



THE Genesis

A Monthly Newsletter

September 2017

Another Edifying Message from our Pastor:

The old saying is, time flies when you're having fun. This has truly been the case for me this year. When I reflect on my first three months as your new pastor, I have to say there have been many fun filled moments for me. To be a part of such a loving Body of Christ has definitely increased Rebecca's and my joy and happiness. We both truly believe that the future is very bright for our church, as we continue to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the wonderful fellowship of our loving church to the community around us.

In last month's newsletter, I shared with you one of the 5C's that Arvel Steece presented at a meeting during the 1998 First Congregational Symposium that happened in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. This month I would like to share with you **THE SECOND C** which stands for **COMMITMENT**. As Arvel Steece points out Commitment is the positive response to the question, "*What shall I do with this Christ?*" who calls.

C - "Come unto me all you who labor and I will refresh you."

O - Obedience moves one from hubris to humility and one is led to sing with Isaac Watts:

"When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

M - Material resources are committed. We are advised to love God with all our strength. Physical strength and financial treasure are offered.

M - Mental abilities are committed. We are counseled to love God with all our mind. The intellectual pursuit may well be through science to God. The Christian mind seeks to know the mind of Christ.

I - Inspiration comes to those who cultivate the soul through the disciplines of the spiritual life. The Pilgrims and Puritans were men and women of prayer. The Bible and the Psalter were their devotional guides. They were edified from some non-Biblical sources, e.g. in the eighteenth century Philip Doddridge's *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*.

T - Taking up one's cross is another response of commitment to follow Christ. "If you carry the cross, the cross will carry you."

M - Mission is another element of commitment. One is called to share the good news of the Gospel which one has received. The priest-hood of all believers expresses the sense of mission and the personal witness.

E - Emotional health is enhanced when one loves God with all one's heart.

"Lift up your hearts, ye people, In songs of glad accord, and in your adoration Praise Christ, your risen Lord. For he hath won the victory O'er sin and death's dark night, and filled the gloom and darkness With resurrection light. Now let the earth be joyful In springtime's bright array. Let hearts downcast and lonely Rejoice this Easter Day; The grave has lost its triumph, And death has lost its sting, O, sing in exultation to Christ, your risen King!"

Leonard A. Parr (1880-1975)

N - Newness of life results from commitment to Christ. Some would describe this as being born again. Others would claim that Christ offers this new life to

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A Member Church of the

National Association of Congregational Christian Churches
Southeast Michigan Association of Congregational Churches
Michigan Conference of Congregational Christian Churches

Our Mission Statement

We, the members of Rockwood First Congregational Church, as a fellowship of God loving people are: United in glorifying God; committed to teaching, learning and sharing in Christ's Word; and determined to live our faith, so that others will come to know Him.



MUSIC MATTERS

Thank you to the individuals and the members of the groups who presented special music to enhance our summer worship services. Soloists, both vocal and instrumental, included *Bertha Beach, Cecilia Bianchi, Dinah Bianchi, Ron Bolenbaugh, and Wayne McLeod*. Returning duos were *Diane Anderson and Bryant Wulff* and, after a long absence, *Sheila Burke and Joe Kidd*. The Thursday Crafters were a new addition to the summer schedule. They include *Nathalie Beach, Joan Bettinger, Pam Dudek, Jane Lemerand, Jeanette Riska, Vicki Robers, and Betty Springstead*. It is rumored they may return later in the year. Please encourage them to do so. We are looking forward to closing our summer music with another visit from *Brett Polack and Victor Cicarrino* in September.

Choir will resume Sunday morning practices on **September 3**. Practice time begins promptly at **9:30 am**. Please join your voices with theirs to **make a joyful noise unto the Lord**. If you are concerned your voice is not good enough, remember God puts the emphasis on joyful noise. It is amazing how beautiful the sound is when all the noisy voices are put together!

If you have questions, please contact Sue List.



Notes from the Moderator

My last article for the Newsletter was written just before the beginning of Summer. This article is just before the end of Summer. How could it go so fast? I hope Everyone had a great summer, is well rested and ready to begin a busy Fall and winter schedule.

Pastor suggested that we have a summer church picnic which we held on August 13. I think it was a great idea and was enjoyed by all. It would be a great event to have every summer. Thanks to Vicki Nicholas for chairing the picnic, great job!

Fall programs are being planned. The Worship Committee met in August to begin planning for Fall. Choir will meet for the first time August 27 at 9:45 a.m. to organize, with the first practice the next Sunday at 9:30 a.m. If you would like to join in making a "Joyful noise unto the Lord" please see Sue List. Rally Sunday is being planned for early September, and the Diaconate Board will coordinate the Instillation and Ordination of Reverend Pniewski. There has been some discussion of having a Thanksgiving Potluck service again, but perhaps on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Your input on these matters of church life would be appreciated.

