

The Celtic Cross

October 2015

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Letter from the Co-Pastors

Dearly Beloved:

Thank you, thank you, thank you to all of you who organized, worked on, sent notes, or in any way contributed to the celebration of my anniversary ordination. So much for my thinking that I was aware of all that is going on around here! I had no idea about all of the arrangements that were being made in advance of the 20th, and the generous gift that so many made possible was certainly a total surprise. Many contributed to make it a very special day that I will remember for a very long time. Thank you.

“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11). The encouragement you have given us in our ministry did not begin with either of our 25th ordination anniversaries. Week after week, month after month, year after year, we have been encouraged in our ministry with you. When you show up for worship, or for a Sunday School class or Bible study, when you say, “yes,” to an opportunity to serve, when you make a pledge to support the ministry of this church financially throughout the year or respond to a special need—in all of these ways we are encouraged in our ministry together. Thank you!

We also hope that you have felt encouraged in your faith and service here. Encouragement is often an overlooked virtue but when we do it, encouraging others can make such a difference. Do you know that studies have shown that children who struggle hear two words of discouragement for every encouraging one, while those who flourish were shown to have received six encouraging words for every discouraging one? A new study on coaching sports found a similar ratio points to success: five statements of encouragement for every statement of criticism. I remember two parents we much admire struggling with a daughter going through adolescence. The strategy they were told to follow was to find three specific encouraging statements they could make each day to their daughter. It made a difference. This is not the same as giving a trophy to every participant in a youth activity. Encouragement recognizes specific actions or words and reinforces them with recognition and gratitude.

Let’s take Paul’s words to the Thessalonians to heart. Let’s “catch people doing something right.” Let’s drop a note or email or simply make the effort to thank those who have done something we have appreciated, whether for us directly, or for others. Let us hold up each other in prayer. Encouragement is a ministry that we can all undertake no matter what age we are.

Encouragement makes a difference—I know first hand. Thank you.

Grace and peace,
Carter (and Kerry)

Worship Matters

- October 4: 10:30 a.m. World Communion Sunday
 Sermon series: "What are We Waiting for? : Heaven"
 Welcome of Children to the Lord's Table
 HENS Family Sunday
- October 11: 10:30 a.m. Service for the Lord's Day
 Sermon Series: "What are We Waiting for?: Hell"
 Commissioning of Mission Workers
- October 18: 10:30 a.m. Service for the Lord's Day
 Cherub and Celtic Choirs Sing
- October 25: 10: 30 a.m. Reformation Sunday
 Come hear the pipes, and **wear plaid if you want!** .
 Apple Fest Following

Music Notes

Our ministry has planned several glorious pieces to set the mood for World Wide Communion Sunday on October 4.. The Chancel Handbells will begin by ringing a wonderful arrangement of "Air" and "Holy, Holy, Holy" by Linda Lamb. The Chancel Choir will offer John Rutter's classic hymn, "For The Beauty of The Earth," as the anthem. "Let Us Break Bread Together," arranged by Mark Hayes for piano, will be heard during the offering while "What Wondrous Love is This," and an old Sunday School hymn, "When He Cometh," will be played on the organ during communion. We'll wrap up the service with the spirited postlude, "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ."

Deb will offer several other Hayes offerings this month including the dramatic "The God of Abraham Praise," the funky "Sunshine in My Soul," and the powerful "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" on piano. Several Baroque pieces will be played on the organ, including two trumpet tunes and a Vivaldi sonata, as well as arrangements of "This is My Father's World" and "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past."

The Chancel Choir will also offer Anna Laura Page's arrangement of "I Sing the Mighty Power of God" on October 18th. This piece is a terrific combination of the traditional FOREST GREEN melody with Isaac Watts's beloved hymn text. Other anthems sung during October are "Be Still" and "Christ is Made a Sure Foundation."

—Cindy Foust, Music Director

Germany Reformation and Music Tour in June 2016

Join Carter and other First Presbyterians and friends for a nine-day tour of Germany and Salzburg, Austria in June, 2016. For all of the details, pick up a brochure and sign up form from Carter. Family and friends invited! The requested registration deadline is October 16.

Upcoming Events

CROP WALK RETURNS, SUNDAY, Oct. 11 at 1:30/2:00 p.m.

