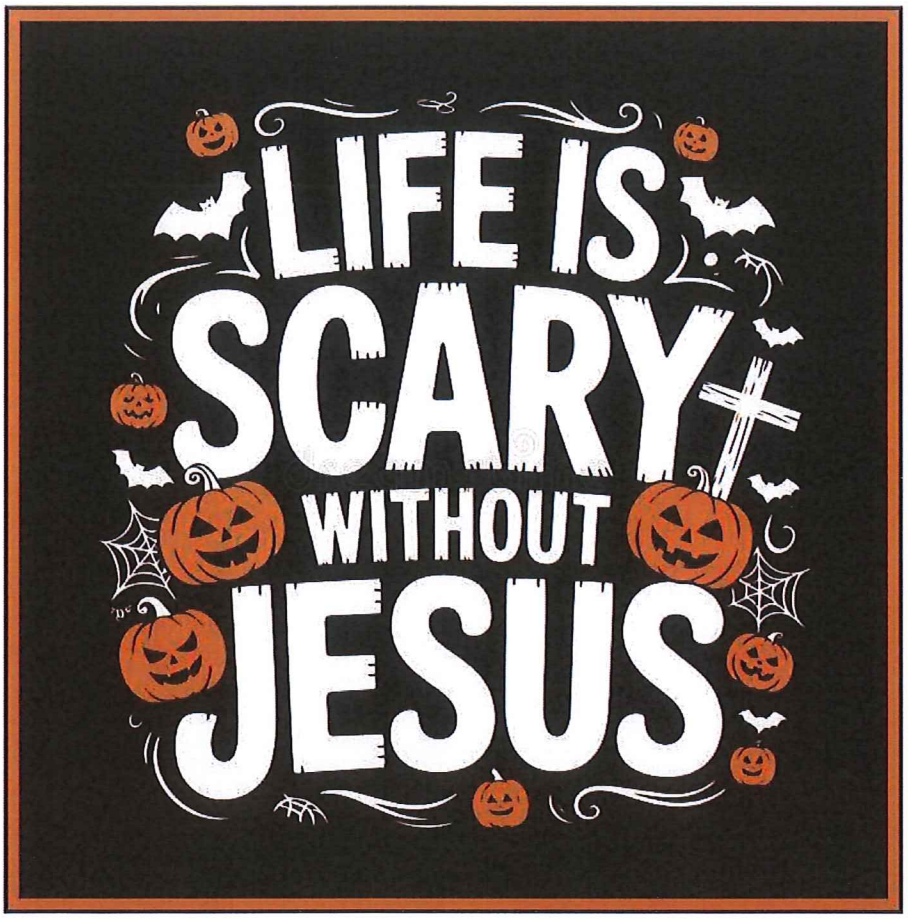
FIRST NEWS

First Lutheran Church
Freeport, IL 61032

Through worship and loving service,
We make Christ known to all

Volume 53 #10 *October 2026*

Rooted in the past and growing into the future, the church must always be reformed in order to live out the love of Christ in an ever-changing world. We celebrate the good news of God's grace, that Jesus Christ sets us free every day to do this life-transforming work. Trusting in the freedom given to us in baptism, we pray for the church, that Christians will unite more fully in worship and mission.



1 Corinthians 10:31 states that whatever you do, you should do it to the glory of God.

Caregivers give emotional support when a member is in need. If you know of anyone who could benefit from a caregiver's visit, don't hesitate to get in touch with Bev Herrling at (815) 235-4225 or the church office at (815)235-9790

MESSAGES FROM THE PASTOR

It is Thursday morning, and the newsletter deadline is pushing upon me. Have you ever had one of those deadlines?

I am also currently at the campground trying to breathe and decompress while simultaneously preparing for tonight's bible study, the funeral on Saturday, and worship on Sunday.

In the end, for this newsletter, I decided to share with you two questions that I used for our devotion on Monday and the end of the prayer that I prayed. I will add some words after the questions and prayer.

Q1: What are we holding so tightly that we may not have an open hand to receive the new thing God is already doing?