It will soon be time to begin planning our Christmas programs and the Annual Meeting and election of Church officers. Please consider serving on one of the church boards. Until October, I remain in your service to Christ.

Ron Bolenbaugh

Jesus Said, "Let the little children come to me, and not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

We Are Kicking Off Our New Sunday School Curriculum!

The Gospel Of Matthew

Teaches Our Children The Story About Jesus!

We will have a potluck meal following morning worship—Bring a dish to pass!



Plus Other Important Life Lessons Such As: Respect, Kindness, Giving, Prayer, Judging & Blessings!

Rally Sunday • September 10th • 10:30 am

Comments from a Member

– Michael Stiles

Appearance and substance are two very different words, but often confused in some people's minds. Some people put a great deal of value in how things appear to be, but very little in how things actually are. They value other people's opinions over what the truth may actually be.

They make purchases based on what others have instead of what they can really afford. They fall into the trap of "keeping up with the Joneses" and don't appreciate what they do have, only lamenting over what they don't.

Like all kids, my initial values were based on what I observed from those around me, primarily those of my parents and siblings. I started out valuing what they did, and discounting what they thought had little value. Until I was old enough to start making value decisions on my own, I accepted all of their values as my own. I am sure we would have had a lot fewer discussions if it had stayed that way, but as I grew I came to decisions on my own, and sometimes they were different than theirs.

My Mom and I did NOT see eye to eye on many things, and my choice in apparel was one we had many discussions on. OK, maybe discussion isn't the right word, I came out of the basement in what I threw on and she told me to go back and change clothes! I didn't see a problem with wearing striped pants with a plaid shirt, but Mom sure did!

As both of my parents worked at the Cadillac plant, they made good money and we were upper middle class. I had no idea as a kid, I just knew we always had a new car, a big house, went on vacations (they had to bring my little sister though), and never seemed to lack for anything. I thought everyone had a TV in their bedroom and got new clothes for school.

Having a sister I learned a LOT about appearance and substance. I had no idea that people would notice what brand of pants and shirts I wore, that my tennis shoes were making a "statement", that if I talked with a specific person it branded me into a clique and I couldn't talk to anyone outside of that group without damaging their reputation.

Maybe teen girls are more susceptible to peer pressure, but it seemed that every day she had to

give me commentary on what I was doing wrong and how it was not only ruining my life, but somehow ruining hers as well! I don't know anyone ever talked to her about my wardrobe or what I was doing when they may have seen me, but based on the hours she seemed to spend talking to other teen girls I have to assume they did or would have run out of things to talk about. Why they cared was, and still is a mystery to me, other than a polite greeting when they called or came over I didn't talk with them. I discovered early on that the less time I spent trying to decipher why a simple greeting was cause for giggling and whispered conversations made my life less complicated.

Males are not immune to appearance over substance, some of the guys I knew were into fast cars and constantly looking at improving the car they had to make it "cooler" than their friends. You can say a spoiler on the back improves the aerodynamics, and your gas mileage is improved, but I won't believe you actually get a cost savings over the hundreds of dollars spent to get it installed. Males have a different view but can also be swayed over what is actually of value and going for what looks good.

While I am older now, I still have to evaluate what I say and do and the reasons for it. Substance always has long term benefits, appearance doesn't. Are my actions for the right reasons should be the guiding force not how others perceive them.



(Pastor's Message continued)

all who seek to follow him consciously.

T - Trust in God's faithfulness in Christ sustains one's commitment. In seasons exalted or depressed, one can trust God's constant care.

In Closing, I really hope you're enjoying Arvel Steece thoughts and wisdom about what it means to be a servant of Jesus Christ and how it relates to our Congregational Way. Next month I plan to share with you the **Third C - Covenant**.

Many Blessings,

Pastor David Pniewski

"It is good to praise the Lord."

Psalm 92:1



OUR MISSION FOCUS IN SEPTEMBER

Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies

Our mission of the month for September is the **Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies (CFTS)**, which makes it possible for seminary students to learn about the Congregational Way of being Christ's Church.

CFTS educates seminarians for leadership in *Congregational* churches and ministries. Graduates of CFTS are uniquely prepared to meet the challenges of today's churches through the vibrant traditions and practices of the Congregational Way.

Many churches, regional associations and individuals provide scholarships to students through CFTS to offset financial indebtedness and provide tangible encouragement for CFTS students during the seminary experience. CFTS also provides a financial stipend to students and encourages CFTS graduates to engage in Congregational ministries with post graduate grants.

