

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
LCMS

NURTURE



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Redeemer *Reflection* Newsletter

Loving People To Christ

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REDEEMER REFLECTION

From the Intentional Interim Pastor's Desk...

NURTURE

by Reverend Carl Bassett,
Intentional Interim Pastor

*"Like newborn
infants, long for the
pure spiritual milk of
the Word,
that by it you may
grow up into
salvation."
1 Peter 2:2*



And Job 23:12 says, *"I have not departed from the commandment of His lips; I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my portion of food."*

Folks, it's imperative to our spiritual survival that we are daily in the Word of God. Theologian Charles Spurgeon wrote over 100 years ago, *"We quickly lose the nourishment and strength of yesterday's bread. We must feed our souls daily upon*

Dear Family in Christ,

One of the things we must do to stay alive is eat! Along with air, water, and sleep, our bodies need food. The nutrients contained in the food we eat keep us healthy and strong. If we neglect to nourish our physical bodies, our health will inevitably decline.

The human soul works the same way! We must regularly be **nurtured** by God's Word to stay alive and spiritually healthy. We must continually and purposefully **nurture** our souls with the Word of God. Our text for this month says, *"Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk of the Word, that by it you may grow up into salvation."*

the manna God has given us." First Timothy 4:13 says, *"Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."* Because reading God's Word is a command, we must consistently stick to a plan. Our approach cannot be hit or miss.

You know, when I eat at a familiar restaurant, I enjoy trying something new every now and then. I like variety! When I have my time with God, I like to incorporate variety in my approach as well. It can be easy to fall into a routine during our quiet time with the Lord. Yet, there are different ways to read God's Word and be **nurtured** by it. I

encourage you to vary your approach from time to time to keep your devotions fresh and vibrant.

Here are a few ways to be spiritually **nurtured**:

Read God's Word. Vary your approach to reading God's Word. You may want to read the books of the Bible in chronological order, or pick a particular book of the Bible to read through several times. There are many different Bible-reading schedules you can follow. Read through the Bible in a year. Read one Proverb a day, corresponding with the day of the month. Read through the book of Psalms in one month. Read at least fifteen minutes per day. Read and you will be **nurtured** with countless blessings and truths from God!

Study God's Word. Don't be content to just *read* the words of Scripture. Seek to be **nurtured** by the message they contain. In addition to reading, we should study the Scriptures. Second Timothy 2:15 exhorts, *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."* Determine to intentionally read God's Word to understand the truths contained therein.

Meditate on God's Word. Set a special time aside each day to devote to spiritual **nurturing** as you pray and meditate over the Scriptures you read. I've discovered over the years, that in just a few hours of time spent with the Holy Spirit, I have learned so much as He abundantly feeds me! Ask yourself as I have, when was the last time I "shut myself into a room" for the sole purpose of meditating on the words

and promises of God? Have you ever done that? If not, why not give it a try?

In God's eyes, why we do something



is far more important than what we do. Why do you spend time with God? Is it out of a sense of duty or out of a heart of love for Him? How is your attitude as you enter

God's presence? Is it one of robotic service or humble surrender?

It is quite possible to do the right thing but with the wrong attitude.

Finally, as we seek God's **nurturing**, what should be our posture before Him? Consider these

5 Characteristics:

1. We must have pure hearts.



Jesus said, *"Blessed are the pure in heart"* (Matthew 5:8). Make sure your sins are confessed and that there is nothing between you and your Savior.

2. Go before the Lord with an attitude of reverence. Life is very busy, so be careful not to rush into God's presence. Be still, and let the quietness clear away the cares of the world. Habakkuk 2:20 says, *"But the Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him."*

3. Be alert and pay attention. Remember you are

meeting with the God of the universe, your Creator—your Savior. He deserves an acute awareness of His presence and complete attention to His Word.

4. Have a heart of complete surrender. This attitude is so important. Don't pick and choose what you will obey. Go before the Lord having already chosen to do His will—no matter what!

5. We should have a spirit of expectancy. Let's come before God with anticipation and eagerness. Expect to have a good time with your God and to receive a blessing from Him.