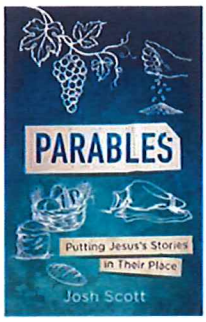
Q2: If we were starting this ministry today, knowing our community as it is today, what would we build, begin, or do differently?

Closing Prayer Lines: When we hear ourselves say, "But we've always...," give us the courage to ask, "But is this still helping us love God and love our neighbor?" Open our hands. Open our imagination. And lead us into the next faithful step.

Pondering: We have a lot to process as a congregation, especially our next steps. I have some thoughts, dreams, and aspirations. Some that will definitely question the way we have always done things while simultaneously holding on to those that are precious. It's a tightrope adventure.

In the end, it is about loving God and loving our neighbors. Recently, I read a book, Radically Sent. My mind is swirling, and I hope a few brave souls will be willing to take a wild journey.

UPCOMING BIBLE STUDY



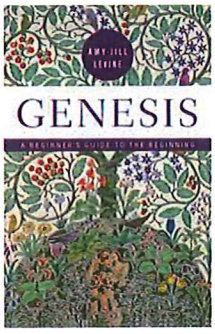
Tuesday at 12p

October 6: Parable Four: The Wicked Tenants

October 13: Parable Five: The Wedding Party

October 20: Parable Six: The Workers in the Vineyard

October 27: Session Break: Pastor on Continuing Education Week



Thursday Evenings at 6 pm

October 1: Genesis Chapter Four: Near Sacrifice of Issac

October 8: Genesis Chapter Five: Jacob's Stairway to Heaven

October 15: Genesis Chapter Six: Joseph Saga

October 22: Session Break

October 29: Session Break: Pastor on Continuing Education Week

WORSHIP

Sunday Bible Study- The Sunday morning adult study group meets on Sunday mornings following worship. This is a relaxed group of people who are interested in learning. Everyone is welcome.

Streaming – Sunday morning services are available to watch live on Facebook at 9:00 a.m. You can view this by clicking on or typing in this address: https://www.facebook.com/firstlutheranfreeport. Once you are on the page, you must click on the video. If you cannot watch us live at 9:00 a.m., you can view the recorded version of the service at the same link or by going to the First Lutheran website www.firstlutheranfreeport.org. If you watch it on the website, scroll to the bottom of the home page and choose the service you want to view. New to our online presence. After a four-year hiatus, Pastor Jeff has brought back our YouTube page and is posting daily videos. You can view them on our YouTube page: https://www.youtube.com/@firstlutheranchurchfreeport.

Ushers / Greeters Needed – We need your help. Ushering/greeting is such an important but easy job. No experience is necessary. We currently have open dates for October, November & December. The sign-up sheet is on the 3-tiered stand in the Galena St. glass door entrance. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Assisting Ministers – Assisting ministers are needed. No experience necessary, and no canting is required. If you would like to join our group of assisting ministers, please contact Judy Kaufman or the church office.

Noisy Offering – The second Sunday of each month, we will be taking up a noisy offering. Bring in your change and make some noise putting it into the bucket. All noisy offering money will be donated to a different worthy charity each month. For September, we collected $101.64 for the Salvation Army. The October noisy offering will be on October 11th, and the money will be donated to Voices. We appreciate your participation.

World Hunger Sunday - World Hunger Sunday is September 27th, and next month it will be on October 25th. Donations received during Fellowship time will be sent to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal. You may also place donations in the offering plate anytime during worship by using a World Hunger envelope found in the pew. Checks should be made payable to First Lutheran Church, and one check will be issued for all the donations received. Thank you for your support of this program, which addresses hunger issues throughout the world.

Choir - The Celebration Choir meets in the balcony every Thursday at 7 pm. We would love to see some new faces join our group. We have room and a folder for YOU! No experience necessary. If you have questions, contact Teresa or the church office.

Guest Pastor – Pastor Jeff will be away from the church on Sunday, October 25th. Pastor Carol Soderholm has agreed to lead us in worship that day.

Notice of a Special Congregational meeting and quarterly financial report in Fellowship Hall on October 18th following worship. This is an important meeting. Your attendance is appreciated.

