

The Vine

February 2008

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is to lovingly proclaim the Gospel among all people in order to form and nurture loving communities which confess by word and deed that Jesus is Lord and Savior





Our Partnership February 2008

For A Better Lent

“Of fasting I say this: It is right to fast frequently in order to subdue and control the body. For when the stomach is full, the body does not serve for preaching, for praying, for studying, for doing anything that is good. Under such circumstances God’s Word cannot remain. But one should not fast with a view to meriting something by it as by a good work.” Dr. Martin Luther

“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites... But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret.” Matthew 4:16a, 17,18a

“He wants nothing at all to do with you if by your fasting you court Him as if you were a great saint, and yet meanwhile nurse a grudge or anger against your neighbor.”
Dr. Martin Luther

“First, let fasting be done unto the Lord with our eye singly fixed on Him. Let our intention herein be this, and this alone, to glorify our Father which is in heaven.”
John Wesley in “Sermons On Several Occasions”

Dear Members and Friends of St. John’s Lutheran Church and School,

February 6th is Ash Wednesday which marks the beginning of a forty-day period known to Christians as the Season of Lent. Lent means many things to Christians and the season is filled with many different activities. From ancient times the season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance born of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on God’s eternal Word and draws from it life and hope.

For Christians, the season of Lent is a time of sober reflection and repentance. Holy Week is the time to focus on the actual suffering of Jesus; for now during the season of Lent it is enough that we humbly acknowledge our great need of a Savior. For us then the 40 days of Lent provides a time for giving attention to almsgiving, sacrificial acts and catechesis.

I believe it would be good for us to ask ourselves; “What could I do to make this year a better Lent?” We, who are heads of the family, may well put that question in the context of our families. In other words; “What could we do as a family do to make this year’s Lenten season a better one?”

I want you to ask this question, because I want the Season of Lent to be a time of spiritual growth and renewal for each of you. While of course, no one can be forced to do anything nor does anything positive come from doing something we are forced to do, we can and will make choices on what we will do or not do during this 40 day period. I want to urge you then to consider several options and then choose a discipline which you believe will not only be of benefit to you, but one that you believe you can fulfill.

The first choice revolves around the word “catechesis” which means to “teach or instruct.” In the early Church and still today, the 40 days of Lent present an opportunity for non-members to ready themselves for Baptism. Lent was a period of instruction, during which the catechumens were prepared for Baptism during the Easter Vigil service. This year at St. John’s, Early Communion instruction will be given during the Lenten season for the purpose of preparing our young people to receive the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday.

To aid you with your spiritual growth during Lent, you will find with this Newsletter a special devotion book from Lutheran Hour Ministries titled; “Uncustomary Love.” I urge you and your family to set aside a special time to use this devotion book, so that as you read it and study God’s Word you will be instructed and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior.

The second discipline of alms-giving is reflected in the special Lenten offering envelope you will be soon receiving in the mail. In the past this has been called the “Lenten Denial Offering” at St. John’s. The hope is that we during these 40 days will cut back on our spending habits and use a portion of that savings for the Lord’s work. If you have not practiced this discipline in the past, perhaps this could be the year for you to take a serious approach to alms-giving during Lent by cutting back spending and giving that amount for the Lord’s work. Remember, this is of course over and above our regular, weekly offering, which we have pledged to bring.

Now the final, but often practiced discipline – fasting. If you’ve been around me you know that I love to cook and eat. Some time ago I lost over 60 pounds and have worked hard to keep it off. I am also a diabetic, which means that I need to eat a certain amount to keep my glucose in the proper range. However, that does not mean that I could not practice this discipline.

As I was studying the lessons for Ash Wednesday, I noted that our Lord did not say “if you fast” but rather “when.” Fasting does not mean going without food, but it does mean *doing without something*. Now if we are doing without something, we may just have some extra money that could be given to a special Lenten offering. As one writer has said, “Our habits and pleasures are our masters. Watching “Good Morning America” is often more important than morning devotions. Fasting might also free up some time to do the special Lenten devotions I noted above.

There are of course many Biblical references to fasting. Jesus fasted for 40 days in the desert, which led to Satan tempting Him. Fasting from food is not dieting, nor is it self-punishment. It is, however, a discipline which can help you experience God in new and deeper ways.

How can you have a better Lent? Each of these disciplines can help, however, without God’s Spirit which comes to you through Word and Sacrament; Lent will just be another meaningless exercise with no spiritual value. My prayer is that you by making the proper choices, will have a good Lent, and therefore be fully prepared to realize the joy of Easter.