After a one year hiatus, Pottstown is glad to welcome back the CROP Walk.

The CROP Walk is a fundraiser sponsored by Church World Services that raises money to combat hunger. The walk begins at 2:00 PM and starts from the church. If you would like to walk all you have to do is show up. There is the option of a one mile walk or a 10k, depending on what you are most comfortable with. 25% of the money raised for CROP Walk will go to the Cluster with the rest of the money going to Church World Services' global efforts.

If you would like a donation packet see Jeff Fox-Kline and if you would like to donate online please go to <http://hunger.cwsglobal.org/goto/fpcpottstown>

Apple Fest, Sunday, October 25 after worship



Come, one and all, to the Apple Fest, Sunday, October 25, right after worship in Fellowship Hall.

There will be hot apple dumplings, with vanilla ice cream – Yum!
a bake table featuring goodies from our church family
and again this year, the special contest to become
“The Apple of Our Eye”.

Who will win the trophy this year? We are again inviting groups in the church to enter a wonderful apple dessert, that is, Elders, Deacons, choirs, youth groups, Bible studies, Sunday School classes, or form your own group, and create a prize-winning goodie.

Sign-ups will be in the church bulletin and on the bulletin board.

“Live Free”

Stewardship Dinner and Program, Sunday, November 1

Mark your calendars now for a great night of food, fun, fellowship, and inspiration at 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 1. In addition to a delicious dinner prepared by our own Beth Ann Straub, we will be treated to a delightful musical program that will showcase the ages of all ages, including our own **Christian Fletcher, who has sung and taught voice all over the world.**

Please join us – You will not want to miss it! Dedication Sunday is November 8.

Inquirers' Class: for new members—or those who want to know more

If you would like to learn more about the ministries First Presbyterian Church and explore the possibilities of joining the church, you are invited to a series of “Inquirers' Classes” led by the pastors. We are scheduling around personal and family schedules so if you are interested, contact Carter or Kerry.

Adult Spiritual Formation Opportunities

SUNDAY MORNINGS—9:15 to 10:10 a.m.

- **Forum (Community Room):**

October 4: Presbyterians, Catholics, and the Pope (cont). Teacher: Carter

We finish up our three-week stimulating discussion about the differences and common ground between Catholics and the Presbyterians, and our exploration of the person and positions of the new pope—and Philadelphia's most famous tourist.

October 11, 18, and 25: Blood on the Page: Violence and Holy Scriptures

Is Islam an inherently violent religion as some charge? What does the Quran say about violence, especially against those of other religions like Christianity? What about our own Scriptures—what do we do with those texts in the Bible that seem to call for violence and ethnic cleansing. Join us for an illuminating three week discussion.

October 11: “Violence and the Scriptures” Carter

October 18: “Show Them No Mercy: Religion, Violence, and Scripture

Dr. Philip Jenkins, one of the foremost authorities on world religions, including Christianity, speaks about violent texts in the Bible, Quran, and other holy scriptures in this talk delivered at the Chataqua Institute this summer (video).

October 25—“Personal, Not Private: Making Religion Healthy”

A leading rabbi speaks about healthy and unhealthy religion.

- **Thoughtful Christians (formerly Faith and Relationships and Women's Sunday Mornings) (Mary Ann Yost Room) “Bible Women: All Their Words and Why They Matter”** Discussion leaders: Debbie Remelius, Sharon Trevoy, and Rob Wade
This discussion is based on a book by Lindsay Hardin, an Episcopal priest, writer, speaker, and retreat leader. We start with Eve and then work our way through several other women in the Bible.
- **Men's Sunday Mornings (Pastors' Conf. Room): “Exodus”**
Teachers: Gary James, Paul Lepard, Tim Peckham, and Carter

WEEKDAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWING IN FAITH

- **“Sisters of the Way” Bible Study:** 9:15-10:45 a.m. every Thursday. Teacher: Kerry
- **Next Week's Sermon:** Tuesday, October 13 and 27, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Teacher: Carter
- **Praying the Scriptures Group:** Tuesday Oct. 6 and 20 at 7:30 p.m. Leader: Kerry
- **Theology Reading Group:** Our next meeting will be in November to finish our discussion of Lesslie Newbigin's *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. The date was to be chosen after the *Celtic Cross* publication deadline. If you are interested in the group, want to know the date of the meeting, or have questions, talk to Carter.

