



*A Spiritual Oasis Committed to Christ,  
to Peace, and to Service*

Cedar Park First United Methodist Church

# Connections

## Newsletter

### CPFUMC Technology Plan

Submitted by Neil Howard

What would happen if our sanctuary projector suddenly broke? What if our Wi-Fi thermostats stopped working? What if our computers became too old to run Windows 11 or other modern software? What would happen if our main network router died

unexpectedly leaving us without the capability to access the Internet, send and receive email, print to a network printer, livestream or make a phone call?

The day-to-day operations of the church and our services on Sunday depend on the same types of technology which we all have at home or at our

office jobs. It makes sense for a church to have a systematic plan to repair or replace aging equipment and to prepare for the constant stream of technological advances happening every day.

To meet this challenge, the Trustees of our congregation have recently approved a Technology Plan. It is based on guidance from

TECH continued on p. 9



### A Conversation with Carol Slater

Submitted by Anita Martin

Q: When was your first day at CPFUMC and what do you remember about it?

A: August 1995. I felt like I was attending church “back home” in North Dakota. The friendly atmosphere was outstanding (and still is)!

Q: Tell us about what drew you to CPFUMC.

A: The surrounding area, at that time, was filled with longhorns, horses and acres around the homes. A real country setting. We were visiting our family and were sightseeing the “small quaint town of Cedar Park.”

Q: In what city did you grow up? Where do you live now?

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## VBS Enjoys a Successful Return

After a two year hiatus, the VBS, Treasure Hunt 2022, was a great success. It was from June 14 - June 16. We had 11 kids ages 6 - 10 who participated in interactive activities such as Songs, Storytelling, Crafts and Recreation. Let us not forget the snacks.

*Isaiah 60:1 "Arise! Shine! Your light has come, the Lord's glory has shone upon you."*

We could not have done this without the many volunteers that made this come to fruition. Thank you to the following:

- Assembly Leader - Pastor Suzette
  - Helpers
    - Mady
    - Audrey
    - Zay Higgins
- Storyteller Leader - Debra Longoria
  - Helpers
    - Laurel Fabian
    - Josie Theriot
- Craft Leader - Nancy Holmes
  - Helper
    - Maryann Mosier
- Recreation Leader - Gigi Heermans
  - Helper
    - Jozi Heermans
- Snacks Leader - Sue Sidney
- Director Leaders
  - Carolyn Smith
  - Amanda Theriot
  - Brenda Higgins.
- Others assisting
  - Neil Howard - media/audio
  - Stephanie Talley - Happenings



## BE LIGHT YOUTH

BE LIGHT YOUTH FINALLY made our journey to the Holy Land this month after nearly 3 years of prepping and waiting. We had a rough start as our seats were given away on an overbooked flight and our luggage did not join us until the last day. This has created a time-consuming process of attempting to be reimbursed for the 2 complete outfits plus shoes and swimsuits I purchased for 13 people. Please add that to ongoing prayers as it is nearly \$4000 - we do have travel insurance as it is an arduous process.



Eventually, we arrived in Israel. We started in the north end around the Sea of Galilee and made our way south through The Dead Sea, Masada and Jericho onto Jerusalem. We visited many sites of Scriptures and read them aloud where it happened. We walked in the footsteps of King David, Mary Magdalene, Jesus and so much more.

Pastor Suzette shared some highlights in Worship on Sunday, June 12 - (the worship may be viewed at your leisure via website or FB). BE LIGHT YOUTH are pondering offering a luncheon this Fall where we will

cook our favorite dish from the trip, magluba, a traditional Palestinian dish our guide shared with us in Jericho. The Pilgrims would each share few pictures and share what the trip has meant to them at this point. This would be the fundraiser launch for our next trip to the Foundations of Methodism in London in summer 2024.



BE LIGHT YOUTH participated in VBS the next week. They served as the Assembly leaders, pathfinder guides, Art buddies and PE corral-ers. They were fabulous as always

[BE LIGHT continued on p. 4](#)

(BE LIGHT from p. 2)

making the entire week a delight for all. On Thursday, after the last VBS, the BE LIGHT YOUTH headed to Freddy's for dinner then to the Cinemark to catch the BUZZ LIGHTYEAR 9:40pm movie. We had two new youth join us - Brenda's grandson Xav, and Jozi's friend, Zoe.



