

Peace Free
Lutheran
Church



July 2026 Newsletter



Blessed is the nation
whose God is the LORD,
the people whom he has
chosen as his heritage!

Psalm 33:12, ESV



VBS 2026 is coming July 12th – 16th!

The theme this year is “Emerald Crossing, an Irish Adventure through Psalm 23”. The kids will journey through Ireland's green, lush landscapes while exploring the powerful words of Psalm 23. They will explore the life of the shepherd-king David and will learn how to cross from anxiety to peace, from fear to faith, and from uncertainty to a firm foundation in God's Word through a relationship with the Good Shepherd. There will be Bible stories, crafts, music, games, and more! A light meal will be provided from 5:30pm - 6:15pm each evening. Register now at www.peacecw.org or pick up a VBS registration sheet

at one of the Sunday worship services. Please call or email the church office if you have any questions.

Daily Themes for the week

Sunday: Pick up your new “Emerald Crossing” VBS t-shirt!

Monday: “Tacky Day” (Forgo all fashion rules for this day of crazy fun: hair, hats, socks, clothes!)

Tuesday: “Tye Dye Day or Ugly Tie Day” (Just don't tell Dad why you need his tie)

Wednesday: PJ day (wear your jammies, but no napping!)

Thursday: make sure to wear your new “Emerald Crossing” VBS t-shirt!

Adult VBS: The Good Shepherd



I am excited for VBS again this year! Our overall theme is “An Irish Adventure Through Psalm 23.” As you know, the “Sheep/Shepherding” themes in Scripture are favorites of mine, and I am looking forward to leading our adult class through Psalm 23 and using that passage as a prism through which to view other “sheep/shepherding” passages in the Bible. We will again learn and use the manuscript method for some of our study, and also engage in small group discussions and individual reflections. In addition, we will give attention to art and music in this class. For over 300 years, the early church used the image of the Good Shepherd (not the cross) to depict Christ and Christianity. We will uncover

some of this rich heritage of the church in our time together. Because this year includes an “Irish” focus, we will also be watching a movie about St. Patrick and his life, first as a shepherd-slave, and then as a shepherd of souls in Ireland. You will have a wonderful time of fellowship throughout our time together! Bring a friend with you! - Pastor Carlson

FROM THE COUNCIL



1. Pastor reported that the men's cookout was a great time of food and fellowship. He also reported on visitations and asked if anyone knew of others he could connect with. We will be hosting a PDHC "Pastors Breakfast" on 9/18 this year, ahead of their Gala Event in Lancaster. He connected with Heather from Lifewise Academy to share about the organization during Sunday School in July. For more information, they are at lifewise.org. We will also be hearing from the "K Family" on July 12. Pastor will be teaching the adult VBS class (theme is Shepherding, in line with Psalm 23). He is also teaching an adult Sunday School series called "The Christian Heritage Of Our Nation" in the months of July and August. During the summer (until Thanksgiving) the lectionary texts for worship services will be from the Gospel of Matthew and the book of Romans.
2. The Finance chairperson put forth a proposal that if the general fund reaches or exceeds an amount that is 6 months of operating expenses and is maintained for 3 consecutive months the funds will be used for Mission purposes. Currently the avg monthly expenses are \$24,654. A 6-month period would total \$147,927.00. Currently we are not in excess with our balances.
3. The Parish Life chairperson reported that the Fifth Sunday potluck was successful with 71 in attendance. Upcoming events are the annual church picnic on August 16th at noon, and the Labor Day hot dog giveaway on September 7th. They are also planning a chili cookoff in October.
4. The Property chairperson reported that some damaged cement backer board siding on the PCC was replaced. He also primed and painted part of the PCC. The work is ongoing. A plan has been made to get the parking lot potholes fixed in part by the city.
5. The Social Concerns chairperson reported that we will be participating in the CW school supply drive this year. She will also ask that a reminder about the Baseball Game on August 14th be sent out. In addition we have hired someone to reformat and enhance our church website.
6. The Education chairperson reported that Sunday School/confirmation has finished for the year, and will resume in the fall. Adults and children are doing Summer Sunday School. Most Home Bible Studies have taken a summer break, and will resume in the fall. We canceled the trip to the Ark. Only 2 families were able to attend. We are hoping to try again at a later date. VBS: our biggest need this year is a lead for food. We still need leaders in the following areas- Games and adult leader guides. A VBS painting party will be held at the Staffans on June 28th, and we will be decorating at the church on July 11th.
7. The Stewardship chairperson reported that they will be meeting the 4th Monday of the month now. Debbie Rehl made a motion to have our VBS donations go to Thomasz and Miriam Chmiel (Ukraine Missions) and their VBS (Summer through Joshua Venture Ministries).
8. The Youth chairperson reported that the Youth Pool Party had low attendance, but it was lots of fun. Their rummage sale for FLY is coming up on June 26-27.
9. Currently we have no one to fill the Evangelism spot. It may need to remain empty until we find someone to fill it.
10. It has been requested that we live Stream Sunday School. We will get someone to look into the logistics of doing this.

