

# **JANUARY 2025**

# **Emmanuel Community United Methodist Church Monthly Newsletter**

N84 W16707 Menomonee Avenue, Menomonee Falls, WI 53051  $\diamond$  262-251-3830  $\diamond$  www.ec-umc.com



## WELL DONE, CHURCH! What a busy and productive Advent/Christmas season we've shared!

- Bravo to our children and their coaches for a wonderful Christmas program on 12/15!
- Kudos to our musicians and their directors for an inspiring time of worship on All-Choir Sunday!
- The Stewardship Team extends gratitude to the 106 households that have made pledges for 2025. Please don't forget to pick up your mug(s) in the Narthex.
- The Mission Team offers thanks for all those who donated winter items and cash donations for the Rooted and Rising winter clothing drive. Over 100 items were provided to help children in the Washington Park area stay warm this winter.
- The **Sew & Sews** are grateful to everyone who bought items from their sale. The proceeds were donated to the R&R coat drive \$407!
- The Worship Team thanks everyone who gave poinsettias to remember or honor someone special. These colorful plants add so much beauty to our worship spaces!
- Our Ministry Teams and Storytellers who made Wednesday evenings such a treat!



### **CPR/AED TRAINING AT ECUMC**

ECUMC is hosting a CPR/AED training class on Saturday, 1/18. The class will run 9 AM - 11 AM. Prior to attending, online coursework is required. There are a limited number of slots open. The cost per person will be about \$100\*; final cost will be determined by the number who sign up.

If you are interested or have questions, please contact Ellen Follmann 414-801-1469.



\*If you need scholarship help with the cost, contact Anne Weiland.

### **NEW OFFERING ENVELOPES**

2025 pledge envelopes are available now. Please pick them up outside the church office. They are

arranged alphabetically by last name.

If you give online or through electronic funds transfer, you will Offering not receive envelopes.



If you are new to ECUMC and wish to receive envelopes contact Financial Secretary, Anna Thompson at <u>annavbthomp@gmail.com</u>. Any envelopes not picked up will be mailed out after January 15.

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### A WORD FROM PASTOR MATT

### New Year, New Conversations: "I Have a Friend Who..."

Dear Emmanuel Family,

As we step into the new year, I am thrilled to invite you to join us for an impactful worship series titled "I Have a Friend Who..." This series is designed to address some of the most pressing and personal questions we encounter as believers, equipping us to respond with both truth and grace.



Each week, we will explore a different topic that reflects the challenges and relationships we navigate in our daily lives. Together, we'll turn to God's Word for wisdom, clarity, and compassion as we discuss how to engage with friends, loved ones, and even strangers who may hold different perspectives or face difficult struggles.

Here's a look at what's coming up:

January

5<sup>th</sup>: I have a friend who... *is gay.* 

12<sup>th</sup>: I have a friend who... *thinks I'm dumb because I believe in God.* 

19<sup>th</sup>: I have a friend who... *is always mad.* 

26<sup>th</sup>: I have a friend who... *believes science disproves faith.* 

February

2<sup>nd</sup>: I have a friend who... *believes a good God would never send anyone to hell.* 

9<sup>th</sup>: I have a friend who... *wants a family*.

16<sup>th</sup>: I have a friend who... *is an addict.* 

23<sup>rd</sup>: I have a friend who... *gossips*.

March

2<sup>nd</sup>: I have a friend who... *is depressed.* 

5<sup>th</sup> (Ash Wednesday): I have a friend who... *is going to die.* 

I believe that these are more than just sermon topics; they represent real lives, real struggles, and real opportunities to reflect Christ's love. Through this series, we'll learn how to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) and walk alongside others with humility and hope.

Whether you're wrestling with these questions yourself or seeking ways to help others, this series is for you. I encourage you to invite your friends, neighbors, and coworkers to join us—especially those who might be curious about how faith intersects with these important issues.

Let's start the year by embracing the messy, beautiful work of ministry together. I'm excited to see how God will move among us through these conversations.

