

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

BY PASTOR DAVID FLEENER



Pastor David Fleener

This is the fifth in a twelve-month series on liturgical time, focusing on festivals of the church. This month, we talk about Ascension Day.

It was a bright spring morning, around Ascension Day. I was finishing up my first field education unit at Montgomery Place, a retirement home on the shore of Lake Michigan. I was going through a tough time then and I made an offhand remark to my supervisor,

“Well, Ascension Day is almost here, where Jesus blasts off, never to be heard from again!” My supervisor knew a lot about my life situation and my sense of humor. He chuckled and shook his head, “There’s that cynicism again!”

It's hard not to be cynical sometimes about the world or about faith. We might be scared. We might be anxious. We might suffer from unending worry about tomorrow, despite Jesus's instructions not to! The words of the scoffers in the Second Letter of Peter may resonate with us, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!” In carrying all this, we might feel like nothing we do matters. We may feel disempowered.

But the ascension of Jesus Christ is the way God empowers the church for the work of the gospel.

John's Gospel is instructive here. At Jesus' last gathering with his disciples, he says, “I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you.” Jesus has to go away for the Spirit to dwell with his church. And where the Spirit is, there the entire Trinity is also. Jesus' flesh was once limited as ours is. He was limited by space and time. He was vulnerable to the same indignities that our flesh is vulnerable to. But in his Ascension, Jesus' glorified humanity is present everywhere, particularly in every baptism, in every communion, and in every proclamation of the word of God. His presence in those places is always for our good. It is always for our empowerment. In this foretaste of the feast to come, we are given a taste of the resurrected life.

Cont'd

Sunday Worship Service

in-person and online at 9:30
a.m.

Pastor David Fleener
pastor@shalomlutheran.org

Youth & Music Director-Sam Meehan

music@shalomlutheran.org
youth@shalomlutheran.org

Church Office:
Geri Rindahl
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“We believe God is calling us to invite people into a deeper relationship with Christ, that they may discover true peace and be prepared to follow Him in compassionate service.”

Wherever and whenever we celebrate the boundless love of God in word and sacrament, Jesus is there, empowering us for the work of the gospel.

Love to you all,

Pastor David



I want to give everyone an update on the Jeremiah 29 project. As a reminder, we began this project last May and interviewed many of you for your thoughts on what Shalom's strengths and weaknesses are.

Through that interview process, you told us Shalom should reach out to engage our community and our younger people. We are now planning to host a brainstorming session ("cottage meeting") for community members, and others here at Shalom, interested in starting a children's or youth chorus. We are also exploring the idea that the Radio Ministry could work in collaboration with the Jeremiah Project.

We'll have much more to share as these ideas evolve and we always welcome your thoughts. The Jeremiah Project members are myself, Tammy Drewes, Catherine Scholer-Kliwer and Julie Anderson.

Pastor David

YOUTH

Be a Sponsor

We invite you to take part in a new opportunity to support our youth. This year, you may sponsor a participant attending the summer mission trip to Niagara Falls. Sponsors may choose the amount they wish to give, and the participant they would like to support. There is no limit to the number of sponsors per participant.

In June, participants will connect with their sponsor(s) to get to know one another and discuss the upcoming trip. After returning, they will meet again to reflect on the experience and share how the trip has impacted them. During the trip, sponsors are encouraged to pray daily for their participant and stay in touch in meaningful ways.

A display will be available in the narthex where you can sign up to sponsor a youth, select your donation amount, and choose your participant. Envelopes with the participants' names will be provided and may be placed in Sam's mailbox so donations can be tracked accordingly.

If you have any questions, please contact Sam Meehan.

Thank you for your support of our youth as they continue to grow in faith.

Steps in Faith

Join us on Saturday, May 16 for Steps in Faith, a fun and meaningful community walk/run fundraiser supporting our mission trip to Niagara Falls this summer!

Participants will gather at Shalom Lutheran Church, where registration will begin at 8:00 AM. At 8:30 AM, we'll begin our route from the church to Big Ole and back—a great opportunity to enjoy fellowship, get moving, and support a meaningful cause.

The registration fee is a \$20 minimum donation, though donations of any amount above that are gladly welcomed. If you're unable to participate in the walk/run, you can still support the trip by sponsoring one of our mission trip participants with a \$20 minimum donation.

After the walk, everyone is invited to celebrate with root beer floats at the finish!

