

THE CLARION

JANUARY 2026

CLARE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Making Disciples of Jesus by Helping People Know God,
Grow in Faith, and Share Christ's Love



BEAST FEAST

COMMUNITY WILD GAME DINNER(FREE)

January 17th



at 6 p.m.



in the Clare

**United Methodist Church,
105 E. Seventh Street,
Fellowship Hall**



FREE

Community Dinner

January 31



Clare United Methodist Church

105 E. 7th Street Clare, Michigan 48617

4:00 – 5:30 pm

Food Service available until 5:30 pm

Last Saturday of every Month

*Soups * Sandwiches * Coffee
* Desserts * Music


Making Disciples of Jesus by
Helping People Know God,
Grow in Faith, and Share God's Love

We would love for you to join us!

*If you have any questions please contact
Our church office 989-386-2591*

CLARE UMC STAFF AND SCHEDULE

Pastor:

Pastor Brian Comiskey pastorbrianc@clareumc.org
517-215-8637

Leadership Team Chair:

Mary Ann Shurlow Scott

Administrative Assistant:

Judy Bailey: jbaily@clareumc.org

Music Director: **Tracy Lubs**

Clare UMC Preschool and Child Care Center

Director: **Terri Banasak:** terrib@clareumc.org
phone: 989-386-4815

Church Office Hours

Church Office phone: 989-386-2591

10:00 - noon & 1-4:00 p.m.

Monday – Friday

Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Sunday School 9 a.m.

**DO YOU HAVE CONCERNS? FEEL FREE TO
EMAIL OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM EMAILS:**

Larry Wyman Jr. : ldwyman@charter.net

MaryAnn Shurlow Scott:

maryannshurlow@gmail.com

Pastor Brian Comiskey :

pastorbrianc@clareumc.org

Tracy Brooks: trbrooks8@yahoo.com

Elvis Denton: elvis@toast.net

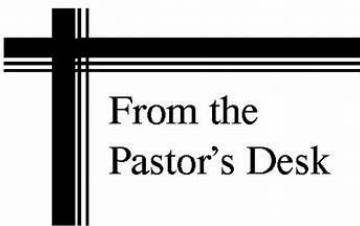
Connie McGregor: conniemcgregor3@gmail.com

Mary Lee: mary_lee10@hotmail.com

Macy Tyler: macytyler@rocketmail.com

Lenny Wixson: Lenn.wixson@gmail.com





From the Pastor's Desk

Greetings in Christ...and Happy New Year! Every January, I find myself reflecting on the old year, any accomplishments as well as what I would like to improve on. A few days ago, I read a short article from a Christian publication that was giving suggestions on how to help make the New Year, let's say, more

spiritually optimal. Maybe it is because I like to try and keep things simple, but in all the list, the one that spoke to me and inspired me the most was the suggestion to pick a scripture for the year and make it your focus. Meditate on it. Let it sink in. Make it a part of your everyday life.

I really like this idea. Sometimes we feel overwhelmed by how much we feel we have to do. To throw one more thing on the pile can seem daunting. But can I do this one thing in the morning? Read this one scripture? Take a moment to think about it before I stand up out of bed, and read it once before going to sleep? Yes, I can do that.

Because of course, as my wife likes to say, I have to fiddle with everything, I had the thought, one scripture for a whole year doesn't seem like enough. Maybe one every quarter of a year, or even one a month. Either way, it is a simple, yet powerful way to help allow the scriptures to permeate our lives. We let ourselves absorb them, just a little bit every day, and watch how our faith deepens and our joy increases.

If I had to pick one scripture for the church, I would choose this one. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things well be added unto you -Matthew 6:33. (And if you sang that in your mind as the hymn, let's finish it...Alleluuu-Alleluiah) That is going to be my own focus scripture for this first part of the year.

Why that particular one? Because it covers all the bases! If we put as much energy as we could in seeking God, putting God first, recognizing and realizing the incredible fullness, wholeness, righteousness, and transforming power of God, then what do we have to fear? In what way would we be lacking? All of the things will be added unto us! And it doesn't have to be an outward theatrical extravaganza of a showing of our devotion. Just a quiet, inward devotion will do. After all, the Kingdom of God is within us.