Please give your generous support to this wonderful program with your mission offerings.

News for Youth

Rally Sunday is September 10th. This is a special day for our Children and Youth as Sunday School begins.

This year's Sunday School will be called Sunday-Funday. We meet at 10:15am each Sunday.

Also, our youth group, Pilgrim Pathfinders, will meet as scheduled.

Come be a part of the fun and learning about Jesus!



After a pleasant summer, it is time to get ready for our first meeting of the new season.

Rally Day on the 10th of September will be our first event and I believe a potluck is planned.

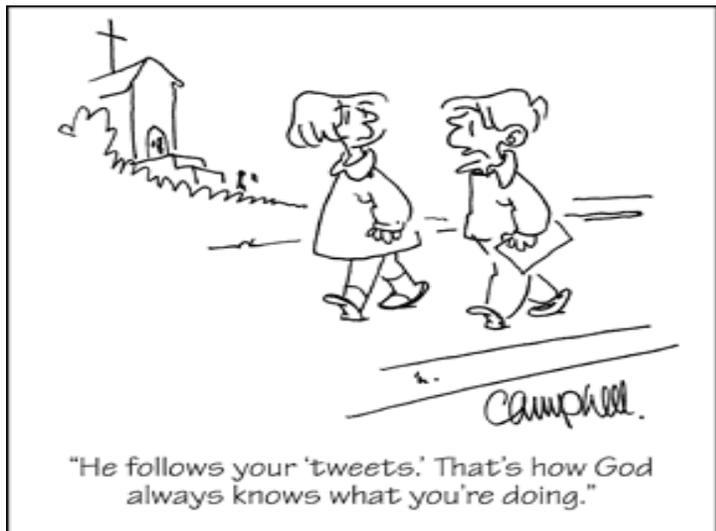
The Women's Fellowship will meet on Thursday, September 21st at 2:00 pm. We enthusiastically welcome new members!

Our focus for the meeting will be our Fall Soup and Salad Luncheon. No date has been set yet, but it will probably be in November. Diane Anderson is donating a pretty flannel throw and a quilt stand to raffle.

Enjoy the rest of the summer!

Anne Stockert

THOSE SERVING IN AUGUST	
Deacon	Phyllis Masserant
Trustee	Bertha Beach
Greeter	Ty Lenigan
Ushers	To Be Determined



Treasurer's Report (submitted by Michael Stiles)

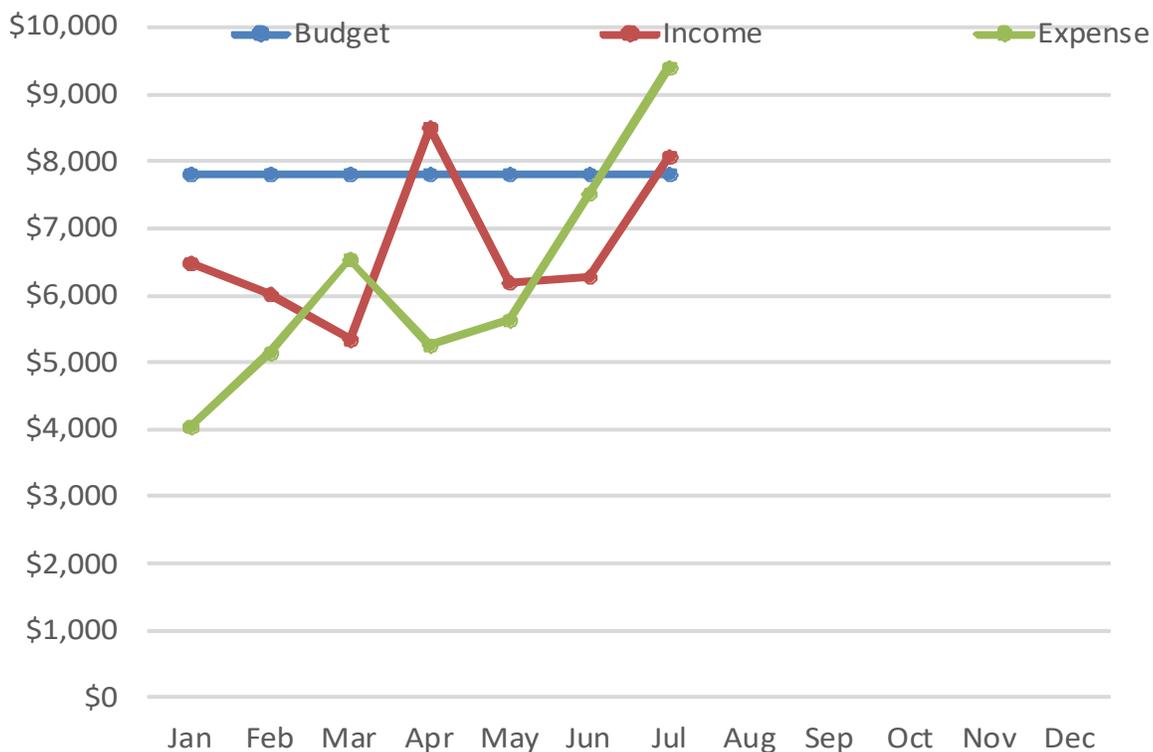
Last year we received a bequest from Grove Hatch, a long time member of our Church. The amount was over \$ 70,000 and initially we placed it into our checking account. We didn't receive interest on the money, so after looking at various options we moved it into a Bond fund. This was only a few months before the Presidential Election, and if you remember, the Stock Market went way up after the election. Bond prices went down, and we lost money. Well, that has changed and we have recovered that loss and made a profit. Our July Report reflects that we have made \$ 1,714 and hopefully the value will continue to rise.