July lectors

July 5

8:00am—Jill Moneypenny
10:30am—Debbie Williams

July 12

8:00am—Paul Roepcke
10:30am—Denny Chotkevys

July 19

8:00am—Michelle Staffan
10:30am—Debbie Rehl

July 26

8:00am—Lori Hertlein
10:30am—Lilane Fox



Peace Free Lutheran Church Financials Through May 2026

General Fund Income: \$113,773
General Fund Expenditures:
\$123,273

Members may request a copy of the Council Minutes and Financial reports from the church office.



Pastor Steven Carlson

Proclaim Liberty Throughout the Land!

This year on July 4th our nation will be celebrating the 250th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence! It cannot be overstated that our nation has been immensely blessed and that our nation has been an incredible blessing to the world. True, our nation is not perfect, but there is no other nation that even comes close to being an ongoing force for good in our world, even at tremendous cost and national sacrifice. It is undeniable that in many ways, the United States has carried the world on its shoulder. America has been the dream of the world as millions continue to come to America for a new beginning and a better life. Even though we are a rather young nation, we have the oldest

constitution of any nation in the world, as we have experienced unprecedented peace and stability. We even survived a bloody civil war, sacrificing tremendous blood, to correct one of our greatest moral failings. Even though there are many who hate our nation, it cannot be denied that our nation is “exceptional” unlike any in the history of the world. We have been blessed beyond measure. We owe that to the grace of the providential hand of the Sovereign King of the universe, the Lord God Almighty. This has been seen from our very beginnings.

In 1620 the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth. Governor William Bradford wrote, that they “cherished a great hope and inward zeal of laying good foundations, or at least of making some way towards it, for the propagation and advancement of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in the remote parts of the world, even though they should be but stepping stones to others in the performance of so great a work.”

In 1630, when the Puritans arrived in the harbor just off the coast of New England, John Winthrop lead them in drawing up a covenant before they stepped off the ship. It was titled “A Model of Chrisitan Charity.” They envisioned becoming “A City upon a Hill” which would embody the laws and love of God as a witness to the world.

Amazing! These little bands of colonists had the vision and faith that God would establish them and utilize them to spiritually impact all the nations of the world for Christ! Throughout our history you will find leaders praying to God for His blessings and appealing to our nation to faithfully live out the Christian life. They appeal to our citizens to live lives of faith and virtue, as they clearly understood that the government structures that they formulated would only function if the people first were committed to God and His divine laws. Our Founding Fathers (as we have been examining in Sunday school) repeatedly quoted Scripture. Their writings were saturated with Scripture verses and Biblical principles. Their conversations and arguments in congressional debates were seasoned with Scripture, and they implored one another to seek God for wisdom, protection, and blessing.

Hundreds of quotes could be referenced. Following are some from a few of our Founding Fathers:

“For my country, I eyed the Lord, in obtaining it; and more was I drawn inward to look to Him, and owe it to His hand and power, than to any other way; I have so obtained it and desire to keep it; that I may not be unworthy of His love; but do that, which may answer His kind Providence, and serve His truth and people: that an example may be set up to the nations: there may be room there, though not here, for such an holy experiment.”