Whatever you may do the coming months to grow your spiritual lives, I pray that you will have the most blessed Year, filled with opportunities to serve, moments of joy with friends and family, and most of all, experiences of the Divine Love, Divine Wisdom, and peace from within, through the source of our joy, Jesus Christ.

Peace and blessings always, dear friends,

Pastor Brian



JUST A NOTE FROM CHIPPY

Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength Deuteronomy 6:5

I am so thankful for the life God has given me and the love that my best friend gives me. I cannot help but Love my Lord God for what He has given me in every way. I'm also very thankful for this church family that treats me like I'm a part of their family.

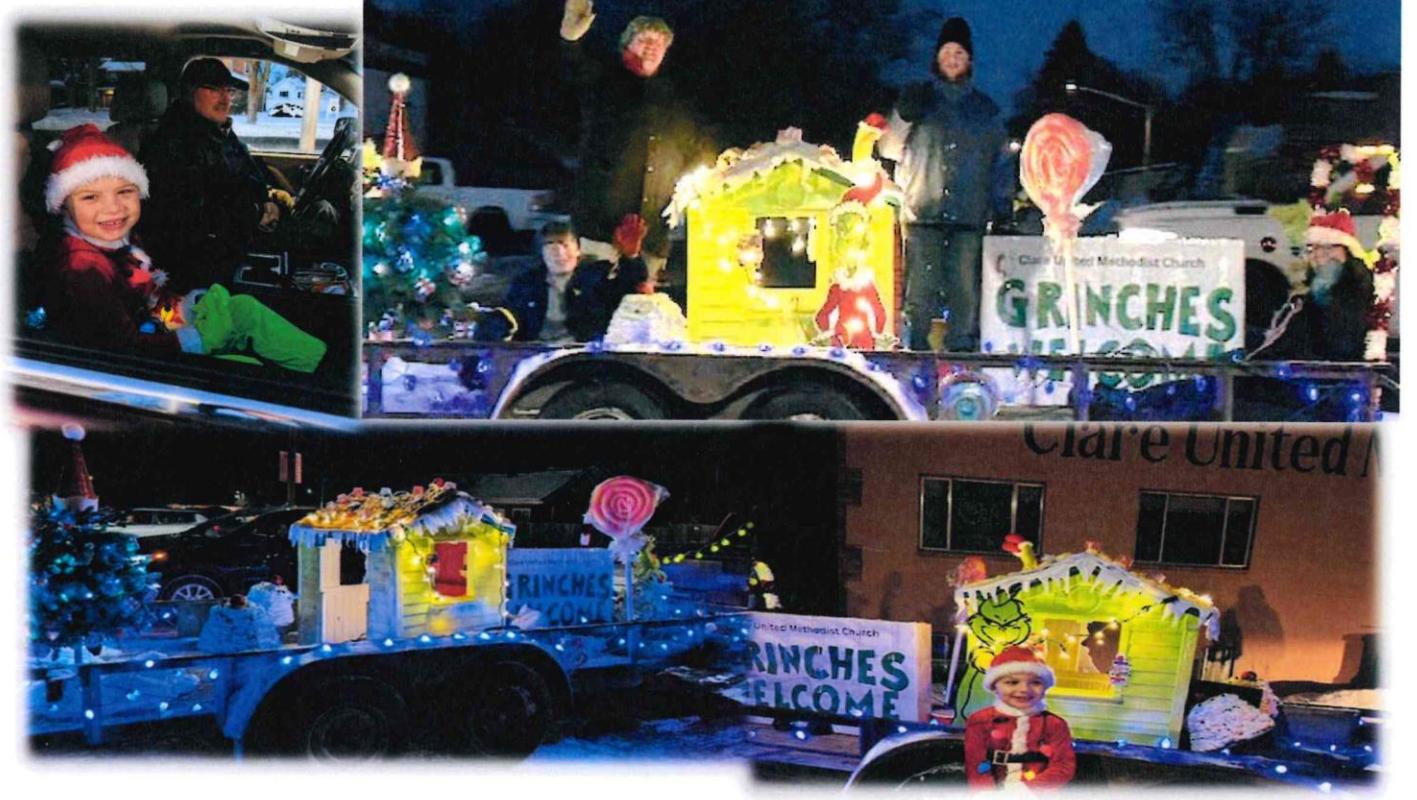
We Hope you all have a very Happy New Year!! "2026"

Be safe out there this winter, and on Jan. 1 we only have 79 more Days before Spring!! We can't wait!!