The more that we invest in our study of the Bible, the more we will get out of it! How much time and effort have you put into your devotional time? Are you allowing time for God's Word to shape your mind and change your thinking? Adjust your attitude to one of expectancy. Believe that God will reveal Himself and His truths to you personally and He will!

Let the *nurturing* begin! Have a great month for the Lord!

Peace and Love in Christ,

Pastor Bassett



☺ **Mondays, Ongoing: Women's Bible Study.** This Bible study will meet every Monday morning at **10:00 a.m.** in the large Connection classroom in the lower level and live online. We will start a new study on **July 12**. Hope to see you there.

☺ **Summer Sundays— Two Divine Service Options:**

8:00 a.m.—Traditional

9:30 a.m.—Contemporary

☺ **Saturday, July 24: Mobile Food Pantry at Trinity.** From 10:00—11:30 a.m. Ongoing event, the fourth Saturday of each month. Redeemer partners with Trinity in this outreach to serve the community. We need volunteers to be available from 9:00 a.m. until Noon. Hope to see you there!

MOBILE FOOD PANTRY AND GIVEAWAY

The Mobile Food Pantry is a monthly event that takes place in front of the doors of Trinity Church in downtown Jackson. Each month Redeemer partners with Trinity to provide essential food items for those in need in our community. Non-food specialty items are also offered to help fill

additional personal needs, as we become aware of them.

We are collecting **school supplies** in **July** for the next giveaway. This is another way we can help with providing necessities to our community. **Please put your donated items in the provided bin in the narthex.**

The food items that we distribute are provided through Compassionate Ministries of Jackson County. This is a wonderful organization in the Jackson area, and more information can be found online at www.cmjackson.org/

If you'd like to volunteer and get involved with these ***fourth-Saturday-of-the-month*** opportunities to serve our community, please contact the church office at 517-750-3100.

Thank you all for being so generous during these unusual times.

NURTURE HAS AN END

by Craig Britton

I do not generally point to our monthly newsletter prompt in the title of my article. But since the general tenor of the article is to the point, why not the title, too? Let me share the words of the amazing teacher of the faith we know as the Apostle Paul: "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*" (Ephesians 4:11-13, emphasis added).

There it is. That is the target, the end, so to speak. I could almost end my submission right here, but I suppose there needs to be at least some explanation for good application to take place. So here goes.

We live in a culture, even in a church culture that, well, has become soft. We used to attend church weekly if we were considered "regular attenders." Do you realize that national statistics point to "regular church attendance" now as 1-2 times per month? And of course, that pertains to people that go at all. But that's not the only place we see a shift. We see it in the physical surroundings where we gather. Today we have "Big Box" churches that look a whole lot like a Home Depot or Lowe's. We have "Black Box" churches that mirror some theater venues, where lighting and stagecraft are primary considerations in "propping up" the religious bill of fare of any given Sunday. We have coffee shops in our lobbies, lobbies that rival the Sheraton Resort for comfort, and comforts that point you to consider coming to church as "the best time of your week." Kind of sounds a bit commercial, doesn't it? It's not news that worshipers in America have become consumers with the common slogan that one needs to "find a place on Sunday that feeds you." This is old news. But stay with me.

What has been sacrificed in many locations and many souls, is the very subject of nurture. I joked with our editor this week that at first, I misread the prompt, thinking it was "torture" and not "nurture," and now I wonder if there isn't an element of the former in this discussion. The apostle enjoins the dear believers in Ephesus to realize that all the holy effort, rigor, discipline, and

love, yes love, in learning of Jesus is spent on attaining a goal, an end. And what is that end? That we would, by God's grace, grow into the very fullness of Jesus. But I wonder if all the shift, movement and seeming savvy poured into the faith over the past couple of generations has been the type of true nurture that crafts living, breathing, fiery-hearted saints. Remember Paul begins his letter to these young believers by calling them "saints." That's a moniker which is positional at the beginning for all of us, but is meant to become actual after what? After true spiritual nurture.