October Worship Volunteers				
Date	Altar Guild	Usher	Reader	Assisting Minister
October 4	June Brandt & Esther Eden	Volunteers Needed	Jan Butterfield	Sharon Wall
October 11	Brad & Rochelle Heilman	Volunteers Needed	Jan Butterfield	Barb Statdfield
October 18	Steve & Nancy Olson	Tina Chamberlin	Jan Butterfield	Judy Kaufman
October 25	Roger & Dena Kampmier	Tina Chamberlin	Jan Butterfield	Dena Kampmier

PLEASE INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS

Members and Friends who need extra prayers – Donna & Marvin Beyer, Sarah Lower Borstad, Judy Brady, Lauren Diehl, Linda Donmeyer, Laith Dougherty, Mckinley France, Mary Lee Gerbode, Connie Gogel, Ryan Griffith, Terri Hawes, Sharon Janicke, Stephanie Kohl, Jordan Larson, Bob Last, Joann LeBaron, Beth Luke, Kevin Madsen, Kay Mammoser, Raymond Marschang, Mary Meier, John Moore, Dave & Carol Netherland, Bob Neuendorf, Gary Ogren, Noni Payne, Reuben Pearson, Sue Sellen, Vic Shields, Gary Statdfield, Brian Toepfer, Caleb Wallace, Corrine Wallace, Stan Ward, Kathy Wilkin, Gail & Bob Willis, and Steve Wise.

Members and Friends who need skilled care – Margaret Althoff, Dee Burstrom, Harriett Gustason, JoAnn Kohn, Jean Sorn, Jennifer Stees, and Ruth Wardlow.

Military & First Responders – Military Personnel: Tyler Kennan, Jayce Kohn, Owen McVicker, Jeff Meiborg, Kaydin Rabey, Madison Scace, and Derrik Triem. First Responders: Officer Daniel Moore, Detective Tony Bradbury, and Officer Josh Garrett. Fire Fighter/EMT: Taylor Ramsey.

ACTIVITIES

Supper on Galena & Jackson – The next Supper on Jackson and Galena will be held on Sunday, October 4th at 6:00 p.m. The meal for the evening is hot ham & cheese sandwich, pasta salad, chips, veggie tray, and dessert. Come and join us. Everyone is welcome. Sign-up sheets for attending, volunteering, and donating are on the activity sign-up board.

Luther N Brew – The Luther N Brew group will meet on October 6th at Cannova's, 1101 W Empire St., Freeport, at 6:30 p.m. All men are welcome, and no reservation is required.

Saturday Morning Bible Study – Every Saturday morning at 7:30, a group from First Lutheran gathers at Amigo's restaurant, 306 N. Galena Ave., for breakfast and bible study. The group studies the lessons for the upcoming Sunday. Everyone is welcome to join. For questions, please contact Bob Neuendorf.

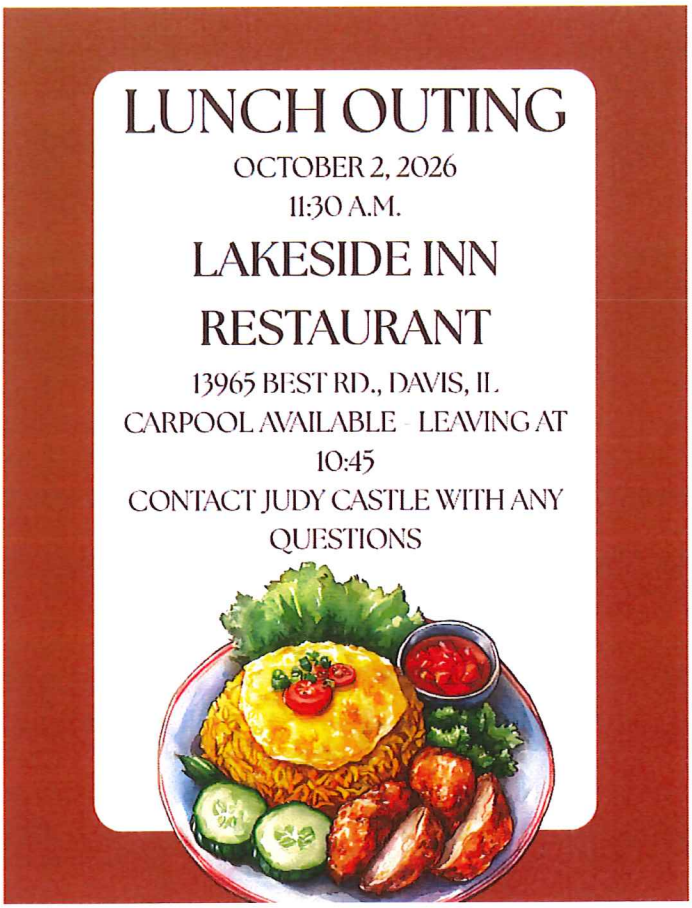
Trick or Treat Trail – On Saturday, October 24th from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. First Lutheran will be participating in the Trick or Treat Trail at Krape Park. We need a few people to volunteer to hand out candy. There is a sign-up sheet on the activity sign-up board. This has become a yearly event for us, and it is a fun day. We need 4 people to volunteer to hand out candy.

