



# PRESBYTERIAN NEWS

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

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*“For you were called to freedom brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” Galatians 5:13-14*

When is life the best?

I want to encourage each of us to take some time to reflect on that question. As we think about our lives, when is life its best? What is going on when our lives are at their best? What are we doing (or not doing) when our lives are at their best? I think this is an important question as we seek to follow the way of Jesus both as individuals and as a church.

Once we have some thoughts about when life is at its best, then I would encourage us to consider how that understanding relates to our culture. Do the ideas our culture propagates match up with our life experience?

I would like to suggest that life is at its best when we love God and love neighbor. What do you think of that idea? How does that idea match up with your life experience?

Through Scripture there is an interesting tension: the tug between freedom and following God’s commandments. Theologically we call freedom, “Free Will”. God created us with “Free Will”. That was an essential aspect of creation because it makes us different from the rest of creation. As humans we have the ability to make decisions based on something other than instinct. Thus “Free Will” gives us the freedom to choose how we live our lives each day.

As we begin to unpack the reality of “Free Will” we quickly realize that with out “Free Will” there is not love, because love must be freely chosen. Love that is not freely chosen is not love it is something else. Thus God created us with “Free Will” so that we

have the freedom to choose to love God and neighbor something we could not do if we did not have “Free Will”.

As we enter these summer months, I would encourage us to take some intentional time to consider how we use our God given freedom. Do we use our God given freedom for self-indulgence or do we use our freedom to love God and neighbor? As Paul says, “become slaves to one another”. That truly describes the radical nature of following Jesus, choosing to use our freedom to become slaves. Wow! I am glad we have the summer to chew on that truth.

When is life the best? Could it be that life is the best when we freely choose to become slaves of one another in love? What do you think? What has been your experience? What does your heart tell you?

In Christ’s Service – Pastor Abbott

## Exciting Upcoming Events

**All Church Retreat:** Mark your calendars now for September 18 & 19. We are excited that the all church retreat is returning. We will have two wonderful days at the Van Buren Youth Camp. We hope you will come for all or part of the retreat. A part of our experience will be worshiping at the camp on Sunday morning. We will have a car pool from the church. See you there!

**Pastoral Resident:** We are excited to announce that we will again have the privilege of hosting a pastoral resident in conjunction with the Presbyterian Churches of Schoolcraft and Benton Harbor. Our Pastoral Resident this year will be Jason Mariano and he will primarily be in Paw Paw during the months of November and December. Jason just graduated from Western Theological Seminary. He is married with two daughters 5 and 2. We look forward to Jason’s time with us.

**Interested in Learning about Church Membership?** This fall we plan to have a new member’s class. If you find yourself interested please give Pastor Tom a call at 657-3111.

## Adult Small Groups

**Monday Night Study:** The Monday night study continues at 7:00 p.m. in the Library. We will meet on June 7 & 14 and July 12, 19, & 26. Come and join us as we look ahead to the Scripture passages for the upcoming Sunday morning.

**Attention Men:** Men's breakfast will take place on Saturday, **June 26 & July 24**, at 8:00 a.m. In June wear your paint clothes. Each month we share a wonderful meal, spend some time reflecting on God's Word (presently we are studying 2 Corinthians), and sometimes we do a bit of work around the church or in the community. We would love to have you join us.

## Worship Opportunities

**Sunday Worship Times:** Through June and July we have one worship service at 10:00 a.m.

**Sacrament of Communion:** We will celebrate communion on Sunday, June 6<sup>th</sup> & July 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Sacrament of Baptism:** We will be celebrating the baptism of Madison Leigh Imus on Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Super Senior Sunday:** Come and celebrate as we recognize those faithful people who have been serving Christ through this part of the church for at least the last 50 years. On Sunday, June 6<sup>th</sup> we will recognize our 50 year members. Don't miss the fun.

**Invite a Friend:** One of the ways we can be a beacon in our community is by simply inviting people to join us in worship. People's spirits are thirsty. Let us invite them to the well that never runs dry. Make sure to offer to pick them up.