So, what does that look like? Well, by most rubrics and scales, it's not all that exciting. And perhaps that is one of our great challenges. The everyday walk of the believer in taking in the Word of the Lord, talking back to the Lord, pondering His gifts and His inestimable beauty, gathering weekly with some "just like us" folks, receiving well-seasoned counsel, and then proclaiming what we are taking in doesn't rank with hot music, cushy auditorium seating, or the latest and greatest "TED talk"-styled message. And I like TED talks.

No. God in His goodness has given us a slew of servants to teach, train, mold, and let's not forget, to nurture us. Attaining "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" doesn't happen overnight. It doesn't necessarily happen over years. But all that God gives to move us along comes under the guise of a Father helping His kids to grow. And to finally be grownups. That is the end of nurture.



Women's Bible Study

A new study for women will begin Monday, July 12 called

"Perseverance: Praying Through Life's Challenges, A Nehemiah Battle Plan" by Donna Pyle. All women are invited to the Connection Room from 10-11:30 am for the study. Please contact the office to sign up so that enough materials are available for all participants. This study will run for 8 weeks until August 30.

Questions? Contact Kimber Walsh at kimber@redeemerjackson.org or 517-750-3100.

TOPIC FOR AUGUST

The *Reflection* newsletter is meant to reflect Jesus through our lives into our community and the world in which we live. The writing prompt for August is **Fruitful**.

Our print media, and all other communication from and through Redeemer Lutheran Church, is designed to *reflect* His light to a searching world. Send articles, information, and/or photos by the 15th of each month to bennitt49@yahoo.com, to be included in the following month's newsletter. All submissions are appreciated and prayerfully considered.

CAN COURAGE BE NURTURED?

by Peggy Bennitt

Courage is *NOT* being unafraid; it is moving forward through the fear. Anxiety is on the rise, and not just with adults. Children and teens are dealing with increasing anxiety issues and fears; some due to the pandemic, but often due to the normal ups and downs of growing up. Children need to know it's okay to be concerned, but it's not all right to be consumed by worry. We all get anxious about things, but we aren't meant to live in a constant state of worry and stress. Let's focus on teaching our children how to handle



anxiety so they can face it with a problem-solving attitude, not with fear.

Preparing children and young adults to face each new situation with an acceptance of the challenge, rather than a fear of failure, can help them take a more realistic look at the

opportunities in every situation. Assuring them that God is always there with them, can help them



have the confidence to trust Him, and themselves, as they learn to accept the “nervous excitement” that comes with new situations without becoming “frozen with anxiety.” Knowing that parents are supportive and have confidence in their capabilities is a boost to their self-reliance and poise as well. Never hesitate to affirm your child in situations where they show good choices and positive actions. Parental confidence in a child's abilities to make wise, thought-out decisions goes a long way to building that self-confidence that is key to relieving much of the anxieties that trouble young people today.

Emotions are normal and acceptable. Our humanity is influenced by emotions and is an important part of who we are. But emotions are not meant to rule us. If we allow our children to let their emotions overwhelm and control them, we aren't setting them up for success. Teaching our young people to control their emotions shows them how to stay mentally safe and healthy. By guiding and helping them to recognize and control their emotional actions and reactions, we help them to build positive controls into their lives that will serve them well throughout a lifetime. Emotions add depth and joy to our lives, and enhance our very existence here on earth. But where emotions rule, chaos and unhappiness will dominate. If we invest the time and effort to teach our youngsters to channel their emotions into healthy expressions, they will have a life skill that will have a positive impact on their entire future.

Use positive reinforcement with, “I love you.” Make “I love you” a normal part of each and every day. Make sure your kids “hear” those words. No matter

how you say the words—whether you mention several examples of why you love them, or things they do that show what makes them lovable to you—it's important that your children (no matter what their ages) know without a doubt that they are loved. There is no substitute for love, and love expressed through words and actions on a daily basis goes a long way toward building self-confidence and keeping anxieties at bay. Courage can indeed be nurtured by love, and the knowledge that fears faced can be the positive force to curb anxieties and build that confidence to move into the future with a new hope.