**OUR FUN
LADIES
ADVENT
LUNCHEON
PHOTOS
ON DEC. 9
AT THE
DOHERTY
HOTEL**



PHOTOS OF OUR FLOAT IN THE CHRISTMAS PARADE
THANK YOU TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN BUILDING THE FLOAT AND
THANK YOU TO DAVE LEE FOR PROVIDING THE TRAILOR AND FOR
PULLING THE TRAILOR IN THE PARADE. AND TO JACKIE & JASON
KELLY FOR PROVIDING THE PROPS AND FOR LETTING COOPER
PARTICIPATE.



OUR LIVE NATIVITY DEC. 23 & 24
THANK YOU TO ALL OF THOSE WHO
PARTICIPATED



SHARING SOME RECIPES THAT SOME OF YOU SHARED WITH US

Lemon Fruit Cake

Layered Jello Salad

Ingredients:

1 lb butter
2 1/2 cups brown sugar
6 eggs
4 1/2 cups flour
8 oz candied cherries
8 oz candied pineapple
1 lb pecans
2 oz pure lemon extract

Cream butter, sugar and eggs. Mix until creamy.

Add lemon extract

Add 1/2 of the flour to fruit and nuts.

Add remaining flour to butter mixture

Combine nuts and fruit mixture in with the wet ingredients.

Line 2 loaf pans with parchment paper.

Pour mixture evenly into both pans.

Bake at 300 for 2 hours until golden brown and the cake starts to pull away slightly from the edges.

This recipe was something my grandma would make at Christmas and send to us in a CARE package every year. We looked forward to it almost as much as Christmas itself!

Submitted by Alicyn Johnson
December 2025

Snowball Cookies aka Italian Wedding Cookies

Ingredients:

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1/2 cup confectioner's sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-1/4 cup flour
1 cup chopped pecans (walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts)
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup confectioner's sugar (more if needed)

Beat butter, 1/2 cup sugar and vanilla in a large bowl until smooth. Add flour, nuts and salt.

Roll dough into teaspoon size ball. Place 2" apart on an ungreased cookie sheet.

Bake at 350 until bottoms start to brown but tops stay pale, cracked, about 12-15 minutes.

Cool for 10-15 minutes. Roll warm cookies in 1/2 cup confectioner's sugar. Once cookies cool completely, roll again in sugar.

Store in an airtight container.

This recipe is an ode to all holiday meals my mother served some form of Jello. Now I make it because it is my grandson's favorite. He has even been heard to exclaim, "I don't know how Nana makes that Jello taste so good!"

This is a multi-layered Jello. I make 3 layers but you can adapt it to how many layers you desire. I use flavors where the color matches the season. For example, for Christmas I use 2 red and 1 green.

Ingredients:

Packages of 3 oz Jello (each package makes 2 layers)
1 pint sour cream
3T cold water

Dissolve 1 package of Jello in 1 cup boiling water. Divide 1/2 cup plus 1T. Add 1/2 cup sour cream. Blend until smooth using wire whisk. Pour into the dish and chill for 20 minutes or until firm.

Add 3T cold water to the remaining half of Jello. Pour over first layer. Chill. Continue with layers as desired.

Enjoy!

From the kitchen of
Connie McGregor
December 2025

Peanut Butter M & M Cookies

Ingredients:

2 cups margarine/butter
1 cup brown sugar
4 eggs, separated yolks from whites
2 T vanilla
1 t salt
4 cups flour
1 lb crushed walnuts
Peanut butter M & M's

Combine butter and sugar. Mix until creamy. Add egg yolks and vanilla. Mix thoroughly.

Add flour and salt. Mix until combined.

Form into tablespoon size balls. Dip in egg whites then roll in crushed walnuts.

Bake at 350 degrees for 5 minutes. Make a thumbprint in each cookie. Continue baking 5 more minutes. Allow to cool completely.

Top with frosting and M & M's.

This recipe is Judy Bailey's favorite Christmas cookie recipe.