**Parking on Sundays:** If you don't mind walking a bit, we would encourage folks to park on the street leaving the parking lot for folks who have a hard time walking, visitors, and parents with a car full of kids.

## Meetings

**Commission Meetings:** Please check with your chairperson for meeting times through June and July.

**Session & Deacon Meetings:** In June, on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Wendy Mickle will host the deacons at her house and Andy Thorburn will host the elders at his house. Please talk to either Wendy or Andy. In July we will gather for worship on the 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. with elder/deacon meetings starting at 8:00 p.m.

## Fellowship

**Regular Potluck:** June 9<sup>th</sup> and July 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Invite a friend and bring some food to share and your own table service.

## Decatur Homeless Shelter Update

The children are enjoying the swing set that was transported from Grand Rapids and assembled at the shelter. Many thanks for those who participated in that work!!!

We are currently in the process of repainting the ramp and will then take on another porch and staining the swing set. Anyone interested in joining us for this work, please call Tom Shoemaker or Judy Thorburn...624-6901...We need your help!

Mission Commission

Letter from Alma scholarship recipient

Dear First Presbyterian Congregation,

Thank you so much for your continued support of my academic endeavors. The First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw Endowed Scholarship has made life here at Alma a little more comfortable, and thanks to your support I will be starting my third year as an Economics and Finance major in the fall. Thank you for all you have done for me and the great work your congregation continues to do for our community. I couldn't be grateful enough.

Sincerely,  
Willy Drovillard

## Some Special Services

We have enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate some special worship services recently. Our young people directed worship on Sunday, May 9, incorporating stations for reflection on various aspects of our spiritual lives.

On May 16, it was wonderful to see confirmands joining the church and the church school children celebrating Promotion Sunday, the culmination of a year of learning and growing in Christ.

We had a chance to honor the graduating high school seniors from our congregation on May 23 during service, and on May 30, all veterans in our congregation were honored in commemoration of Memorial Day.

Please be certain to attend service on June 6, Super Senior Sunday, when we celebrate all who have been members of our church for fifty-five years or more.

There is much cause for celebration as we continue to live and grow in our faith community.

## Administration Commission

Earlier this year during the planning retreat for the Session and Deacons, a strong consensus emerged to provide staff leadership for our elementary and Middle High youth groups. This desire is in response to our vision of being a Beacon for our community through the development of youth activities and programs in our church family and community.

The Administration Commission has recommended that we combine this position with the vacant position of Music Director. A job description for a part-time position has been developed for a Minister for Youth and Music. The position does not require candidates to be ordained, but is looking for a strong role in our leadership team. A search committee representing the Adult Choir, Worship Team, Christian Education Commission, Administration Commission and a representative from the youth group have been identified and will begin meeting soon to start the selection process for a candidate to fill this position.

Our longer dream is for this position to become full-time to fill our vision for these two important ministry areas. Our financial reality at this time suggests we start on a part-time basis and continue work to develop our financial ability to support all our ministry, staff, and operating expense.

Administration Commission is looking at upgrading our computer systems. Our current equipment is over 5 years old. We hope to be able to provide networking for the staff, backup resources for our Sunday worship, update the software, and explore additional ways to use technology to support our Christian life and ministry together.

We welcome your input and ideas. Please contact Wendy Mickle at 657 6738 or Andy Thorburn at 624-6901 if you have suggestions or comments.

Administration Commission

## Mission Opportunities

**Joint Food Pantry:** If you have any questions about how you might help with the pantry please connect with Wendy Charles (674-3827). I am sure we can find a niche for you.

**Tremendous Need:** We truly need people who are interested in learning how to run the sound system and the video projection system. If you have such an interest please connect with Pastor Abbott at 657-3111.

Are you looking for a place to serve? Are you looking for a place to use your gifts? Please be thinking about involvement in these local mission opportunities: *Lunch with Friends, Habitat for Humanity, Restorative Justice, Eleanor's Pantry, The Decatur Shelter and United Christian*

*Services.* If you have any questions about any of these please contact Pastor Abbott at 657-3111.

