The Epistle

First Baptist Church of Vienna, Va. | "Fruit Bearing Disciples"



From Pastor Walton's Desk

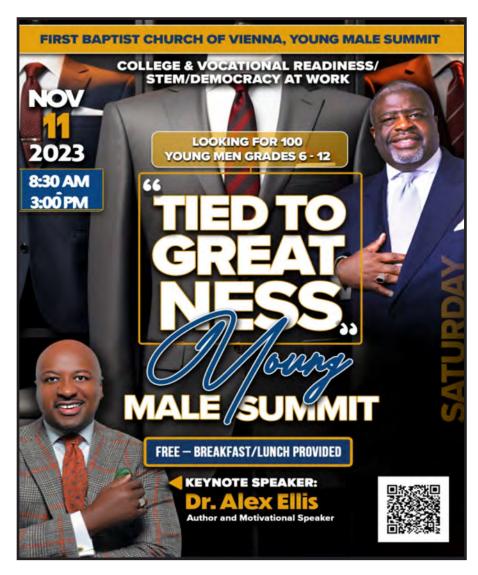
Grace and peace from God our Father!

ow to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." These words, found in the book of Ephesians chapter 3 verses 20-21 remind me that God's provision far exceeds our expectations.

This time of the year always sparks a deep sense of gratitude for all God has given to us. I am especially thankful for the faithful stewardship of many who have sustained our ministry. I truly enjoy this season in the life of our ministry as it is a time when we can express our gratitude to God through giving. Throughout the season we share our many blessings with those in our community who may not be feeling the abundance of God because of their current circumstances.

We are indeed planning to share the love of Christ in the coming months through our extravagant giving and risk-taking mission and service. We will be providing 300 thanksgiving baskets to families in need and 300 Christmas blessing bags to children who might not otherwise gifts.





PASTOR, continued on page 7

Bounty of Thanks

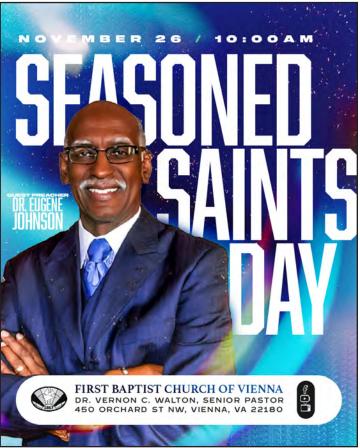
We thank thee, Lord, for the glory of the late days and the excellent face of thy sun. We thank thee for good news received. We thank thee for the pleasures we have enjoyed and for those we have been able to confer.

And now, when the clouds gather and the rain impends over the forest and our house, permit us not to be cast down; let us not lose the savor of past mercies and past pleasures; but, like the voice of a bird singing in the rain, let grateful memory survive in the hour of darkness. If there be in front of us any painful duty, strengthen us with the grace of courage; if any act of mercy, teach us tenderness and patience.

-ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON







Mission Moments

t is that time of the year again when our missions efforts kick into full gear as we engage in our Season of Giving. Each year we at First Baptist we partner with area schools, organizations, programs to help make the holidays a little brighter. The opportunities below represent some of the ways we will be serving the community as we close out the year and we need your full support to ensure that we carry each of them out with excellence!

Coat Drive

As we prepare for our Thanksgiving dinner and the changing weather we are collecting new and clean, gently used coats for children of all ages, men and women. Please only donate coats that are clean and good condition. There will be a coat rack on the lower level where you can leave your donations. We will make these coats available during our Thanksgiving dinner and to our partner organizations. Let's do our part to help keep people warm this winter.

Thanksgiving Basket Distribution

We will be distributing 300 thanksgiving baskets on Saturday, November 18th. The baskets will include fresh produce, pantry items, and a turkey. Recipients will not only have a turkey and all the trimmings, but will also have food items to help carry them beyond the Thanksgiving holiday. You can assist by signing up to help pack the thanksgiving basket item, assist with the pick up an delivery of baskets, or by submitting the names of families who may benefit from receiving the baskets to the church office. Please note: priority will be given to families who have not received a basket in the past. In addition, this is not a drive through distribution and registration is required.

Thanksgiving Dinner

All are invited to join us as we host a special Thanksgiv-ing Dinner on Saturday, November 25th. Our invited guests include college students, families from programs we support, as well our unhoused neighbors. We invite you not only to serve on this day, but to join us for the meal and utilize this opportunity to share with our guests.