~ Willllam Penn, articulating his vision for Pennsylvania, August 25, 1681

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“The rights of the colonists as Christians ... may be best understood by reading and carefully studying the institutions of The Great Law Giver and Head of the Christian Church, which are to be found clearly written and promulgated [proclaimed] in the New Testament.”

– Samuel Adams, “Father of the American Revolution”

“I rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ for a pardon of all my sins.”

– Samuel Adams, “Father of the American Revolution”

“It is impossible to govern rightly without God and the Bible.”

– President George Washington

“Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, [Christian] religion and morality are indispensable supports.”

– President George Washington

“... reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of [Christian] religious principles.”

– President George Washington

“Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other.”

– John Adams, Second President

“I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: ‘that God governs the affairs of man.’ And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probably that an empire can rise without His aid? . . . We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this. I also believe that, without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; . . . I therefore beg leave to move that, henceforth, prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessings . . . Be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed with our business.”

– Benjamin Franklin, addressing George Washington, during the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, June 28, 1787

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights.”

– Thomas Jefferson, primary author of the Declaration of Independence, and Third President of the United States

“We have staked the whole future of American civilization, not upon the power of government, far from it. We have staked the future of all of our political institutions upon the capacity of mankind for self-government; upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God.”

– James Madison, primary writer of the Constitution, and Fourth President of the United States

“The depravity which mankind inherited from their first parents, introduced wickedness into the world. That wickedness rendered human government necessary to restrain the violence and injustice resulting from it.”

– John Jay, First Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and also president of the American Bible Society

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“The most effectual means of securing the continuance of our civil and religious liberties is, always to remember with reverence and gratitude the source from which they flow.”

– John Jay, First Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and also president of the American Bible Society

“There is just one thing more I wish I could give you. It is the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ. With it, if you had nothing else, you could be happy. Without it, though you had all things else, you could not be happy.”

– Patrick Henry, Governor of Virginia, and member of the Continental Congress

“On the mercy of my Redeemer, I rely for salvation and on His merits, not on any works that I’ve done in obedience to His precepts.”

Charles Carroll, written on his 89th birthday. He was the last living signer of the Declaration of Independence, when he died in 1832 at 95 years of age.

“So great is my veneration of the Bible, that the earlier my children begin to read it the more confident will be my hope that they will prove useful citizens of their country and respectable members of society.”

– John Quincy Adams, Sixth President of the U.S.

“The highest glory of the American Revolution was this: it connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government and principles of Christianity.”

– John Quincy Adams, Sixth President of the U.S.

I love the history of our national heritage, and could enthusiastically cite many more quotes and examples. Hopefully just these few will give you an appreciation for the Christian heritage of our nation as evidenced by these Founding Fathers. I am greatly enjoying teaching on the topic of our Christian Heritage in Sunday School. I invite you to join us!

Even as we reflect back on our heritage during this 250th Anniversary of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence, it is imperative today that we wake up and pay attention to what is presently taking place. There are many who are actively trying to destroy the Christian foundation upon which our nation was built. As our founders clearly state, our nation was not built to survive, except that it remains upon a Christian foundation.

We need a Holy Spirit spiritual awakening to sweep across our land to bring forth a groundswell of genuine repentance of sin and a turning to Christ. Political leaders and legislation cannot save our nation. Only a heaven-sent spiritual awakening can save us.

On this 250th Anniversary, let us celebrate with gratitude and joy, and let us also lift up our nation in prayer. May liberty always ring forth from our nation, just as the inscription on the Liberty Bell reads:

“Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.”

~ Leviticus 25:10

Let the celebrations begin! John Adams wrote to his wife upon the signing of the Declaration of Independence, noting that this date would be:

“... the most memorable epoch in the history of America. ... It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore.”

God bless America!
Pastor Steve Carlson

Congratulations on 75 years of marriage!

Duane and Norma Root celebrated 75 years of wedded bliss on June 17th of this year. May God continue to bless your life together!