DATES PLEASE!

The *Reflection* newsletter now includes the wedding anniversaries of our members each month, as well as birthdays. Please help us make this a complete and accurate registry by sending your anniversary information to the church office, and cc it to the newsletter as well. The church office email address is:

office@redeemerjackson.org and the newsletter email is bennitt49@yahoo.com. Please include the names of both spouses and the date of the marriage. Celebrating marriages and the commitment of couples to their marriage promise is a way of recognizing a covenant honored and blessed by God.

Please get your anniversary dates and correct birthdays to us to help us celebrate special events with each other through these opportunities.



JULY BIRTHDAYS

Rev. William Gatz	07/02
Cole Gannon	07/05
Hannah Martin	07/05
Kristina Bigelow	07/08
Kirk Balcom	07/09
Ginny Heffner	07/13
Lainey Garcia	07/13
Eileen Spangler	07/15
Tina Curl	07/19
Deb Fall	07/20
Lillian Martin	07/23
Sally Wingle	07/25
Troy Brownlie	07/27
Kathy Voss	07/27
David VanDerWeide	07/28
Lori Schairer	07/29
Ella Potter	07/30
Lynn Ward	07/31



JULY ANNIVERSARIES

Sean & Leah Anderson	07/08/2000
Chris & Kimber Walsh	07/03/2015

CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

Redeemer's Call Committee received our list of pastoral candidates' names

and data on each candidate on Sunday, June 13. The Call Committee is in the process of meeting with the Circuit Visitor who will help guide us throughout this phase, reviewing the many pages of information on each candidate, and setting up conversations with those who seem a better fit for our ministry.

Please continue to pray for this process that the Holy Spirit would guide and direct the Call Committee in their efforts. The information on each candidate as well as the complete list of names is available for anyone in the congregation to review on-site during office hours. (Monday-Thursday 8:00am-4:00pm and Friday by appointment) The information viewed is confidential and cannot be shared with anyone outside of the congregation, nor copied, duplicated, or photographed in any manner and notes about contents **may not be taken**.

If you have any questions about the status of the Call Committee's work, please contact the Call Committee Chairman, Andy Biegner at mnnavycrna@gmail.com or 517-607-5969.



*Want to stay up to date on the latest news regarding the Call Committee's work toward calling our next pastor? You can visit our website anytime at

redeemerjackson.org/news/pastoral-call-updates/. There are also updates weekly in the bulletin, on the slides, and during the pre-service verbal announcements.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



Photo Credits: Craig Britton, Claudina Kestner

Anchors aweigh! Redeemer's June Vacation Bible School was a dive into His Word, through music, games, crafts, and activities. "Beach Buddies" ages 4-10 joined in the fun June 21-23 for evening Bible study.

We had 60+ children attend VBS this year. It was a learning adventure for all involved and we're already beginning to plan for next years' "growing in faith" adventure.





Thank you so much to all who volunteered their time and talents to bring God's message to our youngsters, both Church Family and community. What a blessing to have so many adults and children involved! May God continue to bless the work He leads us to do for His children.



PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE

Too much criticism, Lord, will poison the relationships that I enjoy. Help me not to nag or put people down when they make mistakes. Instead, let me remember my own fallibility as I encounter flaws in others. Help me remember that we are all works in progress, people whom You are patiently correcting and nurturing toward spiritual maturity. Grant me an ample measure of Your mercy, grace, patience, encouragement, and love when I'm with my family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers.

NURTURE

by Peggy Bennitt

"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God...because God is love." 1 John 4:7-8

Parenting is all about nurturing. Guiding, teaching, discipline, and love all have a part in that important basic

piece we label: nurture. As I study the Bible, I can't help but think that nurturing is the end result of love. Without love, I'm not sure true nurturing can happen.

In the beginning, God created. But if we look closely at the details of creation, we see the nurturing of a loving



Father. He created each feature in an orderly and complex way to support the next facet in His plan to provide for His final crowning glory of creativity: mankind! That forward-looking and planning shows the love and nurturing care commonly associated with parenting. In a perfect world, nurture and nature would still be one and the same.