Have a blessed Lent, and may God richly bless your practice of the Lenten disciplines.
In Christ,

Rev. Richard Lohmeyer, Pastor

Deadline for the March 2008 Vine is February 11, 2008



February 2008

As we move from one season on the Christian calendar to the next, we are often surprised how fast the days go by. Ash Wednesday falls on February 6th, the earliest it has happened in any year, making the time appear to be going faster.

Lent is a time of repentance, prayer and fasting. A time of preparation for the most wonderful day on our calendar, **Easter Sunday**.

It is also a time for renewal of our stewardship commitments. As we know stewardship life and growth just doesn't happen. We need to be motivated, taught and challenged in stewardship. Left to ourselves in the discipline, we soon find Satan in our pocketbooks. He wins whenever he gets us to back off in our offerings for the funding of the church's ministries. Our only defense against the constant, aggressive attacks by the devil on our church is the Word. We teach finding stewardship from the Word and challenge people to grow in this aspect of Christian life.

Do we need to gather commitments? Absolutely! Look at the number of envelope packets for 2008, still not picked up. How many times have we asked for volunteers to fill the Treasures position? How many people have said they were purposely holding back their offerings?

Listen to a few verses of a poem on this subject:

Are you an active member
the kind that would be missed?

Or are you just contented
that your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings
and mingle with flock?

Or do you stay at home
and criticize and knock?

Come out to meetings often
and help with hands and heart.

Don't be just a member;
But take an active part.

Think this over, member, you know right from wrong;
Are you an active member?
Or, do you just belong.

The Stewardship Committee

Deadline for the March 2008 Vine is February 11, 2008

From Our Church Fathers

Martin of Tours (316-397) Popular saint who converted ancient Gaul to Christianity and for whom Martin Luther was named.

Saint Martin of Tours (Latin: Martinus), (316/317, Savaria, Pannonia – November 11, 397 in Candes) was a [bishop of Tours](#) whose shrine became a famous stopping-point for [pilgrims](#) on the road to [Santiago de Compostela](#). Around his name much legendary material accrued and he has become one of the most familiar and recognizable [Roman Catholic saints](#). Some of the accounts of his travels may have been interpolated into his [vita](#) to give credence to his early sites. His life was recorded by a contemporary, the hagiographer [Sulpicius Severus](#). He is the patron saint of soldier.

So it came about that one day when he had nothing on him but his weapons and his uniform, in the middle of a winter which had been fearfully hard beyond the ordinary, so that many were dying of the intense cold, he met at the city gate of Amiens a coatless beggar. This beggar had been asking passers-by to take pity on him but all had gone past the unfortunate creature. Then the God-filled man understood, from the fact that no one else had had pity, that his beggar had been reserved for him. But what was he to do? He had nothing with him but the cape he had on, for he had already used up what else he had, in similar good works. So he took the sword he was wearing and cut the cape in two and gave one half to the beggar, putting on the rest himself.

This raised a laugh from some of the passers-by, for he looked grotesque in the mutilated garment: but many had more sense, and sighed to think that they had not done something of the kind; indeed, having more to give, they could have clothed the beggar without stripping themselves. And that night, in his sleep, Martin saw Christ wearing the half of his cape with which he had clothed the beggar. He was told to look carefully at Our Lord and take that note it was garment he had given away. Then he heard Jesus say aloud to the throng of angels that surrounded Him: "Martin I still only a catechumen but he has clothed Me with this garment."

But Our Lord Himself had once said: "In doing it to one of these least regarded ones, you were doing it to Me," and He was only acting on His own words when He declared that He had been clothed in the person of the beggar and reinforced His testimony to so good deed by graciously showing Himself in the very garment that the beggar had received. But this most blessed man was not puffed up with vainglory by the vision but saw God's goodness in his own good deed. And being then twenty-two years old, he flew to be baptized. But he did not immediately abandon the military life, for he was overborne by the entreaties of his tribune, on whose personal staff he was serving and who promised him that when his term as tribune was over he would abandon the world. Buoyed up by this hope, Martin remained a soldier, though only in name, for nearly two years after his baptism.

Deadline for the March 2008 Vine is February 11, 2008

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Official Acts

December 27, 2007-Audrey Bradshaw passed away

January 13, 2008 – The Baptism of Ashley Rose Skogstrand

Shelton Gilmore- released from St. John’s Lutheran

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New Sunday Lenten Study Begins February 10th

”Pontius Pilate” is the title of the new Bible study which begins February 10th at 9:15 in the Sanctuary. This new study led by Pastor Lohmeyer is based upon a book written by Dr. Paul L. Meier, titled; “Pontius Pilate.” We say his name every time we recite the Apostles Creed, but how much do we really know about this man? Join us as we explore Dr. Meier’s documentary novel during the season of Lent and learn more about the man who sentenced Jesus to death.