From the kitchen of Kathy Hopkins
December 2025

Shared by Diane Boudreau
December 2025

Glorified Rice

Ingredients:

1 cup long grain rice
2 cups water
½ cup sugar
1 - 15 oz can crushed pineapple, drained
¾ cup chopped walnuts
1 - 8 oz container Cool Whip
1 - 10 oz jar of maraschino cherries, drained and halved
Mint leaves for garnish

Cook rice. Fluff with a fork. Let cool. Sprinkle with sugar.

Add crushed pineapple, walnuts and maraschino cherries to COOLED rice.

Fold in Cool Whip to desired consistency. Chill for at least 4 hours.

Garnish with maraschino cherries pieces and mint leaves arranged to resemble holly.

Serve fully chilled.

Enjoy!

From the kitchen of Connie Berg
December 2025

Stuffed Mushrooms

Ingredients:

1 lb bulk sausage
1 Tablespoon chopped onion
1 Tablespoon dried parsley
¼ teaspoon pepper
1 clove of garlic, minced
1 - 8 oz pkg cream cheese, cubed
40 medium mushrooms
½ cup melted butter

Brown sausage until crumbly. Drain. Set aside.

Add onion, parsley, pepper and garlic to cubed cream cheese. Combine cream cheese mixture with crumbled sausage. Mix well.

Wash mushrooms and discard stems.

Place mushrooms in a single layer baking dish.

Stuff caps with sausage mixture.

Drizzle caps with melted butter.

Bake at 350 for 20 minutes.

Serve and enjoy!

Submitted by Connie Berg
December 2025

Christmas Wassail

Ingredients:

1 gallon apple cider
1 46 oz cranberry juice
1 quart orange juice*
1 quart pineapple juice*
Sliced oranges and lemons
Cranberries
Cinnamon sticks
Brown sugar as desired
Ginger, clove or other seasonings as desired

Pour all liquids in a large pot or crock pot. Simmer all day and drink at will!
Best served hot.

* I usually use either orange or pineapple, not both together

From the kitchen of Wendy Wixson
December 2025

Cranberry Cream Cheese Spread

Ingredients:

1 cup washed fresh or frozen cranberries
½ cup water
¼ cup granulated sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon salt
1 Tablespoon Balsamic vinegar
Dash of black pepper
Zest of one orange (approx 2 Tablespoons)
8 oz cream cheese, softened

Combine cranberries, water, sugar, cinnamon and salt in a small saucepan. Stir. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and allow to simmer until thick, about 10 minutes.

Remove cranberry sauce from heat. Cool for 5 minutes.

Add vinegar, black pepper and orange zest. Stir to combine.

Spread softened cream cheese onto a plate. Top with the cranberry sauce.

Serve with crackers, pretzels, bread, rolls or whatever you like!

Submitted by Ashley Hayer
December 2025

CHEESEBALL

Two 8-oz. packages of cream cheese, softened
1 stick of butter, softened
1 small bunch of green onions, chopped
1 small can of chopped black olives, drained (no one knows they are in there)
1 package of chopped pecans (you can toast them). I never have done this and it turns out good. I use the larger bag of pecans, (8 oz?)

Blend cream cheese and butter together (I use my hands with plastic gloves). Add onions and black olives. Roll into a ball. Refrigerate until hard enough to roll in a pile of pecans. Coat the ball with pecans and re-refrigerate. This can be made ahead a couple of days. It is best if it is in the refrigerator at least a couple of hours before serving to harden up.

Submitted by Ellen Fuller

No-Fuss Beef Rib Roast (Yield 6-8servings)

1 1/2 tsp seasoned salt
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp onion powder
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
1-4-6# standing rib roast
1/2 cup butter, cubed

Combine first 4 ingredients; rub over roast.

Place roast, fat side up, in a roasting pan. Dot with butter.

Bake, UNCOVERED, @ 350°F for 1 3/4 hours to 3 hours or until meat reaches desired doneness. (It might look black like it's burning, it's not!)

Submitted by Connie Berg
December 2025

Clare County Right to Life
PO Box 21
Farwell, Mi. 48622

December 12, 2025

Dear Clare United Methodist Church,

We would like to thank you so much for participating in the 2025 Baby Bottle Project.