Invite your family and friends, lace up your shoes, and come take Steps in Faith with us. Every step and every donation helps to support our youth as they prepare to serve in Niagara Falls this summer.

We hope to see you there for a morning of fellowship, fun, and faithful support!

**SHALOM LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MINUTES
March 16th, 2026**

PRESENT: Carol, Corey, Grant, Ken, Kersten, and Pastor David

ABSENT: Sherri

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

Motion was made to approve agenda by Ken, seconded by Grant, and carried unanimously. Motion was made to approve the February 16, 2026 Council minutes by Ken, seconded by Pastor David and carried unanimously.

Devotion was offered by Pastor David, using a portion of an episode of the television program Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood on how loving yourself leads to loving your neighbor.

Reviewed reports by Pastor and Committees:

****Pastor's Report:** Report included in packet. Jeremiah 29 Project report was also distributed and discussed, preliminarily planning a new direction where a youth and/or children's Runestone Choir was being explored as a potential project for outreach and fulfilling of needs in the community. With this new direction, there may also be changes in membership of that ministry's team.

**** Staff:** Report in packet from Youth and Music Director.

**** Worship:** Report in packet. Noted request for contemporary hymn lyrics in service materials would be worked on, and discussed seating in the sanctuary.

**** Finance:** Report in packet from Treasurer. Noted a variance at this point in the year of approximately \$18,000 actual giving under budget. Noted a generous building fund memorial received that will be acknowledged. Motion was made by Grant to remove Corey Drewes as a signer on the Viking Bank general account (number x5037), seconded by Ken and carried unanimously.

**** Stewardship:** No report. Did not meet.

**** Y/ED:** Report in packet noting discussion on a potential summer event, mission trip fundraising, and upcoming programming schedule. No council action requested.

****Outreach and Caring:** Report in packet on outreach activities. No council action requested.

****God's Work Our Hands:** Report in packet on committee activities. No council action requested.

****Personnel:** No report. Did not meet.

**** Property:** Oral report given at meeting, noting work beginning on the tasks generated for the group last month. Safety and emergency procedure binders for staff have been completed, and drills will be discussed.

**** FM Radio:** Report in packet. Fundraising and outreach continue to be a focus of the group's work.

Old Business: No other old business.

New Business: Noted new member class will be offered again shortly. An event form will be ready for staff review soon after Property and Tech team feedback received. Emphasized that facility users understand recycling practices at the church.

A closing prayer was offered by Grant.

With no other business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kersten Kappmeyer, Council Secretary



Shalom Lutheran Financial Activity: Mar/26

SHALOM LUTHERAN CHURCH STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY: JAN/26 - MAR/26

General Fund Activities	Actual	Budget	Annual Budget	Variance
Revenues				
General Offerings	\$ 62,578	\$ 74,328	\$ 297,303	\$ (11,750)
Building Fund Offerings	25,164	19,758	79,032	5,406
Interest and Other	2,006	1,517	6,050	489
Total General/Bldg Fund Revenues	89,748	95,603	382,385	(5,855)
Expenses				
Office expenses and Wages/Benefits	53,053	54,662	218,553	(1,609)
Building and Grounds	18,374	14,568	58,245	3,806
Synod payments, Outreach, GWOH	129	2,460	9,800	(2,331)
Shalom programs (music, Ed, worship, Technology)	4,532	4,986	19,855	(454)
Total General Fund Expenses	76,088	76,676	306,453	(588)
Net Transfers in/(out) of General/Bldg Fund	(983)	774	3,100	(1,757)
Building Fund Mortgage Payments	(19,766)	(19,758)	(79,032)	(8)
Net General/Bldg Fund Surplus / (Deficit)	\$ (7,089)	\$ (57)	\$ -	\$ (7,032)

Fund Activities	12/31/25 Balance	2026 Receipts	2026 Disbursed	Transfers between funds	03/31/26 Balance
General Fund (Unrestricted)	\$ 68,527	\$ 64,889	\$ 76,393	\$ (983)	\$ 56,040
Bldg Fund (mortg pmt, debt reduction)	39,300	25,164	19,766	20,000	64,699
Restricted Funds - WELCA	38,579	227	-	-	38,805
Restricted Funds - Youth	13,740	1,961	539	150	15,312
Restricted Funds: Shalom internal use	96,581	25,410	523	(19,167)	102,301
Restricted Funds for Outreach use	2,126	1,992	-	-	4,118
Totals	\$ 258,853	\$ 119,643	\$ 97,221	\$ -	\$ 281,275

Summary: This Shalom reporting is through March with a combined General and Building Funds deficit of \$7,089; primarily due to below-budget General fund offerings. March Bldg Fund receipts reflect a large 1-time offering. The General/Bldg Funds balance is \$120,738; about \$12,000 above Dec/25; again, mostly due to the recent \$20k estate gift that was transferred into the Building fund from Memorial Funds.