Trunk or Treat – Following the Trick or Treat Trail, First Lutheran will host "Trunk or Treating" in our parking lot from 5:30 - 6:30. We ask participants to be in the parking lot with their candy by 5:20. There is a sign-up sheet by Melissa's door if you would like to participate. You may dress up or decorate your car if you'd like. If you have a chair, you may want to bring it to sit outside your car. Let's make it a fun evening for the children in our church neighborhood.

WELCA

Bunko - The monthly Bunko group will gather on Thursday, October 15th from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the Martin Luther Room. No reservations are needed, and beginners are always welcome. The game is easy to learn! Come on down and bring a friend.

Knitting Group - The knitting group will meet on October 3rd & 17th at 10:00 a.m. at the Wall of Yarn shop on Stephenson Street. Come join us and bring a project of your choice to knit or crochet. We are looking for people to knit prayer shawls and prayer squares. If you would like to help with this ministry, we have a supply of yarn and patterns you may use. Just contact Jan Butterfield or Bev Herrling for more information.



Circle - Mary Circle and Rebecca Circle will meet for Bible Study and Fellowship on October 20th. Mary will meet at 9:30 a.m. in the Martin Luther Room, and Rebecca will meet at 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. We will use the study in the Gather magazine, and copies will be available for those who come. Contact Judy Castle or Nancy Holtum for more information.

Project Day - Project Day meets on the second Thursday. Next month we will gather on October 8th from 10:00-3:00 p.m. in the Martin Luther Room. We can always use large pieces of material and bedsheets for quilt backings for Lutheran World Relief and for lap robes. Donations may be left in the WELCA bin next to the mailboxes. You are welcome to come for part or all of the day. Bring your lunch if you plan to stay over the noon hour.

Thank you to everyone who donated supplies for School Kits for Lutheran World Relief and to those who helped assemble the kits on September 13th. We will be delivering 49 kits to the ingathering in Rockford on October 3rd, along with Personal Care Kits and Quilts. These are projects we work on at Project Day each month. Come down and join us on the 2nd Thursday of each month!

OTHER NEWS

Endowment Applications - It is that time of year again! The Endowment Committee will begin accepting applications on **October 1st**. Applications are available on the Church's website and at the church, in the track rack and front table. They must be turned in NO LATER than **November 30th**. If you, or an organization you know, wishes to apply, please share this information. Please help us get the word out!

Flower Delivery – Occasionally, the altar flowers will be donated to the church for delivery to a shut-in. We are in need of some people who would be willing to do the delivering. All deliveries would be in the Freeport area. You can just drop off the flowers, or you can stay and visit with the recipient; that is your choice. If you are willing to help us with this, please contact the church office or Dena Kampmier.

FACC –For September, we were asked to collect canned vegetables. As of September 23rd, we have collected 82 cans of vegetables. That is over halfway to our goal of 125 cans, and we still have 1 more Sunday. For October, we are collecting peanut butter. Our October goal is 100 jars. As always, please put them in the bin near the coat racks. First Lutheran is so full of generous people. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Coffee Hour Treats – We currently have a treat sign-up sheet for Sunday morning coffee hour. If you are interested in providing treats, please sign up or contact Bob Neuendorf for more information.

Caregivers – The Caregiver Group has changed their meeting day and time. They will now meet the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. If you would like to join this group of caring people, please contact Bev Herrling.