Music and Recreation for Children in Grades 2-5

If you are in grades 2 through 5 and would like to make new friends, sing, and play games, then join us this fall on Wednesdays from 4:30-5:45. First, Pastor Jeff meets you in the Fellowship Hall for a time of games and prayer. Then, you will sing with Mrs. B!

The year is off to an awesome start, but there's always room for more to join us! Our circle is wide and wonderful, and the bigger it is, the more fun we have!

Confirmation

October 4: Creation ... or "What a Wonderful World"

October 25: The Fall... or "When the Hard Drive Crashes"

For October 25th there is pizza between Confirmation and Seekers. Please bring \$3.

Junior Seekers, Grades 6-8:

October 11th: CROP Walk 2:00

The Junior Seekers are participating in the annual Pottstown CROP Walk to fight hunger. The walk leaves from the church at 2:00 and we will be going on the one mile walk, not the 10k

October 25th: Pumpkin Chunkin' 6:00-8:00

We are going to throw pumpkins off of the roof of the church. The trick is to find creative ways to keep them from splatting. Let's make sure we protect those pumpkins so Jeff doesn't have to hose down the parking lot.

Advisors

Jeff Fox-Kline

Rosie and Sandro Roseo

Jeff and Sarah Pinard

Elizabeth Lester

Senior Seekers, Grades 9—12:

BIBLE STUDY MEETS EVERY THURSDAY 6:00-7:00

October 11th: Waffles and guests 6-8

Join us as we make some delicious waffles. Who doesn't like waffles? For dinner? Yes please. We will also be welcoming some guests from the Women's Center of Montgomery County to lead us in a conversation about some very important topics

October 18th, Corn Maze. 6-8 PM

The Fall continues as we get lost in a corn maze! The Seekers will make their way out to a farm where they will try to find their way out. We promise to try and bring everyone back.

Mark your calendars!! Fall Retreat, November 14-15

Opportunities for Fellowship (see also p. 3)

Men's Breakfast, Saturday October 10, 8—9 a.m.

The guys gather with Carter on the second Saturday for food, fellowship, and a devotion. You will be well fed for the day by this month's chef and we break at 9 a.m.

Faith and Nature Group

October will be a busy month for our group, please come out and enjoy a great day outdoors with us:

Saturday October 3rd: We will start the month with our annual autumn day hike. I look forward to this hike every year as we really get out into nature and enjoy a full day of hiking. This year we will travel to the Delaware Gap National Recreation Area in the Poconos to explore a few sections of the AT Trail that will take us through forest, past waterfalls, and to scenic vistas. We will cover 8 to 10 miles at a moderate pace. Come join us for a great day outdoors. Meet at church @ 7:30 am.

Sunday October 18th: Join us for our annual quest to see the brilliant colors of fall as we go for a leaf hike at Nolde Forest. We have always visited Nolde in the winter, but the fall can be just as stunning. Hikers of all ages are welcome as there are plenty of trails to explore. Come and go as you please. Nolde is located just 25 minutes away, near Shillington, PA. Meet at church @ 2:00 pm.

Volunteering at Althouse Arboretum: Located on Gilbertsville Rd about five minutes away from the church, Althouse Arboretum is a wonderful place that wants to connect people to nature through education and leisure. Laura Hazeltine has been investigating volunteer options and we are planning to work with the arboretum on a bird feeding station and bird blind. The next possible date for volunteering will be near the end of October. If anyone is interested please contact Laura Hazeltine or me.

Sign up for these events on the bulletin board or contact me at: mdeegsl6@aol.com or 484-524-8072.

Hope to see you out there.
-Mike Deegan

Prime Timers

"White Christmas" at Steel River Theatre, Pottstown, Sat. 12 Dec. Matinee 2 PM

Sign Up on Church Bulletin Board. Payment due in at the Church office by 18 Nov. to confirm seats. SENIORS (65 and over) \$21, ADULTS (64 and under) \$26 CHILDREN/STUDENTS (4 years - College) \$14. Checks should be made out to "Prime Timers."