With hope for a blessed new year, Pastor Matt

### CHURCH OFFICE

262-251-3830 Church@ec-umc.com Hours: Monday—Thursday, 9 AM—1 PM Special January closures: Wednesday, 1/1 and Monday, 1/20 (New Year's Day/Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

### **ADULT DISCIPLESHIP**

Contact: Janet Ray; JanetR@ec-umc.com

#### Winter Discipleship Study

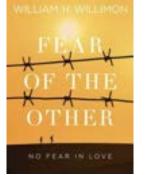
This winter, we will engage in a 4-week study by retired UMC Bishop William Willimon, *Fear of the Other: No Fear in Love.* 

We will meet for an hour in Fellowship Hall immedi-

ately following the 2<sup>nd</sup> service on January 26, February 2, 16, and 23 (we'll skip Super Bowl Sunday, 2/9).

Willimon brings a Wesleyan perspective to what is often a hard thing to do: love the "other" without needing them to become like us.

In the introduction, Willimon writes,



"Let the politicians do what they must to be elected...My job is not to worry about opinion polls or to debate national strategy. My peculiar vocation is to help the church think like Christians so that we might be given the grace to act like Jesus."

Each week, we'll watch and discuss a conversation between Willimon and Dalia Cataline Ramirez, the deputy director of the Community Renewal Society, on the challenges of a xenophobic world, our natural fears, and the gospel promise of inclusion. Of this study, Pastor Adam Hamilton writes, "Will writes with prophetic sarcasm, a touch of humor, and a pastor's heart. His words will make you laugh, cringe, cry, confess, and repent."

Be a part of this timely study! Books are available in the church office for \$5.



#### WOMEN'S MINISTRY EVENTS

Contact: Karen Norz; KNorz@wi.rr.com

### **Breakfast at Ally's**

We are kicking off the new year with a coffee/breakfast get together on Saturday, January 18 from 9-10:30 at



Ally's Bistro in Menomonee Falls. We hope you can join us for fun and fellowship.

Please RSVP so we know how many tables/seats to reserve - Ally's is very busy on Saturday mornings! https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/D9L8R7Y

### Next Women's Study Starts Wednesday, 1/8

Our next women's study starts on January 8 at 7 PM in Fellowship Hall.

How do you tell your boss her jokes are racist? Why did your sister-in-law hang up on you when you mentioned affirmative action? How do you explain white privilege to your white, privileged friend?



In *So You Want to Talk About Race,* Ijeoma Oluo guides readers of all

races through subjects ranging from police brutality to cultural appropriation in an attempt to make the seemingly impossible possible: honest conversations about race, and about how racism infects every aspect of American life.

Come learn with us!

The book can be found on Amazon or from other sellers. Sign up on the bulletin board or here online: https://www.signupgenius.com/

#### go/10C0D44A8AE23A4FC1-54121578-womens

#### **Book Brunch in February**

We will be hosting a Saturday morning book brunch on February 22. We hope you can join is as we discuss *The Measure*, by Nikki Erlick. A New York Times Bestseller, this book poses the question: *How do you measure your life?* By creating a world in which



everyone can choose to know exactly how long their life will be, Erlick explores the philosophical questions raised by such knowledge, as well as the social, cultural and political implications. The book can be found on Amazon or from other sellers. Look for additional details and RSVP list early February.

## YAHAS MEET TUESDAY, 1/21

Our Tuesday, January 21 meeting will feature Kevin and Beth Schumacher's trip to Portugal and

Spain. We will view the many beautiful churches that they saw on their journey.



Bring a dish to pass. Dues \$2.00.

## **2025 MINISTRY LEADERSHIP**

At the Annual Church Conference, we appointed the following Lay Leaders. If you have any questions about any of these ministries, reach out to these people.

Thank you, leaders, for your willingness to serve!

**Church Council Chairperson Recording Secretary** Treasurer Lav Leader Lay Member to Annual Conference **Board of Trustees Chairperson** Staff-Parish Relations Chairperson Nominations & Lay Development Stewardship Council Member-at-Large Music Ministry Worship Missions Children's Ministry Youth Ministry Women's Ministry Marketing AV Tech Green Team **Kitchen Klub Community Care** 

Anne Weiland Ellen Follmann Janice Kohlmann **Rollin Kring** Anna Thompson Gary Morgan Peg Heinen Pastor Gary Wilkes **Amy Schlotthauer** Ellen Follmann Virginia Patterson Mary Klein Frank Vetrovec Patty Buchholz Karen Norz **Rob Tack** David Rohr **Doug Walters Richard Kohlmann** Pastor



### **STAYING HEALTHY**

Now that cold/flu/COVID season is back, please wear a face mask if that increases your comfort at church. Stay well, everyone!