UMARMY MISSION TRIP - we will bless the mission team heading to Belton TX. We leave after church June 26 and return on Friday, July 1. We are restoring a youth community center and building wheelchair ramps. Those going:

- Michael and Hannah Linder
- Allie and Ashlyn Short
- Jozi and Gigi Herrmans
- Abby and Shawn Dubler
- Mady Johnson and Pastor Suzette

Please hold each of us in your prayers as a few have never gone on a UMARMY mission before. We welcome sponsorships as each person costs \$270 to participate. Sunday, July 3 will be YOUTH Sunday where we will celebrate the Mission Trip at a church-wide potluck after the late service.

July will bring pool fun and a car wash to raise funds for Ukraine - details to come.

Peace, Suzette





Tuesday, August 2 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Another outreach opportunity. Let's put our best foot forward.

I need your **Help, Ideas** and **Leadership**

Get the planning started, contact  
Carolyn Smith at 512-970-9087 or [carolynsmith2215@gmail.com](mailto:carolynsmith2215@gmail.com).



# Potluck

**Sunday, July 3, 2022 at Noon**

Bring a cover dish.

All main dishes, side dishes, and desserts  
are welcome.



Followed by God's amazing adventures experienced by our  
Youth from their recent trip to the Holy Land.

If that is not enough excitement for you, the Youth will then  
share their stories of how they gave back to the community  
during their U. M. Army Mission trip.



# Senior Scams

*Scams that affect seniors can affect anyone. But below is some information about scams that may especially impact seniors.*

Common scams from FBI website ([www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov))

1. Shopping fraud: Imposters pretending to be representatives of Amazon, ebay, and many other merchants, call you to confirm your \$99.95 purchase. If you respond the crooks will attempt to get you to send gift cards for their overhead costs or other lies. FYI: Amazon doesn't call.
2. Romance Scams: Criminals pose as interested romantic partners on social media or dating website to target lonely seniors; especially those who have recently lost a loved one. After they gain the seniors trust they ask for loans for emergencies and promise to pay back but never do. Surprise—surprise.
3. Tech support scams: Bad guys pose as tech support reps and offer to fix non-existent computer problems and gain access to sensitive info like expiration dates for credit cards, bank account numbers, passwords, etc. Call our church's own computer experts Dave Sidney or Neil Howard for help.
4. Government Impersonation scams: The crooks use call faking so it looks like the FBI or even worse the IRS is calling. They threaten immediate arrest and imprisonment unless you pay your "bill" with a gift card because gift cards can't be easily traced. I get calls almost weekly from the "FBI".
5. Sweepstakes/lottery/charity scams: Criminals claim to work for a legitimate organization and then ask for a donation They may claim you won a foreign lottery and you need to pay foreign taxes and their overhead costs to win. I recently got a bogus call from Readers Digest claiming I'd won their \$5.5 million sweepstakes.
6. Home repair scams: Crooks appear in person and charge in advance for repairs you don't need and never repair anything.
7. TV/Radio Scam: Victims are targeted with illegitimate advertisements about ` like reverse mortgages, credit repair, or marriage counseling.
8. Grandparent scam: Relatives or acquaintances of elderly take advantage of them or otherwise get access to their money. That Grandson you love may have the flimsiest reason for needing money help instantaneously and because you love him you get him the funds and find out later you have been scammed.
9. Funeral Home Scam: Funeral home directors claim you need an expensive casket for cremation when a cardboard box is more than sufficient to hold the ashes,

The most common ways old folks lose their money is romance scams, next is sweepstakes and lottery scams, then business and impersonator scams. Seniors are more likely to get scammed with technical support, sweepstakes and Grandparent scams than younger Americans

SCAMS continued on p. 7

(SCAMS from p. 6)