Participants will need a copy of Dr. Meier’s book – “Pontius Pilate” for the class. Both new and used copies may be ordered from www.amazon.com or contact the Church Office before February 1st if you wish us to order you a copy of the book. The cost for a new paperback copy is \$12.00 through the Church Office. Remember, this six week study will be offered only during Lent. Questions? Contact Pastor Lohmeyer

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

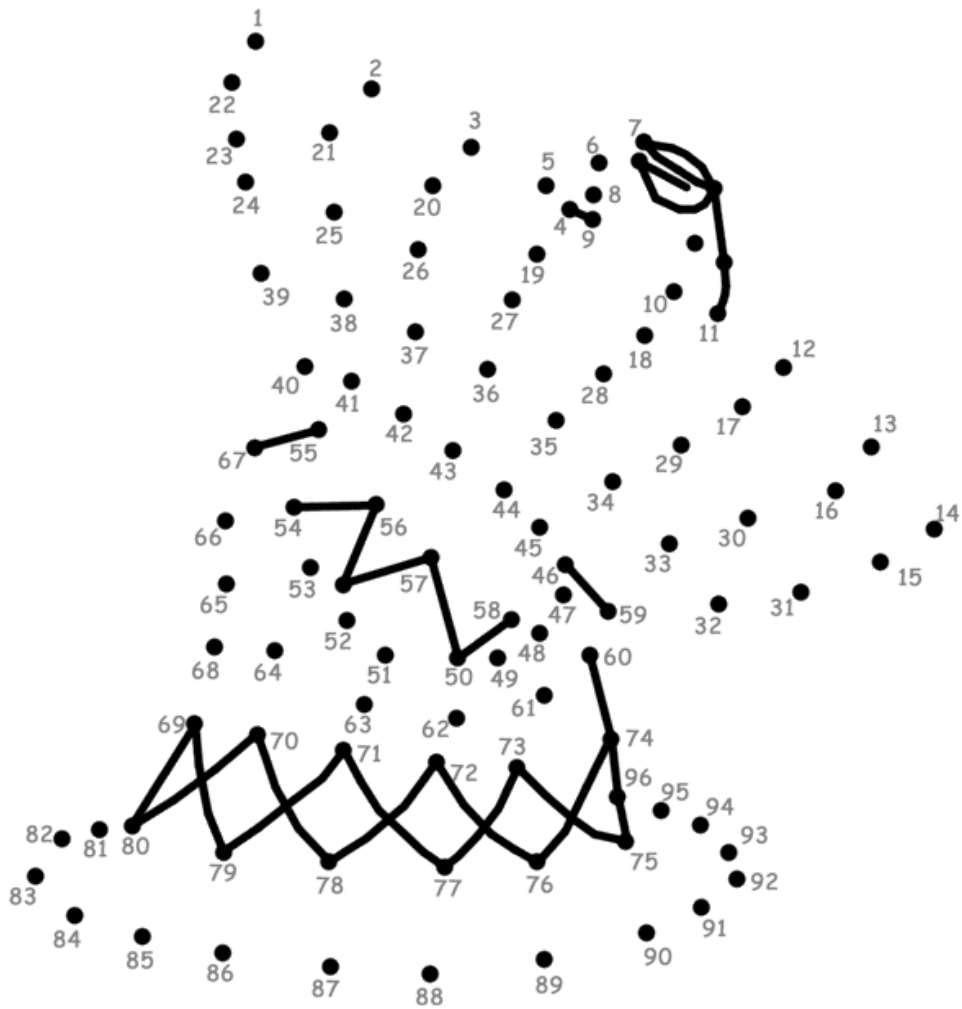
Happy Birthday

- 4 Nick Gencarello
- 5 Debbie Jost
Thomas Sax
- 6 Charles Hermann III
- 12 Darlene Hewitt
- 14 Emmy Alvestad
- 15 Russell Browne, DC
- 19 Richard Baller
- 21 Daniel Hewitt
- 23 Laszlo Szoke
- 24 Joan Mohlenhoff

Happy Anniversary

- 8 Fred & Shirley Bock
- 12 Eric & Eleanor Hansen

KID'S CORNER



Soduko Time

	1	3		9				2
	5			3	6			
7			1					6
		8	2				7	
		7				3		
2		5						1
				1				
	8	4		2	7			
5			9	4				7

Last month had the rules of the game. If you lost them or forgot, just send me an e-mail and I will send them to you.