## ECUMC COMMUNITY BREAKFAST, 1/25

Janet Ray calls Nantes, France "the most intriguing city you've never heard of" and she'll be telling us why at our



ECUMC Community Breakfast on Saturday, 1/25. Come at 8:30 for food and fellowship.

Afterwards, Janet will showcase, through photos, this birthplace of science fiction author Jules Verne, part of its 12-mile trail of 130+ sculptures, and the oh-somagical "Isle of Machines."

### **GREEN RESOLUTIONS FOR JANUARY**

WE CAN renew our commitment to be good stewards of our Earth. Choose one *new* thing to do throughout the year to care for creation.

WE CAN clean up. Review your closets for items to donate for reuse, to repurpose, or to recycle. Challenge your family to avoid letting anything go to the landfill by donating it for someone else to use.



### WE CAN consume less

meat. Explore the options for

foods that are kinder to earth and to health. What we eat does have an impact on nature and climate change, as well as our own bodies. Host a meatless potluck and invite people to share their recipes.

WE CAN avoid single-use plastics. Take your own reusable bags when shopping. When eating out, bring your own take-home container. Substitute bamboo, silicon, cloth from natural fibers, glass, or aluminum products for plastic ones.

WE CAN support creation justice efforts. Help fund organizations that care for the environment and for communities that are vulnerable. They can gather resources and amass power that creates greater impact than individuals can.

WE CAN reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Minimize the use of paper, which comes from chopping down trees. Choose instead email, texting, recycled paper, or reusable scrap paper. Change to bamboo toilet tissue that spares trees so they can continue to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

# SOLAR UPDATE FROM THE TRUSTEES

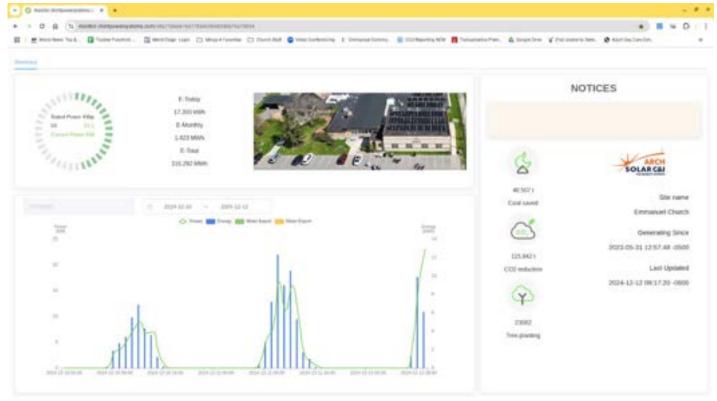
So you look at your thermometer this morning and see it reads -5 degrees! OUCH, that is cold. Then you remember that up on the roof at church we have 118 solar panels working for us today. You smile, knowing that even in cold weather, they produce over 20kw from our sun daily! Thank you, God for your gift of sunshine!

Below is a snapshot from one day's solar plant that we have working for us here at Emmanuel.

This report shows that the energy we have produced equals planting 23,000

trees to remove the same amount of pollution through photosynthesis. We have reduced CO2 emissions by 115 tons (230,000 pounds of carbon dioxide gas)!

Every day our solar panels produce savings for us, but we still have a financial comment to pay them off.



The commitment we made for our Solar project was to "pay it off" in the next 5 years.

As of December 31, 2024, we have made the first two years of payments (2 X \$7,250 = \$14,300), which leaves us with three more years to complete our payments for these panels.

We have just about used the previous donations from church members and could use your help in replenishing the funding for this project.

If your heart is so inclined to share in this project, please donate and write "Solar Project" in the notes section of your payment method. God blesses us each day with opportunities to help us save the earth!