There were 21 churches that participated in the project this year. The total amount collected was almost \$9500, and your church very generously gave \$198.34. We would appreciate it if you would share our deep gratitude with your congregation who were so wonderful to take home a baby bottle or give a donation to support God's precious gift of life.

The funds have been given to the Clare County Baby Pantry, Joshua's House a Place of Hope, and His Helping Hands, who are organizations that are dedicated to the spiritual and physical needs of mothers and families in Clare County. We also use some of the funds to educate our citizens to the value of all life.

We are very thankful that you shared this Baby Bottle Project with your church family so we can help prevent abortions and help families in need. We thank you and praise our Savior and King for his abundant blessings.

Sincerely,
Clare County Right to Life

II Corinthians 9: 10-11

*Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.
You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.*



**WE WOULD LIKE TO
EXPRESS OUR
DEEPEST SYMPATHY
TO DEB & TROY
BONGARD AND
FAMILY ON THE LOSS
OF DEB'S MOTHER,
KATHRYN IRENE
GEROW.**

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Kleinhardt, Kim
- Kleinhardt, Tom
- Norlander, Kayla
- 2 Cooper, Allen
- 3 Swan, Dick
- 5 Mater, Anna
- Bromley, Dennis
- 8 Franklin, Marsha
- 9 Bentley, Savannah
- 10 Thayer, Sue
- 11 Kingsbury, Melonie
- 12 Lane, Marjorie
- 13 Krell, Erin
- Teall, Don
- 14 Everts, Barb
- LeBoeuf, Joyce
- 16 David, Brian
- Wyman Sr., Larry
- 17 Bongard, Troy
- Shurlow-Phillips, Wilma
- Ellison, Debra
- Koch, Kelly
- 18 Bryans, Rita
- Schunk, Mike
- 20 Benic, Alaine
- Taylor, Anthony
- 21 Ward, Kim
- 23 Brecht, Michelle
- 24 Seibt, Bailey
- 25 Lubs, Kylie
- 27 Wagoner, Jan
- 28 Chilson, Ashlyn
- Yats, Amanda
- 30 Bryans, Louis
- 31 Miller, Caley



CHRISTIAN WOMEN CONNECTION



"Happy New Year"

Thursday, January 8, 2026

11:45 – 1:45 p.m.

Special Feature: Jeffrey Walton, R.Ph.
"Compounded Medications"
Coleman Family Pharmacy

Special Music: Ruth Fretz
from Sears, MI

Inspirational Speaker: Lisa Saruga, from Michigan, will share how healing is possible after surviving a violent crime. She will share how to remove obstacles that stand in the way of hope, justice, and forgiveness to have a closer walk with Jesus. "Demolition Day"

**All this plus lunch & beverage for \$ 21.00 at
Cheers Neighborhood Grill
1700 W. High St. (W M20), Mt. Pleasant, MI**

Reservations are due by Jan. 6th.
Edie (989) 463-3287 * Ruth (989) 492-4199
Or Lona (989) 387-4808
Or email Lona at Lonahamilton@yahoo.com



**OUR EXTRA MILE GIVING IN JANUARY
WILL GO FOR OUR FREE WILD GAME
DINNER ON JAN 17.**

THANK YOU!!



Thank you so much for the beautiful poinsettia plant and Christmas cards. We also appreciate your prayers and sympathy card on the passing of my nephew David. Mike and I are blessed to have you all in our lives.

**Thanks again,
Rose & Mike Musser**

THANK YOU!!



**Thank you so much to my church family for the lovely poinsettia and to Kindra for delivering of it.
I hope you have a great "Holiday"
God Bless, Betty Mussell**

A NOTE FROM JEAN & JAMIE BLOW

Hi-

Hope this finds you and your family well.



Mom is very weak but alert and knows what is going on. She spends most of her time in bed watching TV and napping. Maxine is still with her and one of us is with her from 11-6 every day so we can make sure she eats and is taken care of.

Gary flies down about every 4 months and spends 4-5 days with her. She really likes it when he is here. He did not retire this year but is talking about it in the summer.

I spent the last year getting used to being retired and working on my golf game. My golf swing is getting more consistent and when I am swinging well my long game is decent. I continue to work on swing consistency and am now working more on chipping a putting as that is a definite weakness.