Cocoa with Santa

What better way to kick off the Christmas season than by having Cocoa with Santa? In addition, we will be hosting a Jingle Jam? What is a Jingle Jam? It is a fun and engag-ing opportunity for the entire family that will include drama, music, games and lots of laughs! Santa will also be joining us and taking pictures with our guests. We will have some fun, learn more about the reason for the season, and have some great prizes and giveaways. The entire community is invited and we hope you and your

Christmas Blessing Bags

We will be gifting 300 children with Christmas Blessing Bags this season. These bags include new age appropriate toys, games, crafts and books for children from 0-18. In addition, the bags include essential like socks, hats, and gloves for the recipients. Each Christmas blessing bag contains 8-10 gift items which need to be wrapped and so we need lots of hands to assist with gift wrapping. In addition, we will need assistance with putting together the gift packages and deliveries.

We have a lot happening at First and we are always in need of volunteers for our various upcoming opportunities. To help make it more convenient for members and friends to sign up to share their time and talent, we have created a Link Tree. We are constantly updating the link tree as new opportunities emerge. To view upcoming opportunities, simply scan the QR code to review and sign up for all of our upcoming opportunities to serve.



Are you looking for support to reach your health goals?

DIABETES IS NOT OUR HERITAGE

hether you have diabetes, a family history of diabetes, are pre-diabetic, or just want to be more knowledgeable this program is for you!

Join WANDA and the American Diabetes Association to break the cycle of dis-ease! You will work with a lifestyle coach to track your health and get group support, tools and training to address diabetes. Together you will learn how to prevent, early detect, and treat diabetes.

The live hour Saturday sessions will be hosted at the Giant Food Congress Heights Wellness Center in Washington, DC.

The program runs from October to December 2023, and there is still time to sign up!

There is an in-person and virtual option. Sign up here: https://iamwanda.typeform.com/to/iwj7uXKa

For more info on WANDA (Women and girls advancing nutrition dietetics and agriculture) click here: https://www.iamwanda.org

—Submitted by Lisa Harris

family will join us as well. 3 • EPISTLE • FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VIENNA • NOVEMBER 2023

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

MINISTRY UPDATE

ovember, the eleventh month of the year, brings with it a sense of transition. As the vibrant colors of autumn give way to the approaching winter chill, it's a time for reflection and preparation. In the world of faith and spirituality, November is a great season of ministry, marked by various events and activities that allow individuals to deepen their connection with the divine and their spiritual community.

Family Prayer Call

One of the highlights of November in the world of our ministry is the Family Prayer Call, a dedicated time for young individuals and families to come together and share their faith and hopes. Every evening at 7:30 p.m., young believers gather to engage in a collective prayer session, embracing the power of unity in their faith. This daily ritual fosters a sense of community and enables these youths to find strength in their shared beliefs. It's an opportunity to seek guidance, find support, and reflect on their faith journey.

The Family Prayer Call offers a safe space for young people to discuss their concerns, ask questions, and express their gratitude. This open dialogue helps them develop a deeper understanding of their faith and connect with their peers who share similar spiritual journeys.

Youth Lecture Series

November also presents the opportunity to engage in the Youth Lecture Series, an event designed to enrich the spiritual lives of young people. Hosted at 10 AM every 4th Sunday, this series features Min KJ and special guest facilitators who provide valuable insights and teachings on various aspects

of faith, life, and personal growth. The series covers a range of topics, from understanding scripture to developing leadership skills, and navigating the challenges of youth in today's world.

The Youth Lecture Series serves as a source of inspiration and empowerment, equipping young individuals with the knowledge and tools they need to lead fulfilling and meaningful lives. It encourages them to actively participate in the spiritual community, fostering personal growth and a stronger connection to their faith.

November: The Perfect Time for Ministry

Transition and Reflection: As the year winds down and winter approaches, November provides an excellent opportunity for reflection and spiritual growth. The changing seasons can serve as a metaphor for personal transformation and renewal.

Unity and Community: The Youth Prayer Call and the Youth Lecture Series foster a sense of unity and community among young believers. It's a time to build lasting relationships with like-minded individuals and find support on their spiritual journey.