#### WHAT TO DO IF/WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN SCAMMED:

- Contact your credit card company, your bank & credit union and then [www.reportfraud.ftc.gov](http://www.reportfraud.ftc.gov).
- If you have been a victim of elder fraud, contact your local FBI office or submit a tip to <https://tips.fbi.gov>
- If you have been a victim of internet crime file a complaint with the FBI's [www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov)
- HOW TO AVOID BEING SCAMMED IN THE FIRST PLACE
- As your fourth-grade teacher told you years ago, put on your thinking cap and don't let anyone rush you into money decisions and talk it over with a good trusted friend before you do anything.
- If you are aware of a scam and have heard of it before you are more likely to avoid being taken in: Sign up for email updates from the FTC's Consumer Information Blog at [www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog) for alerts on the latest scam techniques
- Many scams begin on the telephone so don't trust your caller ID. ID's and names can easily be faked and it becomes very convincing when a well know company or government agency appears on your caller ID and it is really a crook trying to get your money.
- Consider call blocking services with your phone company and check out [www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-block-unwanted-calls](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-block-unwanted-calls)
- Just hang up or sign up for the national do not call registry [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov) If you are on the registry and get a call, that is illegal, without your written legal consent. If you have ATT immediately after a scam call press star 61 to block future calls from that number.

#### FBI Tips to Avoid Scams

1. Search on line for the contact info like name, email, home phone number, address and proposed offer and you may find out it is all a scam
2. Never be in a rush over money decisions since scammers work to create a sense of urgency to produce fear and lure victims into rapid action
3. Do not give or send any personally identifiable info money, jewelry, gift cards, checks or wire info to unverified people or businesses.
4. Make sure computer antivirus, security software, firewalls, pop-up blockers, and malware are reputable and up to date.
5. Disconnect from the internet and shut down your device if you see a popup message or locked screen. Pop ups are used to spread malicious software.
6. Be careful what you download. Never open an email attachment from someone you don't know and be especially wary of forwarded email attachments.
7. Protect your identity if a criminal gains access to your devices or account(s). Immediately contact your financial institutions to place protections on your accounts and monitor your accounts and personal info daily for suspicious activity.
8. Check out the Pass-It-On Education Campaign for Older Adults [www.consumer.ftc.gov](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov) for additional resources.



mission u 2022

# Who Can We Be Together?

## Building Communities of Hope and Joy

For More Information check the Rio TX United Women in Faith website: <https://www.umwriotexas.org/>

Contact: Dean Carolyn Smith, [smithcb44@outlook.com](mailto:smithcb44@outlook.com) or 210-844-4992

### Study of Luke 13

Great news— COMMUNITY is God’s desire for us! Please join us at Mission u 2022 as we reflect on the community that Jesus is calling us to be!

This year, as we study Luke 13, we find ourselves in a period of disruption and uncertainty. In the midst of a devastating pandemic, divisive political climate, unaddressed systemic racism, ecological crises and economic turmoil, we turn to the stories of Jesus that have anchored Christian communities for two millennia.

Our hope is that we will leave Mission u with a bigger and broader vision of the community Christ is calling us to be in times of loss, grief and massive disruption. What would be possible if we tend to the needs of our communities in small yet radical ways, as Jesus did in Luke 13?

Our newly designed Mission u 2022 is more flexible and intergenerational than ever— with curricula for youth, children and adults focused on the 13th chapter of the Gospel of Luke.

You should order your study books in advance from Mission Resources, [www.umwmissionresources.org](http://www.umwmissionresources.org), We will not be selling the books in the Resource Room during Mission u.

#### **Mission u 2022 In Person Event**

**July 8–10**

See **Registration** at <https://www.umwriotexas.org/>

Drury Plaza Hotel, San Antonio North Stone Oak

\$110/Adults & Youth, \$75/one day attendees, \$75/first child, \$35/each additional child

#### **Mission u 2022 Virtual Event**

**Register now**

Thursdays, July 14, 21, 28 & August 4

6:00–8:00 PM

\$25/Adult Registration



MEMBERS from p. 1

A: I was born and raised on a wheat and cattle farm in North Dakota (12 miles from Canadian border). My home now is one mile from the church in Cedar Park.

Q: What church did you come to CPFUMC from?