- Notes:**
- | | | | |
|---|-----------|------------|-------------------------------|
| | Cash | M Mrkt | |
| 1. Cash & short term investment balances: | \$ 90,016 | \$ 196,164 | Includes all Restricted Funds |
2. Restricted Funds: activities such as Memorials, Love Inc, Music, Youth, WELCA, World Hunger, etc
3. Restricted Funds: not budgeted, but receive/use only money received for that specific purpose.

	Month	To-date	Budget
4. Offerings to-date are:	\$ 28,529	\$ 62,578	\$ 74,328
Building Fund Offerings:	\$ 13,428	\$ 25,156	\$ 19,758

5. Bldg Fund offerings are \$5,406 over budget ytd.
6. Mortgage balance at time of reporting is \$442,501. Our monthly payment is \$6,586.

25th Annual

Golf Scramble

Monday August 3rd, 2026

Lake Milona Golf Club

SAVE THE DATE





The Shalom WELCA ladies attended the NW Synodical Women's Organization Conference 8 Spring gathering on April 18, 2026. The women of Bethesda Lutheran Church of Alexandria, MN hosted the event. The Conference 8 business meeting was led by Nola Smith. The guest speaker was Peggy Kallevig. She depicted the story of Mary and Martha of Bethany, who were featured in the resurrection of their brother, Lazarus. The morning also consisted of worship, singing and fellowship. A delicious luncheon completed the event.

REMINDER: Please continue to support our Coffee Fund with your donations. The donation box is located on the treat table in the Community Room!





RUNESTONE CHORUS

Runestone Chorus: A New Musical Community in Alexandria

This fall marks the exciting beginning of a new musical journey in the Alexandria area! A community choir—**Runestone Chorus**—has begun meeting at Shalom Lutheran Church, under the direction of Sam Meehan. Rehearsals are held every Tuesday evening at 6:30 PM.

Open to all who love to sing, Runestone Chorus offers a welcoming space for anyone interested in making music together and connecting with others through song. Whether you're an experienced vocalist or just someone who enjoys singing in the shower, this group is about community, creativity, and the joy of shared music-making.

If you'd like to learn more, feel free to reach out to Sam Meehan via email at sam.meehan.sm@gmail.com, by phone at 406-480-9675 or better yet, come check out a rehearsal or two. You might just find your voice and your people!

BOOKWORM BUNCH

“SO MANY BOOKS-SO LITTLE TIME”!! Enjoy reading??? Great Discussions???. Come join us at one of our monthly gatherings. We meet the last Monday of each month (unless it is a holiday) at 1 pm at Shalom. If any questions, call Barb at 952-297-2541 or Joann at 320-219-0810.



Following is the list of books selected for discussion.

May 25	The Faith Club	Ranya Idilby, Suzanne Oliver and Priscilla
June 29	The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell	Robert Dugoni
July 27	Where the Wildflowers Grow	Terah Shelton Harris
August 31	I See You've Called in Dead	John Kenney
September 28	Fire Keeper's Daughter	Angeline Boulley
October 26	Theo of Golden	Allen Levi
November 30	Whatever Happened to Lori Lovely	Sarah Mc Coy
December 14	Luncheon (Tentative Date)	