Empowerment and Inspiration: The teachings and discussions during the Youth Lecture Series offer a wealth of inspiration and empowerment. Young people are encouraged to step into leadership roles within their spiritual communities and apply their faith to everyday challenges.

Excellence Academy

Every Thursday at 5:30pm

Excellence Academy, a beacon of educational and artistic excellence, stands as a testament to the power of

holistic learning and the transformative impact of music on young minds. This unique academic and music enrichment program, founded on a vision of nurturing well-rounded individuals, has been instrumental in shaping the future of countless students. In this article, we will explore the key facets that make Excellence Academy a remarkable institution for those seeking a harmonious blend of academic and musical development.

A Fusion of Academia and Music

At Excellence Academy, we believe in the potential for synergies between academic and musical education. The institution offers a balanced curriculum that combines rigorous academic coursework with comprehensive music instruction. This dual focus empowers students to not only excel in their studies but also develop into accomplished musicians.

In conclusion, November is indeed a great season of ministry, with its focus on youth prayer, engagement, and empowerment. The Family Prayer Call, Youth Lecture Series, and Excellence Academy provide opportunities for young individuals to deepen their connection with their faith and their fellow believers. This month offers a unique chance to reflect on the year that has passed and to prepare for the year ahead with a renewed sense of purpose and faith. Embracing these opportunities, young people can grow and thrive in their spiritual journey, ensuring that November is truly a season of ministry that leaves a lasting impact.

—Minister KJ

College Connection

WELCOME

Isaiah Bowman: Freshman at Howard University majoring in Computer Information Systems

NEW College Connection Scholars... We need to hear from you!

The College Connection Ministry needs to hear from the following scholars of the FBCV Freshman class:

Chelsea ColterZachary ByasDamierah WalkerGeorge Mason UniversityStevenson UniversityVirginia State University

Please contact Ms.Arnitra Duckett (arnitrad@mac.com or 404-798-5252) or Minister KJ (kjones@fbcv.org) as we are missing your college information.

Are you in the College Connection Know?

There is a College Connection GroupMe and that is how we stay in touch with all of our scholars. We encourage all Scholars to stay in the know. Send us a quick "Hi" so we know you are receiving our updates. Not sure, you are in the GroupMe?

Join using this link:

https://groupme.com/join_group/90794491/kDQlsjbE

Be our Scholar Spotlight

Are you doing great things at school or in the community? Each month, we would like to spotlight a scholar. Share your good news via our GroupMe chat or email/text Ms. Arnitra. We want to shine a light on you.

November Check-in With Minister K.I

More information on the date and time will be available in the College Connection GroupMe

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

It's Early Action (EA) and Early Decision season. Don't forget to complete your Common Application and polish up your essays. Let us know when you send your applications in so we can keep your FBCV family up to date on your road to college. Stay tuned for scholarship information in the coming months.

—Submitted by Arnitra Duckett

NOVEMBER 11 Veterans Day HONORING THOSE WHO

FBCV Announces Deadlines for 2023 IRS Tax Credit

Those giving to FBCV who want tithes and other church contributions recorded for 2023 must submit them by December 31.

December 24 is the last Sunday for giving cash or checks during worship at church for 2023 Internal Revenue Service (IRS) credit. Cheryl Janey Calhoun, FBCV Trustee servant leader, also wants members to note that cash or checks must be received at FBCV by Thursday, December 28 because Friday, December 29, is the last banking business day for the year.

Electronic contributions will be accepted until December 31 and credited for 2023 through Givelify and the FBCV CashApp at \$FBCVOrchard.

— Rick Taylor, Epistle Staff Writer

BOOK LAUNCH!

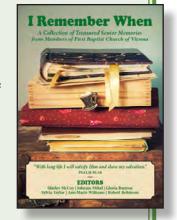
I Remember When, will be launched at a reception on Nov. 26 which is Senior Saints Sunday. The

reception will be held in the Kenny Smith Fellowship Hall immediately following the worship service.