Here at St. John's, we are always trying improve (**to be cost effective**) how we get the news and other events out to our church and school members.

The "VINE" is NOW available on-line for your convenience. You go to: www.stjohnslutheransi.org, click on the Church's Link and on the left hand side you will find another link "The Vine". *It's that easy.*

If you decide to download the "VINE", please contact the church office, so we can adjust our records.

This would be a tremendous cost saving advantage to the church and school, to reduce the amount of postage being used on the mailings.

As always, should you have questions, regarding this, please feel free to contact the office between the hours of 9 AM – 2 PM, Monday through Thursday.

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St. John's is finally coming into the modern age of technology. We are going high tech. St. John's is now in the process of updating our records on **computer**. Please complete the form below and send it into St. John's as soon as possible. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Home

_____ Cell

_____ Work

_____ Alternate

E-Mail _____

Birthday Date _____

Anniversary Date _____

Baptism Date _____

Children: _____ Date of Birth

Please mail to: St. John's Lutheran Church
663 Manor Road
Staten Island, NY 10314

Attention: Church Office

A Hymn for Lenten Meditation--Part 1
February 2004

Among the many hymns for Lent and Holy Week, there are several significant ones that were written by Lutheran authors. Paul Gerhardt (1607-76), for example, wrote several very familiar hymns:

- O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
- A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth
- Upon the Cross Extended

Another author, Johann Rist (1607-67) wrote "O Darkest Woe," a hymn for Good Friday that uses stark language to describe the sacrificial death of Jesus. Another Lutheran hymn writer, who predates both Gerhardt and Rist, is Johann Heermann. Born in 1585 in Silesia (modern-day Poland), Heermann became a Lutheran pastor and served for more than two decades before illness forced him to retire. His pastorate was marked by much personal suffering, especially as a result of the violence and plagues that ravaged much of Europe during the Thirty Years' War. He died in 1647, just as the bloodshed was drawing to a close. Heermann wrote nearly 400 hymns. His texts exhibit a great sense of confidence in the promises of God. Heermann's hymns were so well known in his day that the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolph II crowned him in 1608 as poet laureate. The following hymn for Good Friday was published in 1630. For this collection, Heermann used a medieval compilation of devotional writings that were drawn from the early church fathers. Heermann thought that he was setting to verse the meditations of St. Augustine. It is more likely, however, that he based the hymn "O Dearest Jesus" on a meditation written by St. Anselm (1033-1109), archbishop of Canterbury (England) and an important theologian who contributed to the church's understanding of the doctrine of the atonement. This hymn appears in its complete form in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, #143, and in an abridged version in *Lutheran Worship*, #119. Because of space limitations, the latter version is used below. Following each stanza, several biblical quotations are provided for purposes of meditation and insight.

*O dearest Jesus, what law have You broken
That such sharp sentence should on You be spoken?
Of what great crime have You to make confession,
What dark transgression?*

Luke 23:20-24 • Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him." But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted.

*They crown Your head with thorns, they smite, they scourge You;
With cruel mockings to the cross they urge You;
They give You gall to drink, they still decry You;
They crucify You.*

John 19:2-3 • And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. **Mark 15:19-20** • And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him.

*What is the source of all Your mortal anguish?
It is my sins for which You, Lord, must languish;
Yes, all the wrath, the woe that You inherit,
This I do merit.*

Isaiah 53:4-5 • Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed.

2 Corinthians 5:21 • For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the

righteousness of God.

*How strange is this great paradox to ponder:
The Shepherd dies for sheep who love to wander;
The master pays the debt His servants owe Him,
Who would not know Him.*

Isaiah 53:6 • All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

John 10:11 • I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

R A Hymn for Lenten Meditation--Part 2

*The sinless Son of God must die in sadness;
The sinful child of man may live in gladness;
We forfeited our lives yet are acquitted;
God is committed!*

Psalm 25:11 • For your name's sake, O LORD, pardon my guilt, for it is great.

2 Corinthians 5:17-19 • Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

Romans 5:8 • God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

*O wondrous love, whose depth no heart has sounded,
That brought You here, by foes and thieves surrounded,
Conquer my heart, make love its sole endeavor
Henceforth forever!*

John 3:16 • For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

1 John 4:10 • In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

*When, dearest Jesus, at Your throne in heaven
To me the crown of joy at last is given,
Where sweetest hymns Your saints forever raise You,
I too shall praise you!*

Rev. 7:9 • After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands.