Faithful Friends (formerly Young Adults)

Saturday, October 3 at 6 p.m. at Carter and Kerry's house

Join us for food, fellowship, devotions, and good conversation. Interested? Questions? Need directions or to find out what to bring, contact Carter or Kerry

Faithful Friends with Children (formerly Young Adults)

Faithful Friends with Children is starting up for the year! The date and location are to be determined, but if you are interested in joining a group of parents and young children in fellowship and fun please contact Jeff Fox-Kline.

Fearless Generosity - Where Would You Like to Serve?

Community Meals, October 13:

On the second Thursday of the month, our congregation serves a meal to those in need . Volunteers can help with the cooking earlier in the day, or with the serving from 4:45-6:15 p.m. To help with the cooking, contact Doreen or Dave Duncan, 610-473-2495 or the church office. To help with serving the meal, contact Carter or Kerry or the church office.

Barth Elementary School Partnership:

Can you give one hour a week to a child who needs a tutor? Volunteers from our church serve as mentors/tutors at our partner school in Pottstown, Barth Elementary. To help, or if you have questions, contact coordinator, Sharon Holloway.

Cluster Volunteers and Donations Needed

Cluster Pantry Needs: soup, oatmeal, canned fruit, boxed potatoes, canned pasta, stuffing, baby food, juice and soy baby formula. Plastic and paper grocery bags are desperately needed. Personal hygiene and cleaning products are also needed.

Recycling

Looking for a place to recycle—and raise money for good causes? You can recycle aluminum cans (for Habitat for Humanity), printer cartridges, batteries, and cell phones. Just look for the bins in the cloak room off the sanctuary. Newspapers and papers can be recycled in the “Albiti” bin that we share with Manor Care and is on their property across the street.



Alternative Gift Market, November 22

Join us after church on Sunday, November 22 for our annual Alternative Gift Market. We will be featuring new gift selections from Project Home, SERRV, and Heifer International in addition to an expanded lunch menu and our traditional homemade bake table. And introducing ***Santa's Workshop***, providing the opportunity for children to choose gifts for friends and family with assistance from a friendly team of elves. We hope to see you there!

Deacons' Bench

Church Work Day, Saturday, November 7, 9 a.m. to Noon

On Saturday, November 7, we have our Fall church-wide work day, led by the Deacons. We will rake leaves, trim hedges, and prepare the gardens for the winter. Bring your tree and hedge trimming tools and a rake. There may also be an “inside” crew cleaning the pews. Sign-up is on the bulletin board .

Miller-Keystone Blood Drive, Tuesday, Nov. 10, 3:30—7

Give the gift of life: your blood is needed! You can sign up for an appointment or walk in. To sign up for an appointment, you can go online at <https://donor.giveapint.org/donor/schedules/zip> and put in our zip code. Or you can contact our Parish Nurse, Dawn Skelly.

Session Digest

At its September meeting, the Session:

- Shared joys and concerns
- Voted to move the October meeting to Wednesday, Oct. 28 since several elders and pastors will be in Honduras on the third Wednesday.
- Approved the baptism of Kelsey Weidner, child of God and daughter of Jackie Greenawalt, at a date to be determined.
- Received and discussed the financial report with Treasurer, Michelle Thompson. A summary of the financial report, which shows a deficit is on p. 9.. In light of the deficit did not make any transfers to the mission or capital improvement funds.
- Approved celebration of the Lord's Supper on the Seekers' retreat on November 15, 2015.
- Received a report from Mission that noted among other things: the return of the CROP walk on October 11, with Jeff coordinating the walk for the community; ten children from our congregation attended Camp Kirkwood this summer; the vegetable garden produced well this summer with food going to the Cluster; 51 articles of clothing were delivered to Barth in early September, with more to come.
- Approved receipt of the Peacemaking offering.
- Heard that 15 people will be traveling to Honduras on October 17-24 to install two systems.
- Received a report from the Admin. Committee noting that the flood repairs have been made, the Spiritual Formation wing's halls have been painted by Mike Matrone, and a number of maintenance repairs were made over the summer.
- Received reports also from the Deacons and the Personnel, Endowment, Stewardship, and Spiritual Formation committees.
- Prayer requests from the committees—
 - Worship: Thanksgiving for all of the volunteers who clean up the sanctuaries, recruit greeters, prepare the coffee hour and prepare for communion;
 - Administrative: For wisdom concerning oversight of the facilities and finances;
 - Hospitality: For our visitors and those considering joining the church;
 - Mission: for those traveling to Honduras;
 - Endowment: Thanksgiving for prudent and sound management of our money;
 - Spiritual Formation: Thanksgiving for Rally Day and our committed Sunday School teachers, Advisors, and Young Children and Worship leaders;
 - Stewardship: our vision for a successful stewardship campaign will be brought to fruition;
 - Personnel: Thanksgiving for our staff and the anniversaries of staff service celebrated.