## June/July Sermon Schedule

**June 2 – Baccalaureate – 7:00 p.m. at Red Arrow Ministries**

**June 6 – 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time – Super Senior Sunday - Communion**

**Scripture Reading: Psalm 71, Genesis 27:1-38, Galatians 4:8-20**

**Sermon Title: “On Your Best Behavior”**

**Synopsis:** Why do we have the tendency to behave one way when we are around certain people then a different way when we are around other people? As disciples don't we want our living always to reflect our belief in God?

**June 13 – 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

**Scripture Reading: Exodus 20:1-17, Psalm 49, Galatians 4:21-5:1**

**Sermon Title: “Slaves of What Idol?”**

**Synopsis:** What are your idols? What tends to distract you from the way of discipleship? What idols do we have as a church? Let us be set free!

**June 20 – 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

**Scripture Reading: Psalm 44:1-8, Luke 9:51-62, Galatians 5:2-15**

**Sermon Title: “Freed to Love & Serve”**

**Synopsis:** God desires to set us free from our idols, our fears, our vanity, and our insecurities so that we can go out into the world sharing God's love and pointing people to God's Kingdom. Do we feel that freedom? What holds us back?

**June 27 – 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

**July 4 – 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**July 11 – 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time - Communion**

**Scripture Reading: Psalm 3, Matthew 8:21-29, Galatians 5:16-21**

**Sermon Title: “Ways of the Flesh”**

**Synopsis:** We are called to follow the Spirit of God, but so many desires, cravings, and worldly distractions blind us to the Spirit's leading. How do you get distracted from following the Spirit in your life? How do we get distracted from following the Spirit as a congregation?

**July 18 – 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Scripture Reading: Psalm 1:1-3, I Corinthians 12:1-11, Galatians 5:22-26**

**Sermon Title: “Fruit of the Spirit”**

**Synopsis:** Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control flow into our lives and out of our lives as we follow the Spirit's leading. How has that been true in your life? How have you experienced that in the life of the church?

**July 25 – 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Scripture Reading: Psalm 8, Matthew 18:10-22, Galatians 6:1-5**

**Sermon Title: “Accountability”**

**Synopsis:** One of the ways that we care for each other is by holding each other accountable. As disciples we are called to help each other grow and mature. This means that we must walk with people when they lose their way and love them back into a relationship with God. How are you doing that? How are we doing that?



## Congratulations Graduating Seniors

**Kyle Fevig** graduated from Paw Paw High School where he participated in SADD, Voices of the Future, concert band, symphony band, jazz band, marching band, theater, varsity tennis and stage crew. He says he plans to become an underground musician. If that fails, he'll travel. If that fails, "college comes sooner than expected."

**Alex Wiese** graduated from Paw Paw. He was involved with Voices of the Future, jazz band, musicals and plays, cross country, track, National Honor Society, SADD, and Paw Paw Pride Band. Outside school activities included Young Life, playing guitar and ultimate Frisbee and writing. He intends to pursue an English degree at Whitworth University followed by teaching English as a second language in a foreign country.

**Samuel Abbott** is a Paw Paw graduate, whose activities included Voices of the Future, varsity tennis, soccer, theater, National Honor Society, SADD, Young Life, Wyldlife, violin and guitar. He plans to attend Whitworth University, double majoring in theology and Spanish with a minor in violin performance. He'd like to become a youth pastor ministering to impoverished Hispanic communities around the world—while climbing lots of mountains and drinking much tea.

**Jakob Vlieg** graduated from Decatur. He ran cross country and his hobbies include hunting, paintball and model railroading. In June 2009, Jakob graduated from Michigan Youth Challenge Academy in Battle Creek. While attending, he performed with the silent drill team and earned college credits in welding at KVCC. After graduating he will join the work force until enlisting in the United States Army.

**Kate Walters**, a Paw Paw graduate, was involved in SADD, PALs, Peace Jam, National Honor Society, cross country, tennis, band, Voices of the Future and the theater program. In the fall she plans on attending Western Michigan University to major in French and minor in Japanese. She plans on

traveling around the world and becoming an entrepreneur.