# ASK THE UMC: What's Changed And What Hasn't Since General Conference?

Many churches are still processing the momentous events of the 2024 General Conference and what its decisions may mean for their ministry. This presentation breaks down what did and didn't change at General Conference and how it will impact local ministries. Check it out! <u>https://www.resourceumc.org/en/content/whats-changed-and-what-hasnt-</u> since-general-conference



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### **YOUTH MINISTRIES**

Contact: Bill Follmann; BillF@ec-umc.com, 414-881-3023 Winter Retreat, Friday, 1/10 - Sunday, 1/12

The Wisconsin Conference winter youth retreat at camp Lake Lucerne has been a favorite activity for the youth as they have a chance to grow closer to

God. There's fun interaction with other youth as well as the great winter activities available like sledding, winter hikes, and



broomball plus large indoor group games, singing, and camp-style worship.

Please register online and let Bill know if you are going to attend!! Do not pay online! Sign up quickly as there is a limit of 65 students for this event!!! When the total hits 65, that will be the cut-off for the whole state!

Youth Ministries will cover \$90 of the \$140 registration fee, so your cost is only \$50 per student. All students (grades 6-12) will need to register online in addition to informing Bill. **DO NOT PAY ONLINE!** Since the church covers part of the cost, write a check to the church for your student's part (\$50 pp) and the church will send a check to pay for everyone.

NOTE: This is a 10-point event for Confirmands. Here is the link for online registration:

https://wiumcamps.campbrainregistration.com/

**NEW NAME** Tribe (the 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth group) is changing its name. The new name is 4:12, which

comes from 1 Timothy 4:12 : Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.



Tribe singers have changed their name to the **4:12** Singers. The 4:12 Singers rehearse on Wednesdays at 6 PM in the music room.

#### Confirmation Retreat, Friday 2/28 - Saturday, 3/1

The confirmation retreat is at Camp Lake Lucerne. Please use the registration link to sign up for this retreat. It is a 10 point Confirmation event and will go into detail about the Methodist church, its beginnings, structure and future.

https://wiumcamps.campbrainregistration.com/ Please contact Bill with questions or concerns. The Youth Council suggested these events.

### A STEWARDSHIP STORY

#### Giving - It's More than Gifts

They offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. (Matthew 2:11)

Judy and Doug looked at each other and instantly knew what the other was thinking. It's the second Sunday in January. Where was everyone who came

to Christmas Eve services? Judy put her hands together and whispered, "Here's the church, here's the steeple, open the door, where are the people?"

On the way home Doug remembered, "It was so



exciting to go to church last month. The pews were full and we had kids singing, adults singing and instrumentalists playing at every service. I got so caught up I agreed to serve on the finance committee when they asked! What was I thinking? Now we're singing 'In the Bleak Midwinter,' there's plenty of room in the pews and the offering plates have almost nothing in them."

Judy drove in silence and let him vent. As they sat down for their pizza playoff lunch before the game she said, "Remember what Pastor Matt said about the fact that the story didn't end when the wise men gave their gifts. They heard that Herod wanted to kill the child so they went home via another route so that they could tell everyone what they'd seen. When the wise men arrived at the stable, their journey wasn't over. In fact, it had just begun. Our journey is about a lot more than going to church -- it's about helping people know how Jesus can change their lives for the better and inviting them to join us."

Doug had to agree with her. At halftime he suggested they sit down and make a list of the people they missed seeing in worship and figure out when the two of them might call or email them before the next Sunday's service.



### **CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NEWS**

Contact: Liz Cannon; LizC@ec-umc.com/262-370-7512 2024 definitely ended on a high note for the Children's Ministry Team! Rejoice with us! Acolytes

Seven children completed Acolyte training, and additional children are well on their way! Congratulations to Millie Germana, Kiera Mosher, Rory Mosher, Leon Powers, Will Schlotthauer, Calvin Schoenenberger, and Peirson Sommers. (On Sunday, 1/12, they will receive their completion certificates.)

Light and fire remind us that God is with us. The candles that the children light remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World!

### **Nursery News**

Not only did we promote our wonderful Nursery Coordinator, Renee Rusch, but we also added the lovely Doricela (Dori) Herrera-Sanchez as our Nursey Attendant. What a gift!