Pastor Appreciation Day - Sunday, October 11th is Pastor Appreciation Day. Let's show Pastor Jeff how much he is appreciated. Tell him in person, give him a card, draw him a picture, send him a text, leave him a voicemail, send him a message on Facebook, or any other original idea you may have. First Lutheran is blessed to have Pastor Jeff, and we should make sure he knows it.

Crop Walk for Hunger

October 4, 2026

The Crop Walk will be on October 4th at 1 pm, meeting at the Art Plazz in downtown Freeport, IL, to register walkers. The walk starts at 1:30 pm and walkers have the choice to walk a one-mile route, a two-mile route, or a four-mile route.

First Lutheran has been supporting the Crop Walk for many years. In past years, we have taken up a special offering at our church to support hunger, and we have had a great response, so if you have already given, thank you, and if you haven't, please consider doing so.

This year, four people from our congregation are walking. They will be collecting their donations also. On October 4th, our congregational donation and the walkers' collection of donations will be present at the registration site. Please support our fight against World Hunger. All money is due to the church office on Sunday, September 27th. Please write all checks to First Lutheran, and we will submit one check for all donations.

THANK YOU

Thank you to the First Lutheran Church Knitting Group for the beautiful prayer shawl. Also, thank you to everyone for the prayers and cards. Your thoughtfulness is truly appreciated. – Jan Shields

I would like to say thank you to everyone who thought of me after my fall on Friday, July 31. I fractured my femur bone near the hip joint, which required 3 screws to repair. I had surgery Saturday morning, August 1st, and went home the next day, Sunday, August 2nd. Then I over did and pulled the screws out. I knew something was wrong. My leg became very swollen and painful. I had a second surgery on Monday, August 10th, in the afternoon. This time I had a partial hip replacement. From the hospital, I went to St. Joe's Nursing Home for rehab for two weeks. Then home on Friday, August 28th. The month of August was a very unusual journey for me and a challenge to get back to normal life. I have been doing really well with my recovery, considering the days since surgery and my age. The Lord has been with me through this event, and I thank him every day for his strength and love for me. Thank you, everyone, for your kindness to me. Peace, Hope, Love Always. – June Brandt

We would like to express our gratitude for the many cards sent to Bob & me for our Birthdays and Anniversary. It was so thoughtful and enjoyed by both of us. – Gail & Bob Willis

The Arendt family would like to thank everyone for their thoughts, prayers, cards, prayer shawl, and meals. It was all appreciated. – Lorie Arendt

Marilyn B. Ruthe 1935 - 2026
May God grant peace to her memory, comfort to her family and grace to us all as we seek to live our lives to His glory.

Betty J. Simler 1932 - 2026
May God grant peace to her memory, comfort to her family and grace to us all as we seek to live our lives to His glory.

August Attendance		
Date	Sunday 9:00	Facebook Live
August 2	52	266
August 9	49	208
August 16	44	208
August 23	56	227
August 30	61	201
Total	**262**	**1110**

August Financials		
	Current Month	Year to Date
Total Income	$22,524.75	$164,772.89
Total Expenses	$21,363.71	$193,221.67
Income Less Expenses	**$ 1,161.04**	**-$ 28,448.78**

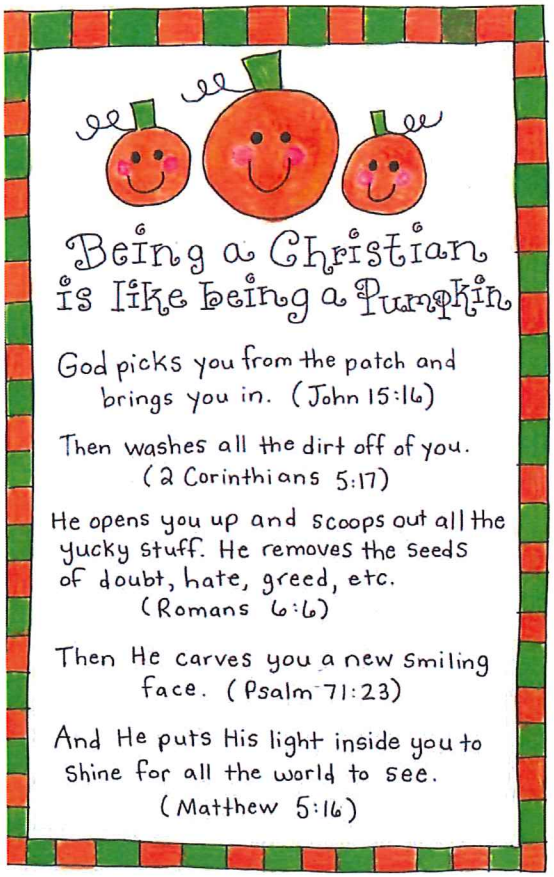
The deadline for the November issue of First News is Monday, October 19th.
Any and all information is appreciated.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- (November) Soup event. Dates to be announced
- Sunday, November 1st is All Saints' Day
- Sunday, November 1st Supper on Galena and Jackson – Menu to be announced
- Sunday, November 22nd Special Congregational Meeting
- Monday, November 23rd Joint Worship Service with Prince of Peace