**Chloe Mesick**, graduated from Paw Paw High School where she participated in band, Voices of the Future, stage crew, theater, PALs, SADD, Key Club, Peace Jam, tennis and jazz band. She plans to attend Columbia College in Chicago and double major in theater and dance, also take as many art and music classes as possible.

Also graduating: **Matthew Driscoll & Anella Cooper**



## Welcome to new members

Hanna Abbott, John Slater, Chloe Mesick, Theron Walker, Jesse Charles, Kyle Fevig, Rebecca Briones



**Hospice of Southwest Michigan** is seeking volunteers to provide companionship and respite care to individuals and families who are coping with terminal illness, with dying and loss. Training will take place **July 17 through August 4**. Training consists of three live sessions, two Saturdays 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and one Wednesday evening 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. For more information please contact Donna Rook at 269-488-3935 or email [donna.rook@hospiceswmi.org](mailto:donna.rook@hospiceswmi.org).

## June/July Birthdays

06/03 Dustin\* Lee  
 06/05 Susan\* Dent Rhodes  
 06/05 Todd\* Walker  
 06/05 Anella Cooper  
 06/07 Nate\* Pursley  
 06/07 Mary Jane Driscoll  
 06/08 Brett Baney  
 06/08 Maggie Crawford  
 06/09 Tom\* Burkett  
 06/09 Ryan Walters  
 06/10 Mary Alice\* Gregory  
 06/12 John\* Taylor  
 06/14 Laurie Cooper  
 06/14 Kylie\* Cusumano  
 06/18 Frances\* McCue  
 06/18 John Bonter  
 06/18 Julia\* Payne  
 06/23 Orville\* Griffith  
 06/24 Frank\* Walters  
 06/24 Susan\* Paynich  
 06/24 Karen\* Racette  
 06/25 Jan\* Emmons  
 06/25 Sierra\* Rhodes  
 06/25 Sarah\* Rhodes  
 06/26 Tyler Rhodes  
 06/27 Sydney\* Roth  
 06/27 Gretchen\* Gilbert  
 06/27 William\* Outman  
 06/27 Stephen Johnson  
 06/27 Katherine Griffin  
 06/28 Jim\* Brinkman  
 06/30 Bobbie\* Long  
 06/30 Justin Plankenhorn  
 07/01 Virginia\* Miller  
 07/01 Amanda Butler  
 07/02 Clint\* Baney  
 07/03 Allegra Greenland  
 07/04 Fred\* Triquet  
 07/05 Bonnie Walter  
 07/05 David Martin  
 07/06 Loretta\* Brunner  
 07/07 David Martin  
 07/07 Kevin\* Garceau  
 07/14 Leandra Vantzelfde  
 07/15 William\* Cutting  
 07/16 William Renbarger  
 07/17 Shannon VanDenBerg  
 07/19 Nicholas\* Bolton  
 07/19 Toby Noora  
 07/20 Helen Mears  
 07/20 Billiann Bonter  
 07/20 Heather Yeider  
 07/20 Zachary Rhodes

07/21 Jordan\* Brown  
 07/22 Richard\* Haefner  
 07/22 Leslie\* Buhl  
 07/22 Joe\* Woods  
 07/22 Jared Yarbrough  
 07/23 Robert\* Tiffany  
 07/23 Matthew Cooper  
 07/25 John McNeil  
 07/27 Tori Miller  
 07/27 Maureen\* Faul  
 07/28 Jan\* Wilder  
 07/28 Steve\* Racette  
 07/30 Tom\* Shoemaker  
 07/30 Cheri\* Duncan  
 07/30 Denise Wyatt  
 07/31 Courtney Buhl  
 07/31 Dillon Ruess  
 07/31 Connor Ruess

