

Put this date to your calendar for an old-fashioned potluck lunch. Reach out and bring a friend to the Sunday service and a dish to share at the potluck lunch after the service on July 26. Hope to see you and your friend there.

– Outreach Committee

"GIVE IT UP" FUNDRAISER

What if a small sacrifice could make a big difference?

WELL IT CAN! Instead of buying a cup of coffee or going out to dinner once a week, we invite you to "Give It Up" for the summer. Choose one small luxury you can live without, and donate that amount to help support ST. PAUL'S SHORTFALL BUDGET. It's a simple commitment—but together, these small choices can make a meaningful impact. If you would like to take part, grab a cup and fill it up! Please return it to the collection box marked "Give It Up" Fundraiser when done. Thank you!



June Food Bank Items

Zion Food Pantry is requesting, Gravy packets (cans or jars); Spaghetti sauce and cereal for kids (prefer no oats or bran if possible) As always other items are appreciated. For those in need, the Food Bank is open on the last two Tuesdays of the June from 5:30—7:00pm. (June 17 & 24).

Local Farmers Markets

It's that time again for fresh fruits and vegetables. Check out one or all for these local farmers markets!

Painesville

Date: Thursdays, May 28 – September 17

Time: 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Location: Painesville Square near Main Street

Madison Village

Date: Thursdays, June 4 - August 27

Time: 5 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Location: Village Square Park, 60 Park Street



Mentor

Date: Fridays, June 12 - September 11

Time: 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Location: Eleanor B. Garfield Park

Willoughby

Date: Saturdays, May 2- October 24

Time: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Location: Parking lot of Willoughby City Hall
1 Public Square, Downtown Willoughby



May Meeting Minutes

Reports

1. President's Report. (Terry Wakelee)
 - a. Total average attendance is 78 per weekend.
 - b. Call committee received new list of candidates. Met to review the candidates; will contact several.
 - c. Parsonage updates completed apart from final cleaning and some outdoor tasks.
 2. Vice President's Report. (Ed Hines)
 - a. \$1400 estimate received for carpet cleaning. Scheduled for the week of August 10.
 3. Treasurer's Report. (Russ Walton)
 - a. Report provided as of March 31, 2026. Cash balance is high. Compared to last year, offerings are down and expenses are similar.
 4. Education Report. (Eric Drake)
 - a. Sunday School and Adult Bible study attendance is averaging 6-7 per week.
 - b. Summer Bible study plans to be determined.
 5. Preschool Report. (Starshine Graziadei)
 - a. Registration for 2026-2027 is currently 34
 - b. Jenn made a motion to approve the letter proposed by the preschool board placing an employee on leave. 2nd by Tom. Discussion. Revised motion to include the specific ODJFS rule in the letter. Motion passed.
 6. Elder's Report. (Dale Kerver)
 - a. Elders will make a recommendation about Saturday service at the annual meeting in May.
 7. Stewardship Report. (Diane Wayner)
 - a. Proposed an idea to encourage offerings over summer. Details to follow.
 8. Financial Secretary's Report. (Jenn Drake)
 - a. Continuing to look for an additional lead counter
 9. Outreach Report. (Kelly Hines)
 - a. Upcoming events and opportunities to serve:
 - i. Mom's Night (May 7 and 11)
 - ii. St. Paul's Church and Preschool Open House- August 8
 - iii. September Chili Cook-off- OUTDOORS (date TBD - possibly Sept. 26)
 - iv. Trunk-or-Treat, October 24
 10. Building & Grounds Report. (Dennis Concoby) – see report
 - a. Spectrum internet went down. Modem was replaced and issue was resolved.
 - b. Windows & Weeding spring clean-up scheduled for Saturday, May 23.
-

MAY MEETING MINUTES continued

- c. Seal Tech Coating will return to re-apply seal coat and re-stripe areas that have washed off
 - d. Several shingles have blown off the steep sanctuary roof. Requests for quotes are out to three contractors.
 - e. Motion: Jenn made a motion to have roof repaired up to \$1500. 2nd by Dale. Motion passed.
11. Contribution Secretary's Report. (Tom Cardina)

Old Business

1. Potential candidate for the preschool treasurer (appointed)
2. Parsonage fence repairs. On hold.
3. Call Committee update. See president's report.
4. Replacement of church office computer
5. Thrivent Choice dollars for preschool. Pending finalization of application.
6. Research alternative method of setting up church credit card. Terry will look into it.
7. Congregation member gospel recording project

New Business

1. Annual congregational meeting on Sunday, May 17

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 3, 2026 at 6:30 pm



From the Preschool

PRESCHOOL



Registration

2026-2027 Preschool Registration

Registration for St. Paul's Preschool 2026-2027 school year is now open. Registration forms which are located at the back of the sanctuary next to the double doors. Classes will be filled as registration forms are received. If you have any questions please contact Mrs. Marizek at 440-354-3000. If you know someone who has a preschool aged child please pass a registration form on to them.