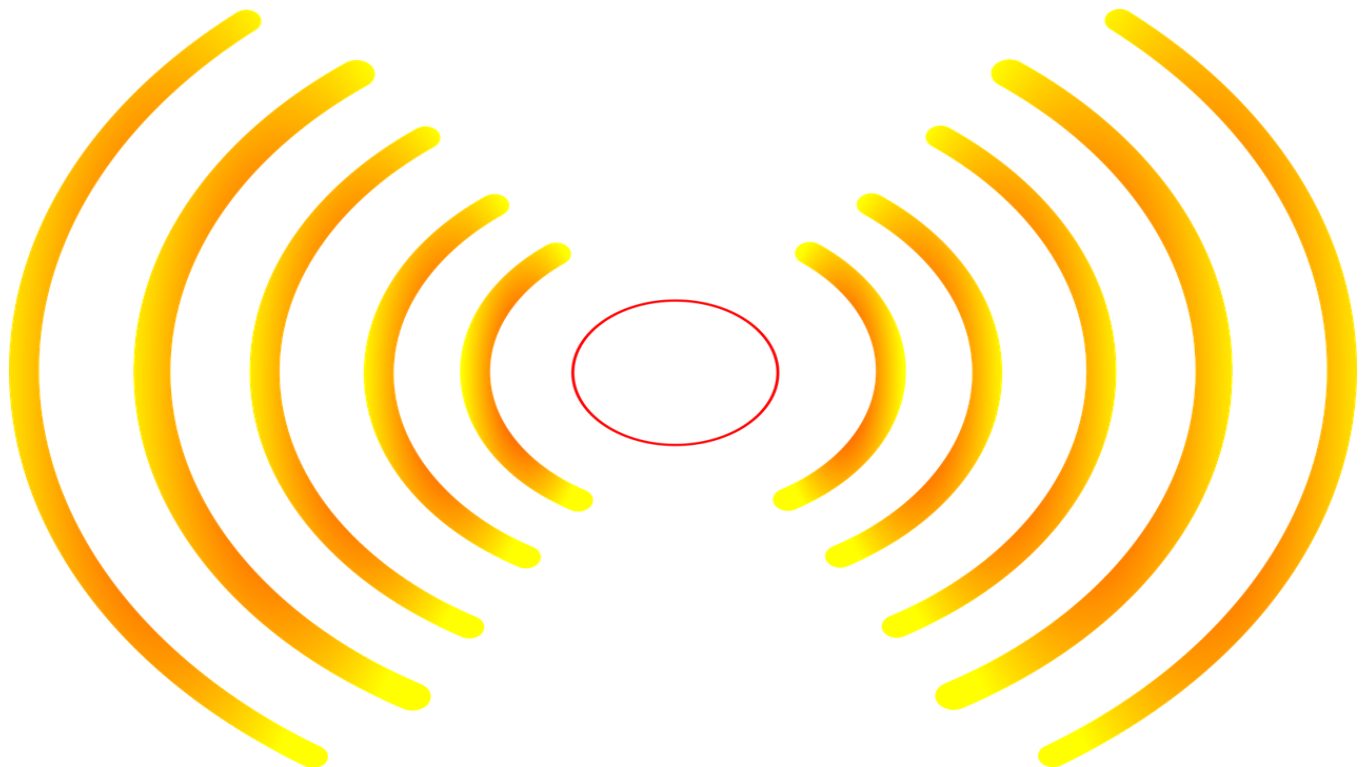
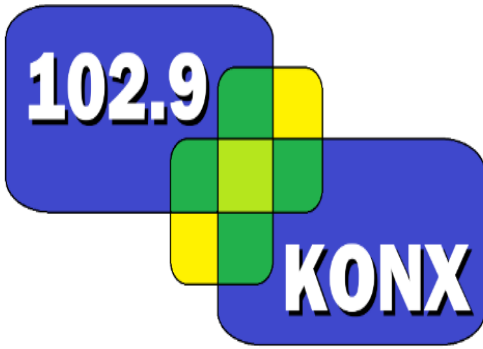


Adult Bible Study

- First, the good news: God always speaks to us through the Bible.
- Second, the bad news: we don't listen or read the Bible as often as we would like.
- Third, the good news: we can share God's Word in inspiring ways. Come to our gatherings on Thursday mornings from 10-11:00 am.



Looking to help your community connect? Shalom’s Radio Ministry Committee is thankful for those who have pledged their support and offered encouragement toward making “**102.9 Connects**” (**KON-X**) a reality! Our proposed radio ministry’s goals are to connect the community, express our love and support of our neighbors, meet God’s calling to serve others, share the good news of Jesus Christ, and help others discover true peace. Two updates this month! **First, a programming update.** We are pleased to feature two short form programs by Pastor Kathryn Rothman as an example of the features a radio ministry like KON-X could bring to the community. **You can listen to these programs by clicking on the following links: [Pastor Kathryn’s conversation with Father Tom Sinning](#) and [Pastor Kathryn’s conversation with Kersten Kappmeyer](#).** Click on the links and they should play on any internet device. **Second, a financial update.** We have received over **\$9,100 in monetary donations**, as well as equipment donations, leaving approximately **\$6,000 left to raise**. This startup funding is necessary to launch the ministry, and our goal is to meet this by **a July 1 deadline**. If you feel moved to support this ministry, please consider lending support, either financially or by getting involved with the Committee. Donations are accepted to Shalom Lutheran’s attention; just clearly designate them for “Radio Ministry.” And all are welcome to attend committee monthly meetings, generally on second Sundays after Worship. Questions? Contact Kersten Kappmeyer or Pastor Kathryn Rothman. Connect with us to help our community connect!