## Anniversaries

06/02 Andy & Judy Thorburn  
 06/03 Bob & Theresa Yarbrough  
 06/07 John & Margaret McNeil  
 06/08 Eleanor & Marlowe Pardike  
 06/08 Sue & Russell Reynnells  
 06/12 Dick & Sally Schallhorn  
 06/13 Laurie & Matt Cooper  
 06/17 Richard & Theresa Walters  
 06/18 Gretchen & Jack Gilbert  
 06/19 Donna & Jack Zabonick  
 06/21 Cynthia & Frank marcelletti  
 06/24 Les & Bill Buhl  
 06/26 Catherine & Fred Smith  
 06/27 Deb & Michael Walters  
 06/29 Frank & Adele Walters  
 06/30 Jan & Dave Wilder  
 06/30 Dick & Pat Beach  
 06/30 Carrie & Wayne Hopson  
 07/02 Dave & Judy Combs  
 07/02 Michael & Susan Paynich  
 07/03 Ann & John Gehrke  
 07/05 Dick & Betty Faul  
 07/06 Brad & Susan Dent Rhodes  
 07/08 Mike & Wendy Major  
 07/12 Rachel & Bill Kube  
 07/13 Kristen & Bill Welling  
 07/14 Fritz & Linda MacDonald  
 07/16 Jean Taylor & Jim Dutcher  
 07/19 Ruth & Bill Johnson  
 07/22 John & Sarah Smith

07/24 Seth & Susan Kaiser Greenland  
 07/30 James & Wendy Charles

## Thanks to...

Johnell Cuddeback Weintraub, Freida Durringer, Barb Kruse and Pat Peters for preparing the May newsletter and to Jim vanWestrienen for folding Sunday bulletins.

**Our sympathy to**  
 Julie Holt's family during their time of grieving.

Julie Holt's family would like to thank you for all of your love and support during Mom's illness and death. We appreciate all of your cards, hugs, contributions to the church in her name and all of the work you did to make her memorial service and luncheon so special. It is truly a gift to be a part of this church family.

## Van Buren Youth Fair Habitat for Humanity Food Booth

All you chefs, counter people, dishwashers, once again you're needed at the Fair. Our scheduled work days will be July 20 and 21.

## Presbyterian Women

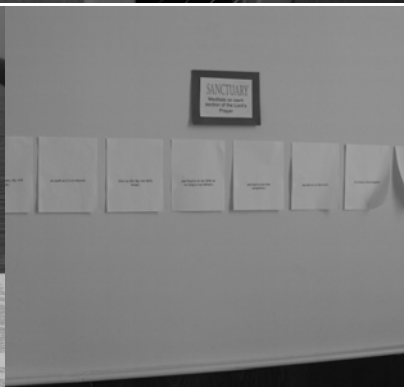
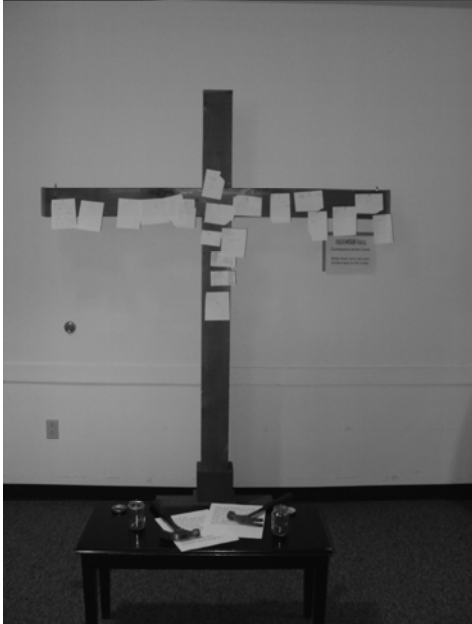
We will meet as usual in June on Wednesday, June 23, but we will have no meeting in July. Our annual get together at Jan Wilder's will take place in August.