In the month of July Operating Income was \$ 8,080 and our Operating Expenses was \$ 9,395. Our budgeted level is \$ 7,813 per month, and we started the year with a deficit of \$ 865. Our deficit for July was \$ 1,314. We have a surplus for the year of \$ 2,452.

Our primary expense in July was our utility bill. We paid \$ 2,943 for Gas and Electric even though our account showed we did NOT have a debt. They changed their computer system in April and we are still trying to get the bill resolved. It is fixed and they now agree we have a surplus. There is no bill for July (on August's Report) and shouldn't have one the following month.

If anyone ever has a question, concern, or just want to talk about a financial issue (or other issues), feel free to contact me!

2017 Income Vs Expenses



MY CHURCH

By Marilyn K. Walker

Some Churches in the cities
have backgrounds, ages old,
with roots from other countries;
there's history to be told.

Some Churches that are rural
have left a legacy.
The freedom of our country
lies in their history.

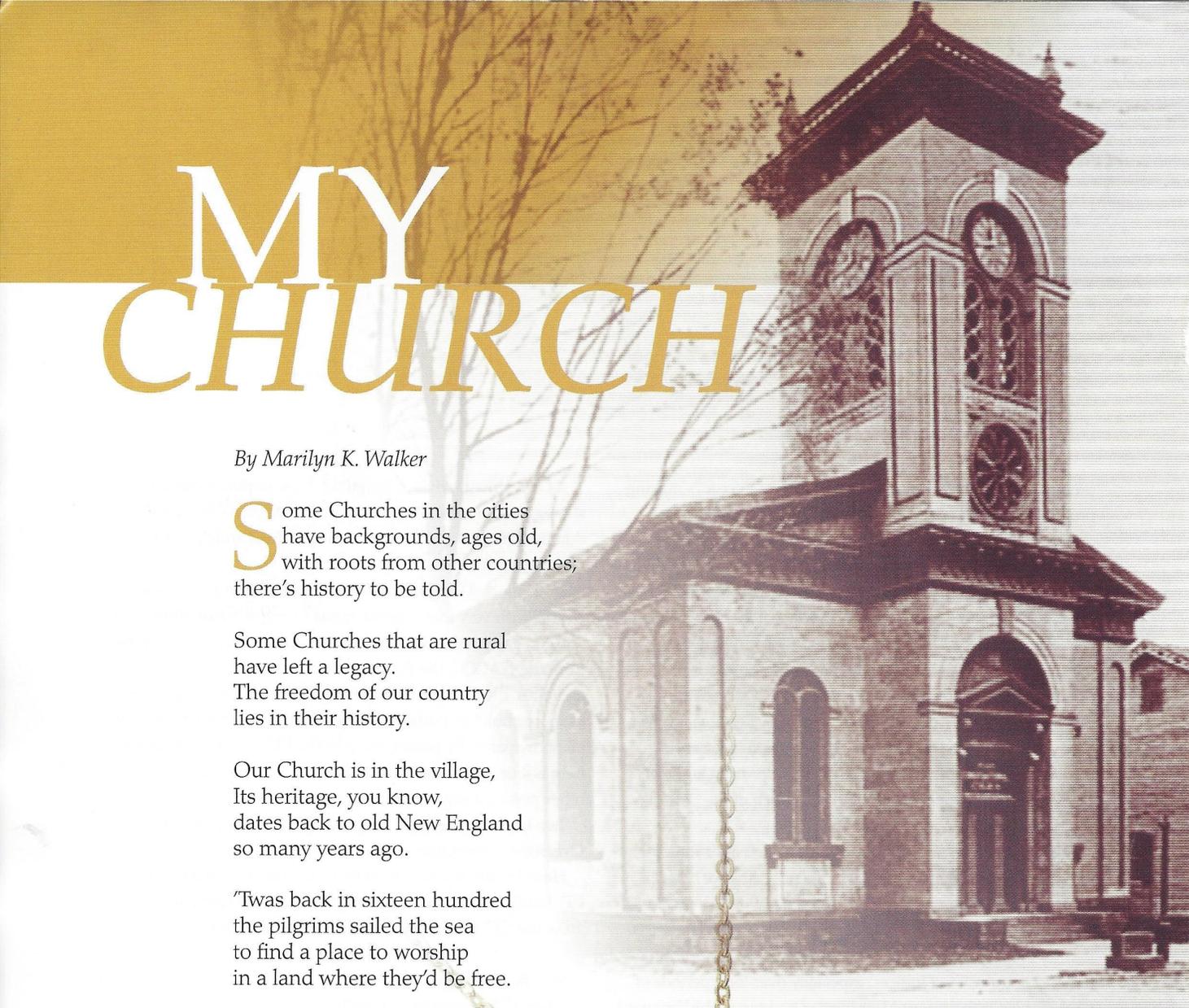
Our Church is in the village,
Its heritage, you know,
dates back to old New England
so many years ago.