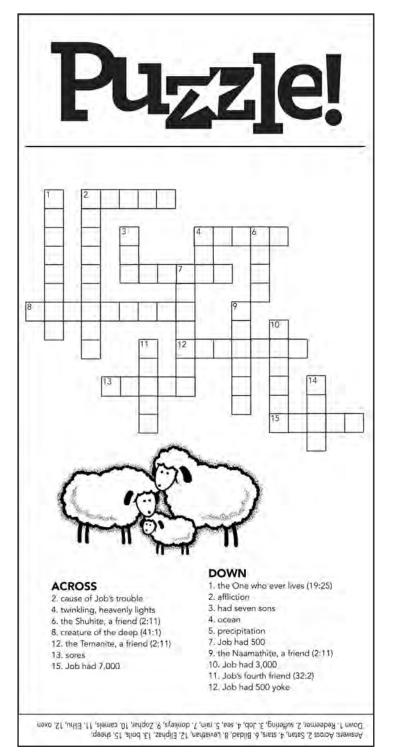
Participants in the book have received a special invitation and all are welcome.

Please come out to celebrate these lives well lived!

—The Book Committee







SWAP Making Changes for Fall

eaves are changing and falling from trees at a quick rate indicating the fall season. While the season is changing, SWAP (Seniors With A Purpose Ministry) is offering activities for seniors at FBCV and in the community. Apple picking was one trip they made in October. Also, SWAP offered a birthday party for those members born in October with a light lunch and a cupcake. During each quarter names will be gathered with the next birthday celebration in January. SWAP requests seniors who have a birthday in November, December, or January to submit their name to SWAP. Johnnie Mikel is the SWAP Ministry Events Coordinator and she can be reached at (703) 505-1979.

Every Tuesday at 11 a.m., members of SWAP are invited to join the Bible Study offered by Pastor Walton. Currently, they are studying John. There are other plans for studying the arts and being in fellowship. Our ministry serves not only members, but also serves the community. If you know a senior in another church that might want to join our activities, they are welcome.

The announcement for the Jazz Brunch in December will be made soon. —Submitted by Esther McCullough

Take Time to Recharge

"Then Jesus said, 'Let's go off by ourselves to a quiet place and rest awhile.' He said this because there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat" (Mark 6:31, NLT). Can you relate? Especially during the holidays, we're "coming and going" so much that we often run out of steam.

As an introvert, I learned an important lesson while navigating a busy graduation season for my son. I was happy to host a celebration for family and friends, but about 20 minutes into the party, fatigue clouded my spirit. My social battery was empty and desperately needed charging.

I sought out my cousin — who "gets" me — and admitted I needed a break. He kindly replied, "Then go into another room and just be. We've got things covered." I was heard and assured that it was okay to press pause. Even Jesus and his disciples sought privacy and rest.

In what ways do you need a break today? Even if you're an extrovert, how can you care for your whole self during the holiday rush? Pay attention and give yourself permission to proactively recharge your battery.

—Janna Firestone

Pastor, continued from page 1

Additionally, we are bringing back our in-person Thanksgiving dinner this year. I hope you will not only sign up to serve at the dinner but also join our guests in a time of fellowship and breaking of bread. We want to extend radical hospitality to everyone who joins us.

Each of us has so much for which to offer God our gratitude. It is my prayer that each of you will join me in Gratitude Giving by minimally giving \$156 toward our upcoming missions projects as we prepare to celebrate the 156th anniversary of the First Baptist Church of Vienna ministry. What better way to celebrate our rich legacy than to impact our community through our generosity giving!

I am asking that you give your Gratitude Giving gift by December 3rd, our church anniversary. I truly believe that we can accomplish great things if only rely on the power that works in us.



FBCV Member Goldie Harrison for the loss of her brother, Ralph Charles Jordon

FBCV Members Lisa Williams and Wanda Gregory for the loss of their father, Louis D. Gregory

Altar flowers

Deacon Michael Clinton to celebrate the birthday of his wife Celia, and the birthday of his daughter Felicia.

—Compiled by Ceola Allen



Women's Ministry 'Herstory' Brunch

he Women's Ministry hosted a "Herstory" brunch, inspired by the mighty women of God in the Bible. As we read about Mary, Sarah, Hannah, and other strong holy women, we were blessed, strengthened, and encouraged by each of their stories.

FBCV women also shared their stories as well. Sydney Meekins, Marcia Taylor, and Cheryl Calhoun's stories showed vulnerability, courage, and inspiration. Each story was woven with the finer details of their lives, seasoned with memories and God's presence is in each chapter.