A note from Pastor David on the Radio Ministry:

Dear friends, as many of you are aware, Shalom's Council gave approval in 2024 for the formation of a radio ministry committee. This came out of a rare (once-in-a-decade) opportunity to acquire a low-power FM license from the FCC. Here are a few reasons I support this project with my prayers and my checkbook:

1. Versatility and ease of use. You don't need to download a podcast app to listen to the radio. You don't need a computer. You don't need any kind of technical savvy beyond pushing a knob and turning a dial. Most cars have a radio. This doesn't discount the need for other means of communication. It enhances them and could potentially expand the reach of our ministry without relying on the internet.
2. Collaboration: Radio is a good medium not only for broadcasting Shalom programming, but for collaborating with community partners, too. First Congregational Church has recently given a grant to this project. Other ecumenical partners have also shown interest. This could be a community ministry that isn't "branded" to one congregation. On top of this, a radio station could play an important role if we were to face another disruption, like the tornadoes several years ago. Together, we could make a significant positive impact on our community.
3. Theology: Many Christian radio stations have a theology that is unaligned with our understanding of the gospel. For instance, you may turn on a preacher saying that a particular political party, leader, or ideology is either heaven-sent or demonic. They may imply that one cannot be a Christian without supporting the cause they champion. This is a distortion of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This project provides another opportunity to proclaim the gospel in a life-giving way.
4. Affordability: While the startup cost is substantial, ongoing yearly maintenance should be 10-20% of that cost. Considering the potential outreach, the cost is affordable, especially if it is shared by community partners. There are possibilities for underwriting programs as well.

I invite you to explore the potential of this by reading the note below about KONX (Connects), the station's proposed callsign. Reach out to Kersten for more information. I am also happy to have a conversation too. Your thoughts and questions are always welcome. Let's discover the possibilities together!

You are invited Shalom members are invited to say farewell and God bless to long-time members Gerry & Skeeter Kingsberg as they move to the metro to be near their children. They have been a blessing to Shalom for many years. Carol Hedlund will host a small gathering to say goodbye and wish them well on Sunday, May 17th at 3:00 p.m. Your presence will be a gift to them.

Mothers Day is May 10th



May Shared Ministry

Shared Ministry	5/3/2026 0:00	5/10/2026 0:00	5/17/2026 0:00	5/24/2026 0:00	5/31/2026 0:00
Acolyte	Aiden Bailey	Joshua Flaten	Rhe'von Richmond	Skylar Cadena Sharon	Olivia Flaten
Assisting Minister	Nola Smith	Dan Hermanson	Deb Kramer	Hermanson	Carol Hedlund
Communion Assistants	Amy Klimek	Dean Kliewer	Angie Erickson	Judy Hoffman	Dave Morgan
Communion Assistants	Amber Whipkey	Catherine Kliewer	Sue Engstrom	Cheryl Burbank	Grant Pexsa
Communion Bread/Month	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom
Greeters	Barb Beyer	Dave Rogosheske	Carolyn Carlson	Linda Fenelon	Renae Hills
Greeters	Dave Beyer	Joyce Rogosheske	Connie Facciotto	Pam McCormick	Carol Klein
Kitchen Monitor/Month	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom	Sue Engstrom
Lector	John Smith	Diane Koranda	Tam Bukowski	Joann Garland	Susan Pletcher
Proclaim Slide Presenter	CJ/Kim/Julie	CJ/Kim/Julie	CJ/Kim/Julie	CJ/Kim/Julie	CJ/Kim/Jullie
Usher	Craig Neubarth	Todd Zarbok	Dave Malvin	Al Anderson	Diane Koranda
Usher	Lona Neubarth	Fritz Bukowski	Grant Pexsa	Sue Engstrom	Arvin Pletcher
Counter	Cheryl Burbank	Vic Dale	Derek Navratil	Craig Neubarth	Dave Harris
Counter	Arvin Pletcher	Charmaine Munt	Fritz Bukowski	Dave Burbank	Dean Kliewer