A: I came from a large Methodist Church in Sun City, California. After retirement, I joined the sewing group at church on every Tuesday and Thursday to make baby layettes for distribution to the needy throughout the area.

Q: Tell us about your family.

A: My family consists of two sons and a daughter. Scott (Vickie) lives in Austin, Anne Marie in Cedar Park, and son Jeff (Asia) reside in Las Vegas. I have two grown grandchildren. Robert lives in Houston and Renee lives in Denver. My husband, Bob, passed away in July 2018. We were married for 65 years.

Q: Do you have any pets?

A: Ann Marie's dog, Winnie, comes every day at 7:10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. to spend the day with me. He is a joy and great company.

Q: What do you like to do in your spare time? Or what takes up a lot of your time?

A: I am blessed to be able to stay in our home since my fall in 2019 (broken neck!). I love my flower garden though the variety has dwindled to mostly native plants. The squirrels and birds entertain me from the patio.

Q: Do you have a particular hobby? Is there one you want to learn?

A: Hobbies include "decorating" of all kinds (sewing, flower gardening and baking). I'm hoping to return to painting classes again.

Q: What's your favorite restaurant or favorite meal?

A: Longhorn Steak House and Garbo's for a lobster roll.

Q: Where is your favorite vacation locale?

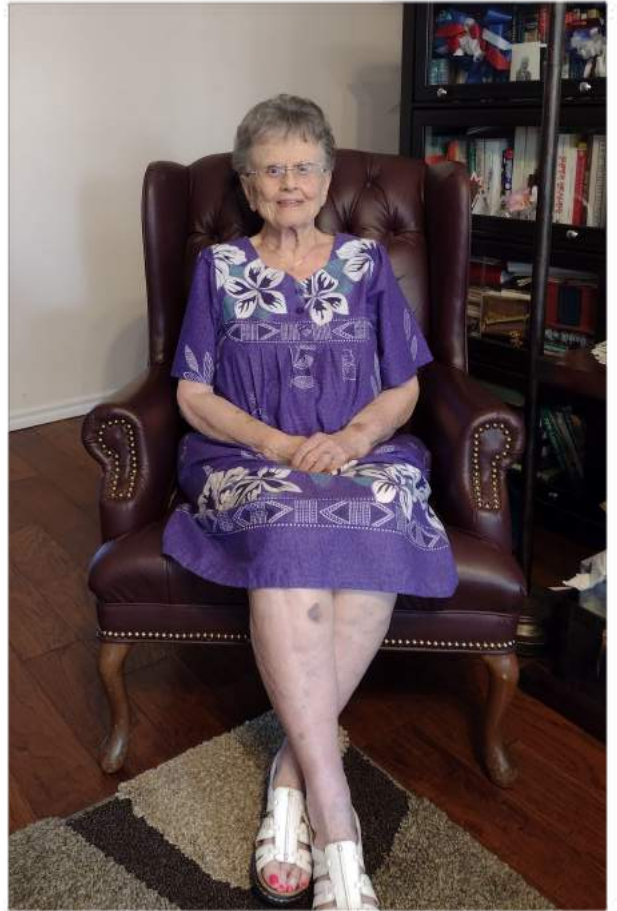
A: Bob and I had many wonderful vacations through the years. Lake Louise in Canada, Grand Canyon, Branson at Christmas time, Australia and England are a few of my favorites.

Q: I'd rather do anything besides

A: go to the dentist.

Q: Tell us something we might not know about you!

A: My hobby "cake decorating" turned into a full-time bakery position that lasted 18 years!



the UMC. Guidance from the UMC is contained in an article by Eric Seiberling entitled [\*Building a Technology Plan for Your Church\*](#) published online in Resource UMC.

The CPFUMC Technology plan begins with an inventory of all of the technological equipment: computers, LAN and office equipment; Wi-Fi thermostats and irrigation controllers; professional sound equipment; audio visual equipment; telephone and communications equipment; live streaming equipment and the software that runs on these devices.

Once the inventory is completed, each device in the inventory is assessed for its average lifespan, years in service, estimated replacement date and cost. The replacement cost can be broken down to annual and weekly costs estimates for equipment replacement.