Min. Hazel Wynn led us in prayer to start. Arnitra Duckett emceed, and Deaconess Marjorie Duncan prayed us out. Keydish Jackson shared her talent through dancing and Candice Herbert provided a spoken word.

We want to thank Pastor Walton for seeing the value in our vision. To the planning committee team members, Shirley McCoy, Benita Thompson-Byas, Morgan Cooper, and Soraya Gunnell—thank you for your tireless work.

We cannot forget about everyone who went above and beyond to make this day special. Stacey Seay, Kwan McKnight, Goldie Harrison, Karen Cathey, Vicki West, Roger Akins, and our wonderful praise team members. And last, but definitely not least, THANK YOU to ALL our members and guests! Your presence made this day one that we will never forget.

Our hope and prayers are that we will continue to allow God to order our steps and to share our faith through our life stories with people who may come to know our Lord and Savior because of our witnessing.

— FBCV Women's Ministry Servant Leadership Team

To join the FBCV Women's Ministry, please reach out to the Servant Leadership team or email the church.



Celebrating 156 Years of Music Ministry at First Baptist Church of Vienna

usic has always been a powerful and essential element of worship in the church. At First Baptist Church of Vienna, this tradition has been upheld for 156 remarkable years, and we have countless reasons to be thankful for the growth of our music ministry. As we approach the momentous anniversary this December, we can't help but reflect on the incredible journey of our church and the role that music has played in its history. We invite you to join us and our dedicated choir in celebrating this amazing milestone, and we extend an open invitation for all who wish to be part of this special anniversary choir.

Heart of the Ministry

First Baptist Church of Vienna, like many churches, has always recognized the power of music to connect with the divine and to inspire the congregation. Music has the unique ability to transcend language, culture, and individual differences, bringing people together in a way that words alone often cannot. Over the past 156 years, our music ministry has played a vital role in fostering a sense of community, spirituality, and togetherness among our members.

Gratitude for the Journey

As we look back on the long and storied history of our church, we cannot help but feel immense gratitude for the journey that has brought us to this moment. The growth of our music ministry has been an integral part of this journey, accompanying us through times of joy and sorrow, change and constancy. From the early hymns sung by our founding members to the contemporary worship songs that resonate with our younger generations, music has been a dynamic thread connecting the past, present, and future of our church.

Music Ministry's Contribution

The music ministry has contributed in numerous ways to the life of First Baptist Church of Vienna. It has provided a platform for talented individuals within our congregation to share their gifts and to inspire others. Our choir, in particular, has been the heart and soul of our musical endeavors, uplifting our spirits and guiding us in our worship. Through their dedication and passion, they have enhanced our worship experiences and conveyed the messages of faith, hope, and love that are central to our beliefs.

A Special Invitation

As we prepare for the grand celebration of our 156th anniversary, we are extending a heartfelt invitation to all who wish to participate in this momentous event. Our anniversary choir will be at the forefront of this celebration, and we welcome singers of all backgrounds and experiences to join us. Whether you have been a member of our congregation for years or have just discovered our church, we invite you to be part of this extraordinary musical experience. Your voice, your spirit, and your presence will be a treasured addition to this celebration.

First Baptist Church of Vienna has witnessed 156 years of growth and spiritual evolution, and we are profoundly thankful for the role that our music ministry has played in this journey. It has been a source of inspiration, connection, and community for generations of worshipers. As we approach our anniversary in December, we look forward to celebrating not only the life of our church but also the legacy of music that continues to shape our faith. We hope you'll join us in this momentous celebration and consider being part of our anniversary choir. It's a joyous occasion that will undoubtedly resonate in our hearts and memories for years to come. Please email us if you'd like to join this amazing anniversary choir, and together, let us make this milestone an event to remember.

—Kwan McKnight

Following God's Lead

azz musician Thomas Dorsey traveled an unlikely road to become the "father of black gospel music." At age 11, he dropped out of school to be a vaudeville performer and blues pianist. While Dorsey recovered from a nervous breakdown at age 21, his mother urged him to serve the Lord with his talents. It took several years, but the musician committed to composing spiritual songs—rejected by many mainstream churches as "the devil's music."

In 1932, after Dorsey's wife and infant son died during childbirth, he channeled his grief into the piano, writing "Precious Lord, Take My Hand." Known to be a favorite song of Martin Luther King Jr., it ends with these lyrics: "Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light. Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home."