Even though we have strayed from God's original intended plan, He still holds us close and sets guidelines and parameters for us, His children. He nurtures and feeds us through His Word, always drawing us into His loving arms, even as He disciplines us when we don't follow the rules He sets to protect us.

In Deuteronomy, after He gives us the Ten Commandments to guide and protect us bodily and spiritually, He reminds us to teach all these instructions to the next generations. In chapter 11, He says in verse 19 and following, *"Teach them to your children, talking about them when you*

sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up..." God even attaches a promise to this.

And God always keeps His Word! He tells us what will happen if we obey Him, but He's also clear about the consequences for *NOT* obeying. God models parenting for us. The rewards and consequences of obedience or disobedience, the nurturing and loving guidance, but also the joys and sorrows of having children who are not always willing to heed a loving parent's advice or even recall past mistakes and the consequences of them to discipline themselves.

We see a loving parent's frustration with the misbehavior of His children and the consequences for that bad behavior, throughout the Old and New Testaments. But we also see His loving forgiveness and His willingness to intercede, and mitigate or moderate the consequences when He sees true repentance for sin. When the penalty

for our sinful lives required a death sentence, He even substituted His only Son to take our place and pay that penalty for us. *"Above all, love each other deeply,*

because love covers over a multitude of sins." 1 Peter 4:7.



Nurturing modeled to the N-th degree...for us!

“Love so amazing, so divine”...is nurturing at its very best. To nurture is to love. And to be nurtured and loved by our Heavenly Father is truly the best of both worlds.

THE BLESSING OF FORGIVENESS

by Rev. Wm. Gatz

After rereading my article in last month's newsletter, I realized that I hadn't said anything about my closest friend, Jesus, my Lord and Savior. Jesus has always been part of my life, even before I was a pastor. I have known and felt Jesus has been with me all my life. My Mom, since we were very young, told us “Be comforted that Jesus is with us all the time.” Jesus has been my Caregiver, but also the One who forgives me when I sin.

The forgiveness of sins to me is the greatest blessing the church has. The forgiveness of sins is all because of the love of our Heavenly Father. After Adam and Eve sinned, God promised a Savior. Jesus was willing to be born as a baby. He grew up in the world, endured suffering on the cross, died, and on the third day He rose from the dead and now sits beside the Heavenly Father. The love of the Heavenly Father is shown in I John 1:7 through the words “the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sins.” We know that all we have to do is confess our sins and we are forgiven. It's only through the forgiveness of sins where we receive the grace of God. That's when we

receive the PEACE which passes all understanding through our friend, Jesus Christ.



During the years I have been a Pastor, peace and the forgiveness of sins has been what people seem to need and want most. It all comes through our friend, Jesus. All my life I have tried to encourage people to remember Jesus as their friend and that they will feel close to Him. After we have confessed our sins, all we have to do is ask Jesus for peace and the forgiveness of sin. Often it takes a long time for it to come, but keep thanking Him for what you have and the peace and the forgiveness of sin will come in time. Ever since I was a young pastor, I've prayed every morning that I would be blessed to be a blessing. I've always believed that the Lord would respond to my prayer request. A long time ago, I asked the Lord why something I had requested had not happened, and He let me know in my mind that I was getting in the way of something I had prayed about. Since that time, just about every prayer I pray I ask the Lord to bless me, and conclude with, “Jesus help me to stay out of the way.” I learned to start out my prayers every morning asking the Lord, “What do you

want to tell me today, Lord?" We have to keep reminding ourselves that Jesus is our best friend.

In last month's newsletter, I mentioned Redeemer's 60th anniversary, and Pastor Bassett has asked me to talk about it when the anniversary gets closer. Redeemer congregation had its beginning in 1961, the same year I was ordained. Five years later on September 25, 1966, the dedication of the church building took place. So in an upcoming newsletter, I will give more details about the history of Redeemer.