May Birthdays

05/01 Flaten Joshua
 05/01 Flaten Olivia
 05/06 Wanttie Marlys
 05/07 Harris Evie
 05/08 Granning Beau
 05/09 Burbank Liz
 05/14 Owen David
 05/17 Dalum Jon
 05/18 Freier Tim



05/18 Klimek Kassidy
 05/19 Owen Mary
 05/21 Raguse Evie
 05/24 Caron Ali
 05/24 Oachs Chrissy
 05/27 Fleener Abigail
 05/28 Harris Dave
 05/29 Smith Nola

Your Shalom family rejoices with you as you celebrate the day God gave you life. Birthday Blessings! If we missed your birthday please let us know in the church office because we would like to include you in our thoughts and prayers on your birthday!

Hospitality Time

Hospitality treats will be served in the Community Room between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. on Sundays.

The schedule May is:

<u>05-03-26</u>	<u>05-10-26</u>	<u>05-17-26</u>
Ken & Kathryn Rothman	Randy & Eldie Dertinger Brad & Deb Hoven Dean & Catherine Kliewer	Ryan & Angie Erickson Connie Johnson Roy & Deb Kramer
<u>05-24-26</u>	<u>05-31-26</u>	
Grant & Cami Pexsa Gavin & Jaiden Pexsa Diane Koranda	Glen & Linda Huebner Dale & Naty Kittleson Clem & Ginny Klimek	

If you are unable to make it, please call someone to replace you. Thank you



May



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Apr 26	27	28	29	30	May 1	2
<p>9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in person or o/c)</p>	<p>1 PM Book Club</p>	<p>7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Common G</p> <p>5 PM Newcomers</p> <p>6:30 PM Runestone Chorus</p>	<p>6 PM Shalom Ringers</p>	<p>8 AM LWR Quilting</p> <p>10 AM Adult Bible Study</p> <p>6 PM Shalom Singers</p>		<p>9 AM SOS</p>
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<p>9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in person or o/c)</p> <p>10:30 AM GWOH</p>		<p>7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Common G</p> <p>6:30 PM Runestone Chorus</p>	<p>6 PM Shalom Ringers</p>	<p>8 AM LWR Quilting</p> <p>10 AM Adult Bible Study</p> <p>+2</p>	<p>11 AM Altar Guild</p>	<p>11 AM Shirley Enstad Funeral</p>
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<p>Mothers Day</p> <p>9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in person or o/c)</p> <p>10:30 AM Radio Ministry</p>		<p>7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Common G</p> <p>11 AM Outreach</p> <p>+3</p>	<p>6 PM Shalom Ringers</p>	<p>8 AM LWR Quilting</p> <p>10 AM Adult Bible Study</p> <p>6 PM Shalom Singers</p>	<p>Newsletter items due</p>	<p>9 AM SOS Rehearsal 9:00 am</p>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<p>9:30 AM Confirmation Day</p> <p>9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in person or o/c)</p> <p>3 PM Kingsberg going away</p>	<p>5:30 PM Council Mtg</p>	<p>7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Common G</p> <p>6:30 PM Runestone Chorus</p>	<p>6 PM Shalom Ringers</p>	<p>8 AM LWR Quilting</p> <p>10 AM Adult Bible Study</p> <p>6 PM Shalom Singers</p>		<p>10 AM Bridal Shower</p>
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<p>9:30 AM Senior Recognition</p> <p>9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in person or o/c)</p>	<p>8 AM Memorial Day Office Closed</p> <p>1 PM Book Club</p>	<p>7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Common G</p> <p>5 PM Newcomers</p> <p>6:30 PM Runestone Chorus</p>	<p>6 PM Shalom Ringers</p>	<p>8 AM LWR Quilting</p> <p>10 AM Adult Bible Study</p> <p>+2</p>		<p>9 AM SOS Rehearsal 9:00 am</p>
31	Jun 1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>9:30 AM 9:30 am worship (in person or o/c)</p>		<p>7:30 AM Men's Bible Study at Common G</p> <p>6:30 PM Runestone Chorus</p>	<p>6 PM Shalom Ringers</p>	<p>8 AM LWR Quilting</p> <p>10 AM Adult Bible Study</p> <p>+2</p>		



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