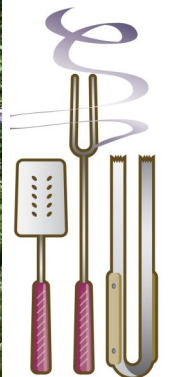


July "Bible In One Year" Reading Schedule

07/01/26	Deut. 13-15	Acts 4	07/17/26	Psalms 18-19	Acts 13
07/02/26	Deut. 16-18		07/18/26	Psalms 20-22	
07/03/26	Deut. 19-21	Acts 5	07/19/26	Psalms 23-25	Acts 14
07/04/26	Deut. 22-24		07/20/26	Psalms 26-28	
07/05/26	Deut. 25-27	Acts 6	07/21/26	Psalms 29-30	Acts 15
07/06/26	Deut. 28-30		07/22/26	Psalms 31-32	Acts 16
07/07/26	Deut. 31	Acts 7	07/23/26	Psalms 33-34	
07/08/26	Deut. 32-34		07/24/26	Psalms 35-36	Acts 17
07/09/26	Obadiah 1	Acts 8	07/25/26	Psalms 37-39	
07/10/26	Ruth 1-4		07/26/26	Psalms 40-42	Acts 18
07/11/26	Psalms 1-3		07/27/26	Psalms 43-45	
07/12/26	Psalms 4-6	Acts 9	07/28/26	Psalms 46-48	Acts 19
07/13/26	Psalms 7-9		07/29/26	Psalms 49-50	Acts 20
07/14/26	Psalms 10-12	Acts 10	07/30/26	Psalms 51-53	
07/15/26	Psalms 13-15	Acts 11	07/31/26	Psalms 54-56	
07/16/26	Psalms 16-17	Acts 12			

Men's Cookout 2026

A great time was had by all at the men's cookout. Thank you, Jeff Pluta for hosting and being the Grill-Master (and teacher)! The men had a wonderful meal, a fun corn hole match, and also spent time in God's Word.



The Emerald Isle is under construction!

Thank you to everyone who brought their time and talent to the Staffan's place in order to bring the VBS Emerald Isle to life! Don't forget to join us from July 12th-16th to see their creation and learn more about the Good Shepherd!





Rummage Sale a big success!!

A big thank you to all who donated to and/or helped out with the rummage sale! The final total for the sale was \$3204. In addition, Eli Hess brought in \$119 with his lemonade/goodies stand (with sister Alice helping too)! The proceeds from the rummage sale and the lemonade stand will be used to send our youth to the FLY convention next year. Great job!



Thank you for all the wonderful birthday cards, texts, and messages this past week! You are so kind and thoughtful! Pastor Carlson

Thank you, everyone, for your kind words and cards at the passing of my father-in-law, Don Pabst. God's blessings, Mary Pabst

Dear Peace Family, Pastor David and I want to sincerely thank all our friends in Peace church for your prayers and sympathy as our son passed on to heaven on May 7, 2026. Many cards are still coming to us. Bless you! Peace church is truly our family and we treasure each and everyone one. May God's abundant blessings be yours. In His Service, Pastor David and Mary Barnhart.

Dear Church Family, thank you so much for presenting me with a devotional. My next step in life is attending Wright State University, where I will study Computer Science. I am grateful for all the prayers and support you have given me. Thank you so much, Logan Haverfield.

God Bless America



In Loving Adoration by Thornton Bancroft Penfield

In loving adoration
We come to worship thee,
Thou Author of Salvation,
So wonderful, so free;
Oh, teach us how to praise thee,
As we before thee stand,
And hear us, as we pray thee,
To bless our own dear land.

For millions still in darkness
Within this land of light,
For those who've wandered blindly
From God and home and right
And those who ne'er have seen thee,
Thou God of love and might,
We earnestly beseech thee
May they receive their sight.

Be thou our strong defender,
Our confidence alone,
Be with our country's rulers,
Our nation's cornerstone;
And thus led by thy Spirit,
And heeding thy blest Word,
From ocean unto ocean
All men shall call thee Lord.