Nominating Committee Seeks Nominations for Elders and Deacons

The Nominating Committee needs your help in suggesting persons whom they may consider as nominees for elders and deacons. If you can pick up a folder from the church lobby, you will see the criteria that the committee is looking for in terms of Christian living in daily life, commitment to the church, and personal characteristics. In the folder is also a list of the current elders and deacons. For each person you nominate, please list the gifts that you have seen in that person. Please take a few minutes to support us in this most important task in church life.

Financial Report

General Fund

Budgeted income for the year:	\$573,590
Budgeted income through August 31:	382,393
Actual income through August 31:	365,347
This time last year:	361,710
Budgeted expenses for the year:	592,132
Budgeted expenses through August 31:	394,755
Actual expenses through August 31:	383,563
This time last year:	342,853
Deficit to date:	(37,340)
Deficit this time last year:	(1,039)

This year's deficit reflects giving below budget, which is often the case at the end of summer, and higher than anticipated utility and maintenance costs from last winter's cold and snow/

Church Family News

Please keep in your prayers the following people who have been ill or hospitalized recently: Bob Hartman, Sr., Betsy McKissic, Kathy Hannigan, Barry West, John McNey and Audrey Buckley.

We remember and send our condolences to the family of Betty Hagmann, and to the Lane family on the death of Judy's father.

Counters Corner

October 4: Sharon Trevoy, Karen Stacks, Marlene Wriigley and Mike Ziemba

October 11: Dave Duncan, Andy Hazeltine, Joe Collins and Susan Matrone

October 18: Rob Wade, Bill Wilson, Sharon Holloway and Jim Madden

October 25: Tom Zeigler, Susan Moyer, Dave DeLong and Liz Genther

Companionship in Grief Luncheon

Have you lost someone dear to you, and you still feel the ache of absence?

Do you walk through your day weighed down by a weight of grief?

Come share the load with Carter and Kerry, and others who have experienced loss:

Wednesday, October 28, 12:15, in the Community room

A simple lunch will be provided — please RSVP to the church office

"A sorrow shared is but half the trouble..."

Lectionary Readings—October

For the week of September 28 to October 4:

Job 1: 1, Psalm 26, Hebrews 1: 1-4, Mark 10: 2-16

For the week of October 5 to 11:

Job 23: 1-9, Psalm 22: 1-15, Hebrews 4: 12-16, Mark 16: 17-31

For the week of October 12-18:

Job 38: 1-7, Psalm 104: 1-2, Hebrews 5: 1-16, Mark 10: 35-45

For the week of October 19 to 25:

Job 4: 1-6, Psalm 34: 1-8, Hebrews 7: 25-29, Mark 1: 46-52

From the Parish Nurse: Take Control of Diabetes

Dining with Diabetes is a program offered by Penn State Extension and is designed to help people with type 2 diabetes take control and better manage their health. This program which focuses on healthy cooking and positive lifestyle changes is open to people with type 2 diabetes and their family members or caregivers.

In four classes plus an orientation session, cooking demonstrations will help participants learn healthy techniques to use at home. Program activities include sampling healthy foods, a short exercise segment and discussion with a dietitian or diabetes educator. Participants are even offered the chance to return to the class after three months for a follow-up session.

The series of classes will be held at First Presbyterian Church from 1:00pm – 3:00pm starting with an orientation on Monday, October 19, 2015. Classes will be held on October 26, November 2, 9 and 16, 2015. A follow-up class will be held on Monday, January 18, 2016.

This program is free. Space is limited, please register early!