#### **Children's Ministry Team**

ECUMC's Children's Ministry is also very excited to welcome three new team members! Tricia Gequillana, Meaghan Germana, and Angie Schneider accepted the call to serve the youngest members of the church. Many thanks to Frank Vetrovec for accepting the position as the Children's Ministry Team Chairperson! We are blessed to retain Laura Hohl, Stacy Velie, and Jean Reif as our steadfast and devoted teachers.

Thank you to Jeannie Berrall, Meaghan Germana, Nate Schlotthauer, Jeff Schmidt, Anna Schoenenberger, and Anne Weiland for stepping up

to teach Fall and Winter of 2024.

Christmas Program Thanks

Our Christmas Program, Santa Tell the Story of Jesus, was a success with 24 children performing during two services. This performance would not have been possible without the dedication of our



Children's Choir Director, Laura Hohl, who guides the little ones in song with patience and devotion. The entire Velie Family worked to support the pageant behind the scenes. Stacy Velie offered endless hours of her time and talents to ensure the costumes, set, and a multitude of other details were attended to. Todd Velie worked tirelessly to



support the play, helping with the set, providing sound, and overall A/V assistance. Noah and Liam Velie cheerfully did whatever was asked of them! Additionally, Chole Grimm was with us for many rehearsals as well as the performances. Claire Heinen and McKayla Loehe stepped up and helped facilitate the play, providing assistance with transitions among other things.

Working with the youth heightened the children's awareness about the service opportunities that await them in the future as teenagers in the church. May they also aspire to contribute their gifts in middle school, high school, and beyond!

#### Club 4/5

Club 4/5 celebrated the season together with the Germana Family hosting the December event. Their time was spent watching "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" and assembling hygiene bags for our friends at Rooted & Rising.



We applied for and have received a Foundation Grant to help us grow this blossoming group in 2025. Please consider donating to the Club 4/5 group to further support their efforts to grow in faith, fellowship, and stewardship.

NEW THIS YEAR - Youth Sunday School for Middle and High School Students

Highschoolers - kick off the New Year right and join in the fun on Sundays! Starting 1/5, youth grades 6-

12 are invited to meet in the Youth Room at 8:30. Our SpiceRack curriculum will engage



and meet you where you are in your spiritual journey. Join the group for a fast-paced, interactive, faith-sharing experience. Each lesson is packed with a variety of activities, discussion questions, and games.

Please contact Liz Cannon at <u>lizc@ec-umc.com</u> or 262-370-7512 with questions or to volunteer.

#### MINUTES OF ECUMC CHURCH CONFERENCE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2024

Meeting was called to order at 7:25 PM by Rev John Sumwalt Together the assembly reaffirmed our mission statement of *Imitating Christ Together*.

#### **Presiding Elder's Reflections:**

Rev Sumwalt reviewed updates from the General Conference that happened in May of this year. The conference addressed issues around homosexuality and the United Methodist Church's stance on this. He also reviewed the new regional organization, WI is now aligned with Northern Illinois and our new Bishop is Dan Schwerin. The regionalization also allows for global regions, so United Methodists worldwide can have different stances on key issues.



Lastly, he read aloud a Resolution of Repentance that was drafted at the conference: On May 3, 2024 the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, meeting in Charlotte, North

Con May 3, 2024 the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, passed a resolution of apology to survivors of clergy sexual abuse and their families. The Resolution of Repentance reads as follows:

"The United Methodist Church apologizes for the times we allowed our desire to protect the Church to outweigh our desire to care for victims and survivors of sexual misconduct. We have allowed polity and protection of the institutional Church to prevent us from holding persons accountable, thus perpetuating harm within our local churches and other ministry settings, and damaging the whole United Methodist connection.

We apologize for the times we have not listened to you, doubted your stories, ignored your wounds, and have not tended to your pain. We believe this has contributed to allowing an unsafe culture to exist. An apology is worthless without a commitment to the challenging work which must follow. The United Methodist Church pledges to:

1. Apologize in every annual conference across the connection.

2. Educate Church leaders regarding sacred trust in ministerial relationships and power imbalance within those relationships.

- 3. Provide healing resources to all affected in accordance with Complaint Procedures.
- 4. Develop a trauma-informed response to complaints of sexual misconduct.

This apology alone is insufficient for healing. The United Methodist Church accepts our responsibility and publicly states our commitment to carry out the steps named to do no more harm. May God's blessing and never-ending love guide our work and see it through."