The BEST Homemade Baked Mac and Cheese

From the kitchen of Lisa Orahood

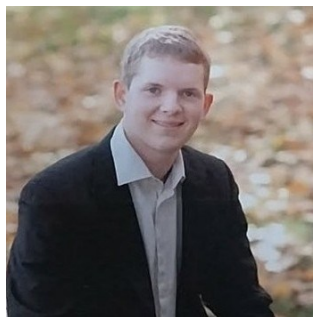
Ingredients

- 16 oz elbow macaroni, cooked (or other tubular pasta)
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 6 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1/3 cup all purpose flour
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 4 cups sharp Colby jack cheese (shredded)
- 2 cups smoked (or regular if you prefer) Gruyere cheese (shredded)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 1/2 cups panko crumbs
- 4 tbsp butter (melted)
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese (shredded)
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika ((or regular paprika))



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350F. Lightly grease a large 3 qt or 4 qt baking dish and set aside. Combine shredded cheeses in a large bowl and set aside.
2. Cook the pasta one minute shy of al dente according to the package instructions. Remove from heat, drain, and place in a large bowl.
3. Drizzle pasta with olive oil and stir to coat pasta. Set aside to cool while preparing cheese sauce.
4. Melt butter in a deep saucepan, Dutch oven, or stock pot.
5. Whisk in flour over medium heat and continue whisking for about 1 minute until bubbly and golden.
6. Gradually whisk in the milk and heavy cream until nice and smooth. Continue whisking until you see bubbles on the surface and then continue cooking and whisking for another 2 minutes. Whisk in salt and pepper.
7. Add two cups of shredded cheese and whisk until smooth. Add another two cups of shredded cheese and continue whisking until creamy and smooth. Sauce should be nice and thick.
8. Stir in the cooled pasta until combined and pasta is fully coated with the cheese sauce.
9. Pour half of the mac and cheese into the prepared baking dish. Top with remaining 2 cups of shredded cheese and then the remaining mac and cheese.
10. In a small bowl, combine panko crumbs, Parmesan cheese, melted butter and paprika. Sprinkle over the top and bake until bubbly and golden brown, about 30 minutes. Serve immediately. ENJOY!



Logan Haverfield awarded the 2026 Rase Scholarship

Logan Haverfield is the recipient of this year's Rase Scholarship. He graduated from Pickerington Central High School on May 23rd of this year. Logan will be attending Wright State University in the fall, where he will study Computer Science. Congratulations Logan, and God bless!





July

2026

Sun
Mon
Tue
Wed
Thu
Fri
Sat
1

 Prayer Meeting
7:00pm

2
3

 Kids Bible/Craft
Class 3:30pm

4
5

 Worship in the
woods 8:00am:
Worship Svc
10:30am

 Sunday School
9:15am

6
7
8

 Prayer Meeting
7:00pm

9
10

 Kids Bible/Craft
Class 3:30pm

11

 Men's Breakfast
and Bible Study
8:00am
VBS decorating
party 9:30am
Deacons Mtg
10am

12

 Worship in the
woods 8:00am:
Worship Svc
10:30am; Sunday
School 9:15am
VBS 5:30pm

13

VBS 5:30pm

14

VBS 5:30pm

15

VBS 5:30pm

16

VBS 5:30pm

17
18
19

 Worship in the
woods 8:00am:
Worship Svc
10:30am

 Sunday School
9:15am

Parish Life 11:45am

Pool Party 12:00pm

20
21

 Council Meeting
7pm

22

 Prayer Meeting
7:00pm

23

 Newsletter
Submissions
Due

24

 Kids Bible/Craft
Class 3:30pm

25

 Men's Breakfast
and Bible Study
8:00am

26

 Worship in the
woods 8:00am:
Worship Svc
10:30am

 Sunday School
9:15am

27

 Stewardship
Meeting
2:00pm

28
29

 Prayer Meeting
7:00pm

30
31

 Kids Bible/Craft
Class 3:30pm

4TH OF JULY BIBLE VERSES



Blessed is the nation
whose God is the Lord.
- Psalm 33:12



If my people, who are called
by my name, will humble
themselves and pray...
- 2 Chronicles 7:14