—NewsletterNewsletter.com

Money Matters: What Are Junk Fees and How Do They Affect You?

hether you're purchasing concert tickets, checking out of a hotel or canceling a cable subscription or gym membership, you've likely run into junk fees.

These are unexpected—and sometimes hidden—fees that companies charge you for a service that costs them little (or nothing) to provide.

Examples of junk fees include:

- Service charges for event tickets.
- Resort fees at hotels.
- Late payment fees for credit cards.
- Airline family seating fees.
- Termination fees for phone or internet service.
- Document preparation fees for financial transactions.
- Out-of-network ATM fees.
- Checking account overdraft fees.
- Restaurant living wage fees.
- Online convenience fees.

A lot of consumers are unaware of these fees until they complete a transaction or have received a product or service.

"A lot of times these fees are just ways for companies to secretly gouge consumers, or to get an unfair advantage over their competitors," says Teresa Murray, consumer watchdog with the U.S. Public Interest Research Group.

"If there is a fee that everyone is charging but one company isn't disclosing it, that can make one company seem like their product or service is cheaper. But they're just not being transparent," she adds.

In his State of the Union address, President Biden promised to crack down on these fees, asking Congress to pass the Junk Fee Prevention Act, which aims to limit companies' abilities to levy some of these charges.

"Junk fees make people feel angry, helpless, and frustrated—like they're being nickel-and-dimed," Nadine Chabrier, senior policy counsel working on federal policy and litigation at the Center for Responsible Lending, says.

"These fees affect virtually everyone, but financially vulnerable consumers frequently bear the brunt of such fees," she adds.

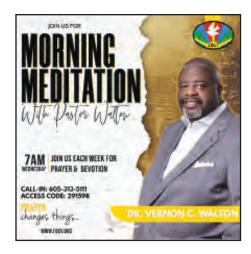
Limit the Impact of Junk Fees

Whether the legislation gets traction or not, there are ways to minimize the impact of some junk fees. For example, make sure to read the terms for any product or service you purchase—and push back or ask about any fees that seem egregious.

"Stop patronizing the places that keep hitting you with these stupid charges, and eventually they'll get the message that they shouldn't be charging them," says Howard Dvorkin, certified public accountant and chairman of Debt.com.

Take some time to decide what you can do to reduce the impact that junk fees have on your current spending activities. Your First Baptist Church Federal Credit Union may also be able to assist.

—Submitted by Willie Boykin based on an article for USNEWS by Beth Braverman, What are Junk Fees and How do they Impact You?









FIRST BAPTISTCHURCH

450 Orchard St. N.W., Vienna, Virginia 22180 (703) 938-8525 • www.fbcv.org Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Pastor

Trunk or Treat!



































Trunk or Treat!



























November

Fruit Bearing Disciples

SATURDAY	4	Food Distribution	, —	Young Male Summit	18	Thanksgiving Basket Distribution	25			
FRIDAY	3	12:00 pm Prayer Call	10	12:00 pm Prayer Call	17	12:00 pm Prayer Call	24	12:00 pm Prayer Call		12:00 pm Prayer Call
THURSDAY	2	Food Dist. Prep 12:00 pm Prayer Cal 5:30 Excellence Academy	6	12:00 pm Prayer Cal 5:30 Excellence Academy	16	Basket Prep 12:00 pm Prayer Cal 5:30 Excellence Academy	23	Thanksgiving	30	12:00 pm Prayer Cal 5:30 Excellence Academy
WEDNESDAY	_	7:00 am Prayer Call 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Mid-week Worship	∞	7:00 am Prayer Call 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Mid-week Worship	15	7:00 am Prayer Call 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Mid-week Worship	22	12:00 pm Prayer Call	29	12:00 pm Prayer Call
TUESDAY	31		7	11:00 am In-Person Bible Study 12:00 pm Prayer Call	14	11:00 am In-Person Bible Study 12:00 pm Prayer Call	21	12:00 pm Prayer Call	28	12:00 pm Prayer Call
MONDAY	30		9	12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out Family Prayer	13	12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out Family Prayer	20	12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out Family Prayer	27	12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out Family Prayer
SUNDAY	29		2	Veteran's Appreciation Day Communion 8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship	12	8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship	19	8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship	26	Seasoned Saint's Sunday 8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. - John 15:5