Anyone with concerns about diabetes or controlling blood sugar is welcome to participate. Please sign up on the Prime Timers' board or on the Health Ministry Bulletin Board. You can also email our parish nurse, Dawn Skelly at dsKelly@fpcpottstown.org or register online at

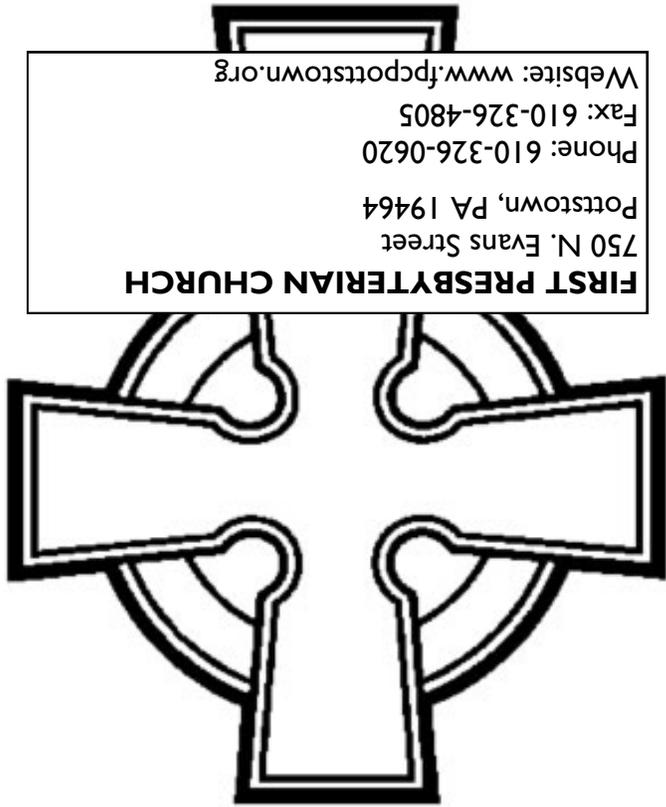
<http://extension.psu.edu/health/diabetes/events>

For more information contact: Mandel Smith, Nutrition/Food Safety Educator at (610) 489-4315 or email mjs52@psu.edu.

—Dawn Skelly, Parish Nurse

October 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sundays: Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30				1 HENS Pictures Sisters Bible 9:15 Yoga 11 Meal 5 Sr. Seek Bible 6 Bells 6:30 Choir 7:30	2 HENS Picture Day	3 Nature Walk 7:30 a.m. Hagmann Funeral 2 p.m. Faithful Friends @ Lesters' 6 op.m.
4 World Wide Communion Welcome Children to the Lord's Table HENS Sunday PT Train Ride 3:30 Conf. Class 5 pm	5 Cubs 7	6 Yoga 11:30 Boy Scouts 7 Praying the Scriptures 7:30 p.m.	7 Yoga 11:30 M/R 4:30 Prayer 7:15 Committees 7:30	8 Sisters Bible 9:15 Yoga 11 Meal 5 Sr. Seek Bible 6 Bells 6:30 Choir 7:30	9	10 Men's Breakfast 8 a.m.
11 Cherub Choir sings CROP Walk Sr. Seekers Waffle Bar 6	12 HENS Closed Cubs 7	13 Yoga 11:30 Boy Scouts 7 Next Week's Sermon 7:30	14 Endowment Meeting 8:30 a.m. Yoga 11:30 M/R 4:30 Deacon's Meeting 7:30	15 Sisters Bible 9:15 Yoga 11 Meal 5 Sr. Seek Bible 6 Bells 6:30 Choir 7:30	16 Honduras Living Waters for the World team departs	17
18 Celtic Choir sings Nature Walk 2 pm Sr. Seekers Corn maze 6 pm	19 Cubs 7	20 Yoga 11:30 Shawl Ministry 7 Dwelling in the Word 7:30	21 Yoga 11:30 M/R 4:30	22 Bible 9:15 Yoga 11 Meal 5 Sr. Seek Bible 6 Bells 6:30 Choir 7:30	23	24 Honduras team returns
25 Reformation Sunday Apple Fest Conf. Class 5 Jr. High 6:30	26 Cubs 7 HENS Board 7:30	27 Yoga 11:30 Boy Scouts 7 Next Week's Sermon 7:30	28 Yoga 11:30 M/R 4:30 Session 7:30 Compassionate Friends	29 Bible 9:15 Yoga 11 Meal 5 Sr. Seek Bible 6 Bells 6:30 Choir 7:30	30	31 Daylight Time Ends Sat. Night. Set your clocks back



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