Rev. 2:10b • Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

James 1:12 • Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him



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God Bless the Family of:

The February Vine 2008

The Newsletter of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran church & School

Divine Service:

Tuesday: 7:30 PM at the Church
Saturday: 5:00 PM at the Church
Sunday: 8:00 AM & 10:45 AM at the church
Family Education Hour: 9:15 AM at the church

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Church:

216 Jewett Avenue (Corner of Jewett & Post)
Staten Island, NY 10302 **(no mail)**
Email: churchoffice@stjohnslutheransi.org

School & Church Office

663 Manor Road, Staten Island, NY 10314
School Email: schooloffice@stjohnslutheransi.org
Website: www.stjohnslutheransi.org

Thank You

We want to take this opportunity to say “thank you” to everyone who blessed our Christmas with cards, words of encouragement, special meals and gifts. Your love, concern, and generosity were a reminder to us of the priceless Gift God has given to us all – His Son, our Savior.

Thanks again, and may the Lord bless you with His peace in the new year!

In Christ, the Incarnate Word,
Pastor and Judy Lohmeyer

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Ash Wednesday – February 6th
Lent Begins with Special Services at 11:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M.
Imposition of Ashes – Celebration of Holy Communion
Lunch Follows the 11:00 Service
Soup Supper at 6:00 P.M.
Special Lenten Midweek Services Each Wednesday
Lunch Follows the 11:00 A.M. Service
Soup Supper at 6:00 P.M. Each Wednesday Evening During Lent

“O Lord, throughout these forty days
You prayed and kept the fast;
Inspire repentance for our sin,
And free us from our past.

Be with us through this season Lord,
And all our earthly days,
That when the final Easter dawns,
We join in heavenly praise.”

LSB #418



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SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 19, 2008

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL
PROUDLY PRESENTS OUR
"2008 CELEBRATE OUR CHILDREN'S
FUTURE AUCTION"
WITH THIS YEAR'S THEME:

"THE FABOULOS 50'S"

February 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<p>1 7:30-9P Mother Son Game Night</p> <p>7:30P Adult Game Night in the Church Basement</p>	<p>2 5:00P Divine Service</p> <p>Presentation of our Lord</p>
<p>3 8:00A Divine Service 9:15A SS & BS 10:45A Divine Service</p>	4	<p>5 9:30A PTL Exec Bd. Meeting 3:30P Confirmation 10A Mary/Martha 7:30P PTL Meeting 8P Christ. Bd. Meeting 8:00P Adult Choir</p>	<p>6 Ash Wednesday 11A Worship 11:45A Lunch 3:30P Early Communion 6P Soup & Supper 7P Worship</p>	<p>7 7:30P Ladies Guild</p>	8	<p>9 5:00P Divine Service</p>
<p>10 8:00A Divine Service 9:15A SS & BS 10:45A Divine Service Aquila, Priscilla & Apollos</p>	11	<p>12 10:00A Mary/Martha 3:30P Confirmation 8:00P Adult Choir</p>	<p>13 11A Worship 11:45A Lunch 3:30P Early Communion 6P Soup & Supper 7P Worship</p>	<p>14 Valentine, martyr</p>	<p>15 5-6P K-4 Valentine's Dance 6:30-8:30P Valentine's Dance Gr.5th-8th Philemon & Onesimus</p>	<p>16 5:00P Divine Service</p> <p>Philip Melanchthon, confessor</p>
<p>17 8:00A Divine Service 9:15A SS & BS 10:45A Divine Service</p>	<p>18 Martin Luther, doctor, and confessor, renewer of the church NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>19 10:00A Mary/Martha 8:00P Adult Choir</p> <p>NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>20 11A Worship 11:45A Lunch 3:30P Early Communion 6P Soup & Supper 7P Worship</p>	<p>21 NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>22 NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>23 5:00P Divine Service</p>
<p>24 8:00A Divine Service 9:15A SS & BS 10:45A Divine Service Saint Matthias, Apostle</p>	<p>25 BACK TO SCHOOL</p> <p>Elizabeth Fedde, deaconess</p>	<p>26 10:00A Mary/Martha 3:30 P Confirmation 7:30 P Bd. Of Christian Ed 8:00P Adult Choir</p>	<p>27 11A Worship 11:45A Lunch 3:30P Early Communion 6P Soup & Supper 7P Worship</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29 Sports photos Interim Reports sent out</p>	