NURTURING FAITH IN THE NEXT GENERATION

by Kimber Walsh, CFLE

We all have a calling to nurture faith in the next generation. Even those of us who don't have kids or grandkids biologically have a responsibility in this mission. Here are four simple (but not always easy) ways to nurture faith in your kids, grandkids, and the generations after us.

"One generation shall commend your works to another and shall declare your mighty acts." Psalm 145:4

1. Pray

Pray for your kids and grandkids, certainly. But also pray *with* your kids and grandkids. Help them to know what it is to call on the name of the Lord and approach His throne of grace. Help them to know they have access about anything and everything to the

Creator and Sustainer of the Universe. That He invites us and He hears us. Praying with your kids and grandkids, whether they are 5 or 55, nurtures the faith that the Holy Spirit is working in them.

2. Talk

I once had a choir director who would say regularly "to sing, you need to open your mouth" with his mouth open wide and large, exaggerated words. It's



simple really; to share Jesus we need to open our mouths and talk. It doesn't have to be really profound. Just share what He's done for you and how He's worked in your life. Talk about how you see Him at work in them. Tell the stories of the Bible and the faith, in ways that make it come alive in their hearts and stick in their memories. "Faith comes by hearing" the Word of God and testimonies about God. (Romans 10:17)

3. Share Resources

There are so many resources and materials that can be utilized in the faith life of a Christian. Be a part of purchasing, loaning, reading, listening to, watching, and talking about the resources that are age-appropriate to your kids and grandkids and the ones

that have blessed you in your faith life.

4. Walk the Walk

Sometimes we might unwittingly put our light under a bowl in our lives. Live unapologetically as a follower of Jesus. Read your Bible when the kids and grandkids are there to see it (even if it's the least convenient time or place for you). Pray, even if your kids or grandkids aren't accustomed to prayer right now. Be a lifelong learner of the faith and the Word of God yourself. Talk about your very real sinfulness and very real need for a Savior. Regularly receive God's good gifts—listen to His Word publicly proclaimed, receive the Sacrament, hear the words of forgiveness spoken for you.

God is the only one who creates faith. He gives us the awesome opportunity to be a part of nurturing faith in the next generations throughout their lives.



And then the Holy Spirit makes the faith He began in each person grow. What a

privilege to be a part of His Kingdom growth plan!

NURTURE FOR THE AGES COME SIT WITH ME

by Pat Gillman, shared by Nancy Bryant

Could you please stop what you're doing?

Take some time to come sit with me?
I'll only keep you a moment
For I get so lonely, you see.

Could you say a few words to me?
Let me know you're concerned and you care?

I'll try not to do all the talking
Just so I know someone's there.

Could you only just give me a smile?
Or even a nod or two?
I know you're often quite busy,
But my days seem so long and so few.

Could you then say a small prayer for me?

It would be appreciated so.
Just pray to my Savior in heaven
He'll come sit with me, I know.



**From
start to
finish,**

**VBS 2021
was a win
for Jesus!**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p><small>philipmartin.info</small></p> <p>C—Holy Communion</p>				1	2	3
<p>4</p> <p>Traditional Divine Service 8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Contemporary Divine Service 9:30 a.m.</p>	5	<p>6</p> <p>Hour of Prayer 7:15 p.m.</p>	7	8	9	10
<p>11</p> <p>Traditional Divine Service—C 8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Contemporary Divine Service—C 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Women's Bible Study 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Hour of Prayer 7:15 p.m.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Quilters 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>15</p> <p><i>Newsletter Deadline</i></p>	16	17
<p>18</p> <p>Traditional Divine Service 8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Contemporary Divine Service 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Women's Bible Study 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Hour of Prayer 7:15 p.m.</p>	21	22	23	<p>24</p> <p>Mobile Food Pantry @ Trinity 10:00-11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Need Volunteers from 9 'til Noon</p>
<p>25</p> <p>Traditional Divine Service—C 8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Contemporary Divine Service—C 9:30 a.m.</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Women's Bible Study 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Hour of Prayer 7:15 p.m.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Quilters 9:30 a.m.</p>	29	30	31