SEPTEMBER REMINDERS

- World Hunger Sunday is September 27.
- Crop Walk donations due September 27.



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October Birthdays					
10/5	Alta Schramm	10/13	Aubrey Olson	10/20	Bev Coleman Elizabeth Starr Harmony Statdfield
10/6	Trevor Brobst Karin Keister	10/15	Jan Butterfield Terry Love Graham Mitchell		
10/7	Carole Busjahn Derek Kortemeier			10/21	Laurie Banderet Brian Butterfield Nancy Holtum
10/8	Kelsey Arendt	10/17	Sheila Field Jakob Moore	10/23	Kirsten Jones
10/10	Randy Gerstner			10/24	Jeff Wall
				10/26	Hannah Vandeberg
10/12	Don Tresemer James Whitson	10/18	Virginia Fox Charlotte Lomison Jennifer Whitson	10/27	Penelope Varzino
				10/28	James Castle
		10/19	Maxine Spangler	10/30	Maelyn Morrison

October Anniversaries			
10/6	Lisa Johnson Thake & David Thake	10/28	Joe & Laurie Banderet
10/8	Rick & Susan Fago		
10/11	Marvin & Donna Beyer Daniel & Hillary Hoffman John & Barb Statdfield Anne & Robert Kurth		

October 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:00 Bible Study 7:00 Choir Endowment Apps. Begin	2 11:30 Lunch @ Lake Side Inn 6:30 NA	3 7:30 Bible Study 10:00 Knitting 12:00 NA
4 9:00 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:30 Bible Study 10:30 Sunday School Home Communion 1:00 Crop Walk 5:00 Games & Fellowship 6:00 Supper	5 7:00 Boy Scouts	6 12:00 NA 12:00 Bible Study 1:00 Finance/ Stewardship 1:30 Caregivers 6:30 Luther N Brew	7 6:30 NA	8 10:00 Project Day 6:00 Bible Study 7:00 Choir	9 6:30 NA	10 7:30 Bible Study 12:00 NA
11 9:00 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:30 Bible Study 10:30 Sunday School Noisy Offering Pastor Appreciation Day	12 7:00 Boy Scouts	13 12:00 NA 12:00 Bible Study	14 6:00 Council 6:30 NA	15 1:00 Bunko 6:00 Bible Study 7:00 Choir	16 6:30 NA	17 7:30 Bible Study 10:00 Knitting 12:00 NA
18 9:00 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:30 Bible Study 10:30 Sunday School 10:30 Congregational Meeting	19 7:00 Boy Scouts First News Info Due	20 9:30 Mary Circle 10:00 Rebecca Circle 12:00 NA 12:00 Bible Study	21 6:30 NA	22 NO Bible Study 7:00 Choir	23 6:30 NA	24 7:30 Bible Study 12:00 NA 1:00 Finance Literacy Program 3:00 Trick or Treat Trail 5:30 Trunk or Treat
25 9:00 Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour 10:30 Bible Study 10:30 Sunday School World Hunger Sunday	26 7:00 Boy Scouts First News Sent	27 12:00 NA NO Bible Study	28 6:30 NA	29 NO Bible Study 7:00 Choir	30 6:30 NA	31 7:30 Bible Study 12:00 NA