June Birthdays

Gretchen Tracy	Jun 1	Nichole Wilhelm	Jun 9
Michelle Szoradi	Jun 1	Becky Franz	Jun 12
Pamela West	Jun 5	Jack Lelle	Jun 13
Joe Graziadei	Jun 7	Karen Krueger	Jun 16
Tom Cardina	Jun 8	Owen Cardina	Jun 22
Jerry Ladany	Jun 8	June Hellwig	Jun 24



June Anniversaries

Russ and Roxanne Walton	32 years on Jun 04
Carl and JoEllen Graziadei	46 years on Jun 14
Keith and Karen Krueger	45 years on Jun 20
Tom and Erin Cardina	26 years on Jun 24

Altar Flowers



A great way to remember any occasion is with Altar Flowers. The Altar Flower Chart is located on the double doors at the back of the Sanctuary. Just sign up next to the appropriate weekend. Clearly print the occasion being remembered, who the flowers are for and who they're from. Altar flowers are \$40.00. Please place the monies in an envelope labeled "Altar Flowers" with the date of the weekend and put it in the collection plate.



Those Who Serve: June 2026

ELDERS:

6:00 P Saturday Dale Kerver
9:30 A Sunday Rich Szoradi

COUNTERS:

Terry Wakelee

LECTORS:

06-06-26	6:00 P	Saturday	Dale Kerver
06-07-26	9:30 A	Sunday	Craig McConnell
06-13-26	6:00 P	Saturday	Dave Murphy
06-14-26	9:30 A	Sunday	Jack Lelle
06-20-26	6:00 P	Saturday	Dale Kerver
06-21-26	9:30 A	Sunday	Terry Wakelee
26-27-26	6:00 P	Saturday	Dave Murphy
06-28-26	9:30 A	Sunday	Dennis Concoby



Scripture Readings for June

June 6/7

Hosea 5:15-6:6
Romans 4:13-25
Matthew 9:9-13

June 13/14

Exodus 19:2-8
Romans 5:6-15
Matthew 9:35-10:10

June 20/21

Jeremiah 20:7-13
Romans 6:12-23
Matthew 10:5a, 21-33

June 27/28

Jeremiah 28:5-9
Romans 7:1-13
Matthew 10:34-42



June Word Search-Animals of Ohio

I	P	R	A	I	R	I	E	V	O	L	E	M	R
F	L	O	W	N	R	E	T	S	A	E	G	O	L
C	A	N	A	D	I	A	N	L	Y	N	X	R	E
L	S	H	R	E	W	X	A	T	R	R	L	B	R
E	C	O	T	T	O	N	T	A	I	L	N	L	R
G	R	E	Y	F	O	X	E	V	B	T	E	A	I
B	O	N	D	T	N	N	E	O	E	E	T	C	U
E	I	E	V	O	I	R	B	Y	O	C	R	K	Q
A	R	O	O	M	O	C	B	I	R	R	A	B	S
V	N	C	R	T	A	E	K	N	I	M	M	E	Y
E	A	E	T	T	M	U	S	K	R	A	T	A	E
R	R	E	D	S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L	R	R
E	R	R	P	O	R	C	U	P	I	N	E	E	G
F	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	R	E	D	B	A	T

- PRAIRIE VOLE
- RED FOX
- ERMINE
- GREY FOX
- EASTERN WOLF
- EASTERN RED BAT
- MINK
- BLACK BEAR
- CANADIAN LYNX
- PORCUPINE
- MARTEN
- MUSKRAT
- GREY SQUIRREL
- RED SQUIRREL
- COTTONTAIL
- RIVER OTTER
- SHREW
- RACCOON
- BOBCAT
- BEAVER

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/9683061/>

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"I was glad when they said to me 'Let us go to the house of the Lord'" Psalm 122:1

Staff

Matt Chaffe, Organist
Peggy McDonnell, Admin Assistant

Worship Services

Saturday 6:00pm
Sunday 9:30am

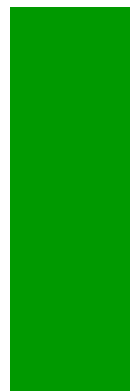
Sunday Bible Study

Adult 8:30am and 10:45am
Children 10:45am

St. Paul's Preschool

Amy Marizek, Director
preschool@splcpainesville.org
www.stpaulspainesville.com

Also Supporting



June 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
<p>Office Hours Monday-Friday 9:00am-12:00pm</p> <p>June Birthstone Alexandrite, Pearl, & Moonstone</p>	1 Global Parents Day	2	3 6:30 pm Council Meeting	4 National Cheese Day	5 World Environment Day	6  D-Day Anniversayr	
7  10:45 am Call Meeting National Chocolate Ice Cream Day	8 National Best Friends Day World Oceans Day	9	10 6:30 pm Elder's Meeting	11	12	13 	
14  National Blood Donor Day	15 World Elder Abuse Awareness Day	16	17 National Mascot Day	18 International Picnic Day	19  July Newsletter Articles and Announcements Due	20	
21  first day of SUMMER!	22	23	24	25 National Handshake Day	26 Take Your Dog to Work Day	27 PTSD Awareness Day	
28	29 National Camera Day	30 International Asteroid Day	 COMMUNION SERVICE			<p>WORSHIP SCHEDULE</p> <p>Saturdays - 6:00pm Sundays - 9:30am Sunday School - 10:45am Adult Bible Study—8:30am & 10:45am</p>	<p>Bulletin Announcements Due Wednesdays</p> <p>June Flower Rose</p>