'Twas back in sixteen hundred
the pilgrims sailed the sea
to find a place to worship
in a land where they'd be free.

Our Church! It, too, has history.
In eighteen fifty three
a cornerstone was laid to prove
their dream, reality.

The members were elated
to witness that event-
the culmination of a dream-
imagine what that meant!

Recalling it, I'm thankful
that God showed them the way
to build this place of worship
that we call ours today.



*MY CHURCH was written at the request
of my minister for the 140th Anniversary
celebration of the first Congregational
Church of Saugeryes in December 1993. It
was published in the Open Door, the Church
newsletter. I have been a member of the
Church since 1942.*

Marilyn K. Walker

September 2017

September 2017							October 2017						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
3	4	5	6	7	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
					29	30	29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug 27	28	29	30	31	Sep 1	2
						4:00pm 9:00pm Chuck Hodge (Family Get Together)
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
COMMUNION 10:15am Sunday School 10:30am Sunday Worship 12:00pm Pilgrim Pathfinders	James Senior (B) LABOR DAY 5:30pm AA 7:00pm 8:30pm Boy Scouts	Chris Blitzer (B) 2:00pm Diaconate Board	4:30pm Bible Chit Chat 5:30pm AA	Arnie Stockert (B) Nathalie Beach (B) 10:00am 2:00pm Crafters	Rick Pierce II (B)	4:00pm 7:00pm Kirk Lenigan - Fellowship Hall (Family Get Together)
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
BIRTHDAY OFFERING 10:15am Sunday School 10:30am Sunday Worship 11:30am 3:00pm Rally Sunday - Kicking off Our New Sunday School Curriculum 12:00pm Pilgrim Pathfinders	4:30pm Outreach Committee 5:30pm AA 7:00pm 8:30pm Boy Scouts	5:00pm Trustees Meeting	Berna Reinwald (B) Florence Irving (B) Judy Breimer (B) Sheri Digue (B) 4:30pm Bible Chit Chat 5:30pm AA	Shawn Kusch (B) 8:30am 10:00am Mens Breakfast (Dixie Cafe) 10:00am 2:00pm Crafters 2:00pm Red Hat Ladies	Sandy Nelson (B)	Kim Bodner (B)
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Warren Danielson (B) 10:15am Sunday School 10:30am Sunday Worship 12:00pm Pilgrim Pathfinders	5:30pm AA 7:00pm 8:30pm Boy Scouts		Coleen Orey (B) LaDon Tillman (B) 4:30pm Bible Chit Chat 5:30pm AA	10:00am 2:00pm Crafters 2:00pm Women's Fellowship		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
NOISY OFFERING Zachary DeBoodt (B) 10:15am Sunday School 10:30am Sunday Worship 12:00pm Pilgrim Pathfinders	5:30pm AA 6:30pm Christian Education 7:00pm 8:30pm Boy Scouts	Pam Dudek	4:30pm Bible Chit Chat 5:30pm AA	10:00am 2:00pm Crafters		Anniversary - Norman and Pam

Aug 27 - Sep 2

Sep 3 - 9

Sep 10 - 16

Sep 17 - 23

Sep 24 - 30