Some technology items are already part of our annual budget: our office copier, Internet service, website hosting, church email accounts, domain name registration (cpfumc.org), SSL certificate, telephone monthly costs, livestreaming fees and help desk subscriptions for our membership and contribution software.

However, equipment replacement is usually an off-budget item which is typically an unplanned expense. Things break without warning or a new software update suddenly makes our computers too old to run the new software. Some equipment can be repaired or upgraded until it is finally too old or too expensive to repair. Some equipment must be replaced if it breaks or becomes technologically obsolete.

The CPFUMC Technology Plan uses the guidance in the UMC article and the inventory of technology equipment maintained by the Trustees. In 2022, the annual cost of potential lifecycle replacements for CPFUMC equipment was estimated to be a little over \$3800. That's a lot of money to absorb in an annual budget line item for unexpected expenses!

In 2022, the Trustees have so far authorized about \$3800 in purchases, mostly computers, to replace aging equipment in accordance with the Technology Plan. The Trustees have additionally authorized about \$825 for a Narthex TV project to replace the rolling cart TV with a permanent wall-mounted TV and micro-computer to display messages and photos of happenings to members and visitors and they enter the church on Sunday morning. The money for these planned and unplanned technology expenses comes from something called the CPFUMC Technology Fund.

Having a Technology Fund was a recommendation of the UMC made as part of a viable Technology Plan. In December 2020 the Trustees established a [CPFUMC Technology Fund](#). The CPFUMC Technology Fund is a separate, off-budget designated fund which carries over from year to year. It is managed by the Trustees to cover the costs of technology repairs, upgrades and replacements. The Technology Fund receives funding from member donations and the salvage sale of any church technology equipment being replaced.

If you would like to contribute to the CPFUMC Technology Fund, simply designate "Technology Fund" in the memo field of your check or online donation payable to CPFUMC.



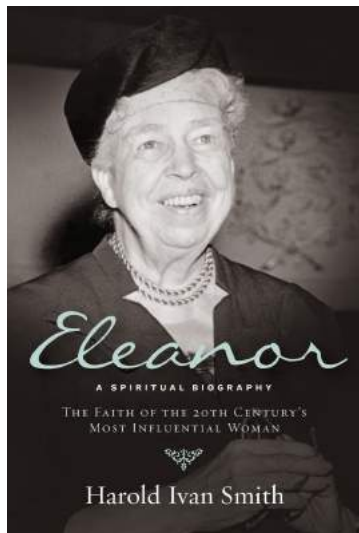
## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR PROJECT TRANSFORMATION IN LEANDER

Leander United Methodist Church will be serving as a site church for Project Transformation, now through July 28, 2022. Project Transformation is a program where college-age young adults lead a summer program for children from underserved neighborhoods.

Caring volunteers are **desperately needed** to read with children in grades 1-6, one-on-one, each day for 30 minutes per child. Volunteers can sign up for one day or multiple days throughout the summer and no prior experience is needed! For more information go to <https://www.givepulse.com/event/290442-Leander-Summer-Reading-Buddies>

Also, evening meals are needed for the eight college interns participating in the program. You can sign up to bring a meal for the interns who are lodging at Northwest Hills UMC's Youth Center by going to <https://www.givepulse.com/event/290644-Dinner-Volunteers-Austin>

## METHODIST READING CLUB Begins JULY 21



More than fifty years after her death, Eleanor Roosevelt is remembered as a formidable first lady and tireless social activist. Often overlooked, however, is her deep and inclusive spirituality. Her personal faith was shaped by reading the New Testament in her youth, giving her a Jesus-centered spirituality that fueled her commitment to civil rights, women's rights, and the rights of all "little people" marginalized in American society.

Pastor Peter will be leading a 5-week discussion of *Eleanor: A Spiritual Biography* (in person and by Zoom) on Thursday mornings at 10am, beginning July 21. If you are interested in joining us to read and discuss this book (a 2021 UMW Reading Program selection) please see the sign-up sheet in the Lobby or email Peter.