### *Thought for the Month*

I Corinthians 13:13  
 "And now faith, hope and love abide, these three and the greatest of these is love"



## Youth Led Service



### *A new beginning for Vacation Bible School*

This summer, five Paw Paw Churches, First Presbyterian, United Methodist, St Mark's, St Mary's & Red Arrow Ministries are working together to set sail for Vacation Bible School fun on the HIGH SEAS! It's easily going to be the most exciting event this summer. Don't miss the boat—Please pre-register now on our website: [1stpresh.pawpawmi.us](http://1stpresh.pawpawmi.us)

Dates: July 26<sup>th</sup>-July 30<sup>th</sup>                      Time: 9:00am-12:00pm

Location: Paw Paw Middle School

Pre-School Participants—3 -5 years old

School Age Participants—Completed Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Assistant Crew Volunteers—Middle School Students

Crew Leader Volunteers—High School Students & Adults

Kids will explore the Mighty love of God! Get ready for a swashbuckling adventure through God's Word, and discover that God shows his powerful love throughout Scripture. Each day, kids participate in small groups, called Crews, and dive into the Bible! Not only will they experience amazing Bible adventures but they'll also watch for God in everyday life through something called God Sightings. High Seas Expedition is filled with incredible Bible-learning experiences kids will see, hear, touch, and even taste! Bible Point crafts, team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the High Seas Expedition activities that help faith flow into real life.

# June 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 8:00 TOPS  7:00 Baccaulaureate	3 Noon Rotary Club Meeting	4	5
6 Communion 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Fellowship	7  7:00 Bible Study	8  10:30 Sharenet	9 8:00 TOPS  Noon Lunch with Friends  6:30 Potluck	10 Noon Rotary Club Meeting	11	12
13 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Sacrament of Baptism Fellowship	14  7:00 Bible Study	15 6:00 Session Meeting at Andy Thorburn's House Deacon Meeting at Wendy Mickle's House	16 8:00 TOPS  Noon Lunch with Friends	17 Noon Rotary Club Meeting	18	19
20 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Fellowship	21	22  10:00 Sharenet	23 8:00 TOPS 9:30 PW Bible Study 10:30 PW Meeting Noon Lunch with Friends	24 Noon Rotary Club Meeting	25	26 8:00 Men's Breakfast
27 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Fellowship	28	29	30 8:00 TOPS  Noon Lunch with Friends			

## Sunday Special Music

We have several groups, singles and duos participating in service this summer. The Hoot Owls will be at service on Father's Day, June 20<sup>th</sup>. Jesse Charles will demonstrate a liturgical dance on June 27. The Methodist Praise Team and their Handbell Choir both may make an appearance, but we still need musicians and singers for a number of Sundays in July and August. Contact Bonnie, 657-3111.

## Parade of Homes

We need volunteers who could be on call for house-sitting from June 17-19.

## Christian Education News

Thanks to all who taught a rotation or volunteered in any way to help with the 2009-10 Church School. We depend so much on our volunteers to make this learning experience great for the children. Looking forward to next year, we will continue to need teachers for the rotations.

**This summer we really need people to teach the children's sermons to give our regular people a break. Please contact Marge if you are willing to do it even one Sunday.**

In August we will have information about the Fall Kickoff which will take place at Van Buren Youth Camp.

First Presbyterian Church  
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Return Service Requested



AND JULY

# July 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Noon Rotary Club Meeting	2	3
4 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Fellowship	5	6	7 8:00 TOPS  Noon Lunch with Friends	8 Noon Rotary Club Meeting	9	10
11 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Fellowship	12	13 10:30 Sharenet	14 8:00 TOPS  Noon Lunch with Friends  6:30 Potluck	15 Noon Rotary Club Meeting	16	17
18 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Fellowship	19	20 Habitat Booth at the Van Buren Fair 7:30 Joint Worship 8:00 Session/Deacons Meetings	21 8:00 TOPS  Noon Lunch with Friends  Habitat Booth	22 Noon Rotary Club Meeting	23	24 8:00 Men's Breakfast
25 9:00 Prayer Time 10:00 Worship Fellowship	26  Community Vacation Bible School	27  10:00 Sharenet  Community Vacation Bible School	28 8:00 TOPS Noon Lunch with Friends Community Vacation Bible School	29 Noon Rotary Club Meeting  Community Vacation Bible School	30  Community Vacation Bible School	31