I still have things to do around the house. I had sod put in last spring and planted some trees and shrubs. I am extending the sod in my backyard as I have decided it is easier to mow grass than fight weeds and keep adding pine straw. I will plant more perennials and shrubs that are pollinator friendly this spring. Trying to do a some and let things grow so I don't over plant. I also don't want a lot of shrubs that require trimming.

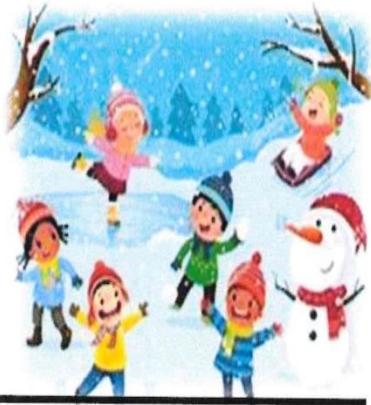


MOTHER HUBBARD'S CUPBOARD

**IN JANUARY WE WILL BE COLLECTING: Facial tissues,
Toilet paper, Paper towels, Paper Napkins, Ziplock bags (1 qt. & 1 gal.), Aluminum foil, Baby Wipes (Unscented), Pull-Ups (Sizes 3T, 4T, 5T)FOR OUR PRESCHOOL/CHILD CARE CENTER**



January 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
REMINDER, THAT OUR BEAST FEAST IS JAN 17 AT 6 P.M. WE ARE LOOKING FOR DONATIONS OF SALADS AND DESSERTS AND LOTS AND LOTS OF HELP!! SIGN UP SHEETS WILL BE IN THE CHURCH LOBBY				1 11:00 -3 ACCEPT CLOTHING AT THRIFT STORE 1:00 AA ONLY 79 DAYS TILL SPRING	2 10-4 THRIFT STORE AA 8-9:30 P.M.	3 FOOD TRUCK IN HARRISON 9 AM 10-4 THRIFT STORE 12 NOON AA
4 9:00 SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00 WORSHIP 2:00 YOUTH GROUP	5 AA 12-1:30 6:15 WEIGHTS 6:45 YOGA	6 AA 8-9:30 P.M.	7 6:15 WEIGHTS 6:45 YOGA 8:00 AA	8 11:00 -3 ACCEPT CLOTHING AT THRIFT STORE 1:00 AA	9 10-4 THRIFT STORE AA 8-9:30 P.M.	10 10-4 THRIFT STORE 12 NOON AA
11 9:00 SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00 WORSHIP 2:00 YOUTH GROUP	12 AA 12-1:30 6:15 WEIGHTS 6:45 YOGA	13 6 P.M. LEADERSHIP TEAM AA 8-9:30 P.M.	14 6:15 WEIGHTS 6:45 YOGA 8:00 AA	15 11:00 -3 ACCEPT CLOTHING AT THRIFT STORE 1:00 AA	16 10-4 THRIFT STORE AA 8-9:30 P.M.	17 10-4 THRIFT STORE 12 NOON AA BEAST FEAST 6 P.M.
18 9:00 SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00 WORSHIP 2:00 YOUTH GROUP	19 AA 12-1:30 6:15 WEIGHTS 6:45 YOGA	20 6PM PCCC BOARD MEETING AA 8-9:30 P.M.	21 6:15 WEIGHTS 6:45 YOGA 8:00 AA	22 11:00 -3 ACCEPT CLOTHING AT THRIFT STORE 1:00 AA	23 10-4 THRIFT STORE AA 8-9:30 P.M.	24 10-4 THRIFT STORE 12 NOON AA
25 9:00 SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00 WORSHIP 2:00 YOUTH GROUP	26 AA 12-1:30 6:15 WEIGHTS 6:45 YOGA	27 AA 8-9:30 P.M.	28 6:15 WEIGHTS 6:45 YOGA 8:00 AA	29 11:00 -3 ACCEPT CLOTHING AT THRIFT STORE 1:00 AA	30 10-4 THRIFT STORE AA 8-9:30 P.M.	31 10-4 THRIFT STORE 12 NOON AA 4:50 COMMUNITY DINNER ONLY 48 DAYS TILL SPRING