Copies of the book will be available for \$20, or you can download the book to your e-reader.

## Church Finance Report

The Church's operating fund financial status through May 31, 2022 is summarized below. May was a good month with strong giving for church operations, missions and designated funds. Expenses continued in line with budgeted estimates. Year-to-date the the Church continues to have an operating deficit but that deficit was reduced by over \$2500 in May. The Church continues to have adequate cash reserves to meet its financial obligations.

### Financial status through May 31, 2022

Total Income:	\$102,602.16
Total expenses:	\$110,722.69
Net Income/deficit:	-\$ 8,120.53

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL THANKS

We all had a really amazing time at Vacation Bible School back in mid-June, after a couple of years of its absence in the summer.

*Thank you*

I am truly grateful for all the people who contributed their time and energy, and made this year's VBS a truly memorable time for all the children who participated. Many thanks to the great trio of planners, who worked tirelessly to make the event a success – Brenda Higgins, Carolyn Smith, and Amanda Theriot. Suzette Thorpe Johnson was superb in leading the assembly time and organizing all the teenagers' involvement – there were a half-dozen or so teens that she put to work, as helpers and assembly participants. Debra Longoria really knows her Bible and was masterful in her Bible story-telling to the kids. Nancy Holmes and Maryann Mosier did a fabulous job as the "Craft Ladies." And of course, who could do a better job at recreation than Coach GiGi Heermans? Sue Sidney and Laurel Fabian kept everyone well fed during snack time. A marvelous time was had by all!

It really does take a village to put on a successful VBS, and our village at Cedar Park First Church is one of the best! Many thanks to everyone for a truly great experience.

Pastor Peter

### Church Contacts

Find us online at [cpfumc.org](http://cpfumc.org)  
or call the church Tues-Thurs between 9 and 2 at (512) 335-9540

Want to contact a Church Leader or submit something for a future Newsletter?

Pastor Peter Castles.  
Assoc. Pastor/Youth Dir. Suzette Thorpe Johnson  
Church Council Chair Carolyn Smith  
Music Director/Pianist Jodi Blount  
Newsletter Editor Jill Lundstrom

[peter@cpfumc.org](mailto:peter@cpfumc.org)  
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[jodi\\_blount@hotmail.com](mailto:jodi_blount@hotmail.com)  
[lund121@me.com](mailto:lund121@me.com)

Be sure to put "Newsletter" in the subject for Connections submissions!



# CPFUMC Calendar July 2022

Click [here](#) to go to the most up to date online calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
UM Army						
8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person	10am - Piano Lessons - 6:30pm - Council Meeting 7:30pm - Centering	9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM		3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	10:30am - Women's 7:30pm - Alcoholics	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person 12pm - Potluck Luncheon	10am - Piano Lessons - 7pm - TRUSTEES in- 7:30pm - Centering	9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 10am - Piano Lessons - 11am - Prayer Shawl		3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	10:30am - Women's 7:30pm - Alcoholics	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person	10am - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Centering	9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 10am - Piano Lessons - 11am - Prayer Shawl	6:30pm - PEO Meeting	3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	10:30am - Women's 7:30pm - Alcoholics	10am - PEO Meeting @
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person	10am - Piano Lessons - 7:30pm - Centering	9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 10am - Piano Lessons - 5:30pm - Prayer Shawl	9:30am - Mbrshp, Care & 6:30pm - Buckle & Bows	3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	<b>NEWSLETTER Input Due</b> 10:30am - Women's 7:30pm - Alcoholics	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person	10am - Piano Lessons - 6:30pm - Council Meeting 7:30pm - Centering	9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 10am - Piano Lessons - 11am - Prayer Shawl		3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	10:30am - Women's 7:30pm - Alcoholics	
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
8:30am - In-Person 9:45am - SS in-person & 10:45am - In-Person	10am - Piano Lessons - 7pm - TRUSTEES in- 7:30pm - Centering	9:30am - Morning Prayer 10am - Bible Study 10am - HCCM 10am - Piano Lessons - 11am - Prayer Shawl		3:30pm - Piano Lessons -	10:30am - Women's 7:30pm - Alcoholics	