But those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles.
- Isaiah 40:31



Now the Lord is the Spirit,
and where the Spirit of the
Lord is, there is freedom.
- 2 Corinthians 3:17



As for me and my house,
we will serve the Lord.
- Joshua 24:15



Let all that you do
be done in love.
- 1 Corinthians 16:14



For freedom Christ
has set us free.
- Galatians 5:1



This is the day the Lord
has made; let us rejoice
and be glad in it.
- Psalm 118:24



The 4th of July

A DAY OF FREEDOM FOUNDED ON FAITH

America was founded on Christian principles
and the belief that all people are created by God
with certain unalienable rights.

1 GOD'S PLAN FOR FREEDOM

God desires freedom for all people. In His Word, we are reminded that He loves justice and wants us to live in peace.

"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."
John 8:36



2 A NEW NATION BEGINS

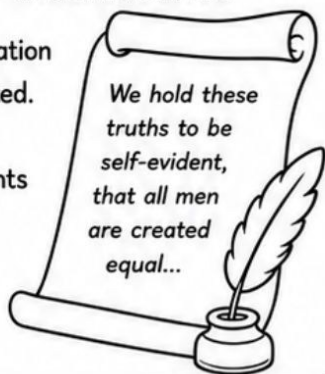
In 1776, the American colonies wanted freedom from unfair rule. They believed that God gave them certain rights.



3 DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

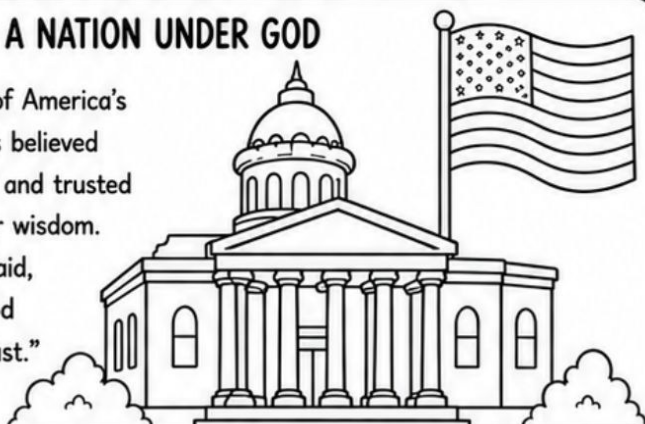
On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was adopted. It says that all people are created equal and have rights that come from God.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...



4 A NATION UNDER GOD

Many of America's leaders believed in God and trusted Him for wisdom. They said, "In God We Trust."



5 FREEDOM TO WORSHIP

The First Amendment protects our freedom to worship God and follow our faith. We are free to pray, read the Bible, and share God's love.



6 LET'S GIVE THANKS!

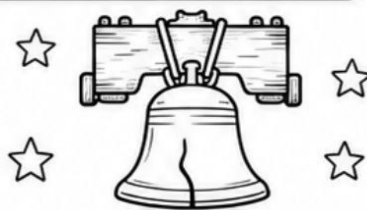
Today, we celebrate our freedom and give thanks to God for our nation. Let's pray for our leaders, our country, and for peace.



May we always remember that
GOD BLESSES AMERICA!

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people He chose for His inheritance."

Psalms 33:12





1st Debbie Crawford
1st Emmy Clark
1st Christopher Brown
2nd Frederik Voigt
3rd Molly Grey
7th Sheryl Jensen
9th Steven Voigt
9th Jennyfer Young
10th Lilane Fox
12th DiAnn Cole
12th Mike Richardson

12th Mark Poff
14th Pam White
14th Sullivan Grey
16th Sue Skaggs
16th Jordon Muller
16th Hitomi Barnhart
21st Logan Haverfield
22nd Lori Hertlein

25th Andrew Young
25th Haley Richardson
27th Megan Cole
31st Pat Dewitt



14th Harold and Marsha Windbigler
16th Mark and Faith Houck
18th Pastor Steve and Jen Carlson
19th Mike and Bonnie Richardson