Not only was the apology statement read in its entirety during General Conference, but all United Methodist bishops around the world are to read the apology at their own upcoming annual conferences.

#### **Ministry Review:**

All those present were provided with a packet of reports from staff, ministry teams and administrative teams. No questions were raised on these reports.

#### **Actions Requiring a Vote:**

Lay leadership (nominations) report presented by Rollin Kring was reviewed, amended as needed and approved unanimously.

Pastoral Compensation for 2025, including Accountable Reimbursement and Housing or Furnishings Allowance was presented by SPRC chair Peg Heinen and was approved unanimously.

Pastor Matt discussed Call and Servant leadership, encouraging anyone stirred to explore ministry to talk with him. He also will contact Garrett Seminary regarding the status of a scholarship from our congregation that was previously established.

Membership Roster was reviewed regarding members who have passed away in the last year and other active members who have requested to be withdrawn from the church rolls.

The proposed 2025 budget was presented by Anne Weiland, with the acknowledgment that it is a fluid document subject to revision by the church council. It was unanimously approved.

Adjournment: Rev Sumwalt adjourned the meeting at 7:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Follmann

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Sat 4		9am - Club Scout Pack 60	9am - CPR Training (CH) 9am - Craft Morning (FH) 25 8am - Community Breakfast	-
Fri 3	Office Closed 10am - Bible Study (Z)	10 Youth Winter Refreat Office Closed 10am - Bible Study (Z) 5pm - Club Scout Pack 60		Office Closed 10am - Bible Study (Z)
Thu 2		6pm - Men's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Women's Choir 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR)		6pm - Women's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Men's Choir (MR) 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR)
Wed	NEW YEAR'S DAY Office Closed	8 10am - Bible Study (FH) 5:30pm - Youth Singers (MR) 6:30pm - Trustees (CL) 7pm - Women's Study (FH)	15 Pathways Deadline by Noon 10am - Bible Study (FH) 5:30pm - Yourth Singers (MR) 7pm - Women's Study (FH) 5:30pm - Yourth Singers (MR) 7pm - Women's Study (FH)	29 10am - Bible Study (FH) 5:30pm - Youth Singers (MR) 7pm - Womer's Study (FH)
Tue 31	NEW YEAR'S EVE	7 6pm - Children's Ministry 6:30pm - Spirit Ringers (MR)	14 11:45am - Food Pantry 5pm - Food Pantry 6:30pm - Spirit Ringers (MR) 21 9:30am - Community Care 11:30am - VAHAS (CH) 6:30pm - SPRC (CL) 7:30pm - SPRC (CL)	28 (No title) 6:30pm - Spirit Ringers (MR)
Mon 30	10am - Staff Meeting (FH)	6 9:30am - Sew and Sews (112) 10am - Staff Meeting (FH) 6:30pm - Green Team (CL) 6:30pm - Mission Team (FH)	13 10am - Staff Meeting (FH) 5:30pm - Stewardship (CL) 7pm - Finance (CL) 20 Dr. MLK, Jr. Day Office Closed 7pm - Church Council (CL)	10am - Staff Meeting (FH)
Sun 29	9am - Sanctuary Worship (S) 1pm - Hmong Alliance (CH)	5 8:30am - Worship (S) 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 8:45am - Adult Study (CL) 10am - Worship (CH) 11am - Confirmation Class 1pm - Hmong Alliance (CH)	12   Youth Winter Retreat   8:30am - Worship (S)   8:30am - Sunday School (V)   8:45am - Adult Study (CL)   10am - Worship (CH)   11am - Confirmation Class   1pm - Hmong Alliance (CH)   1pm - Morship (S)   8:30am - Worship (S)   8:45am - Adult Study (CL)   10am - Worship (S)   8:45am - Sunday School (V)   8:45am - Sunday School (V)   8:45am - Morship (S)   10am - Worship (CH)   11am - Confirmation Class   11am - Confirmation Class   11am - Himong Alliance (CH)   11am - Himong Alliance (CH)	26 8:30am - Worship (S) 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 8:45am - Adult Study (CL) 10am - Worship (CH) 11am - Confirmation Class 11am - Fear of Other (FH) 1pm - Hmong Alliance (CH)