# Presbyterian Church





# FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN...

There is, I feel, a collective sigh happening all around the world as we look to this fall and winter. As summer winds down to a close and we look forward to apple orchards and mums and pumpkin spice everything and (dare we say) football games and volleyball games and campfires and soccer fields, there is a sigh. This, of course, is the first year we are not held captive by "what ifs" that have given society an undercurrent of anxiety. Now, at last, we are left

once again to those things that are happening in our own lives.

I've heard it more than once, "I've just lost track of time over the last three years." Many of us have trouble recognizing children who are tweens and teens and young adults now; as well as those of us

who have visibly aged. Our calendars are over-full once again; and we wonder why we are so physically and emotionally tired all the time. All those things that had slowed down or stopped have returned; at the same time we have new hobbies and friendships and routines we aren't willing to give up. Time is once again in scarce supply as we run back into the world ready for more, more, more; only to find that time continues to roll steadily by.

Time is a harsh and unbending critic.

I always find it comforting when I read ancient scribes and prophets struggling with something I

myself struggle with. It validates my feelings and reminds me that I am living a very human experience. Perhaps that's why the words of Ecclesiastes 3 have been re-interpreted time and time again. "To everything there is a season," Quoheleth writes, "and a time for every purpose under heaven." A few years ago we studied the times and seasons of the church, using this passage as a guide for the orderliness of the seasons and their turning. This fall, we want to invite you to explore the purpose of those seasons. Quoheleth speaks in dualities of experienc-

es, leaving us to wonder at what happens in between. We want to give space for us to wonder together at the seasons we are each living in, as we dare to ask aloud, "what is the meaning of this season of my life?"

This passage tradi-

tionally ends with Quoheleth wondering, "What do workers gain from all their hard work?" I've always thought of a literal rat race through an impossible maze when I read this passage. Maybe because that's how I feel about managing time. "The good life always seems to be speeding up, always bringing change, and we are falling behind," writes theologian Andrew Root. "Keeping up would make me satisfied with the uniqueness of myself, happy with myself. Maybe I'd actually be living, instead of chasing, the good life."

(continued on next page)



# Presbyterian Church





# FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN...

(continued from previous page)

As we move from one season to another, one purpose to another, I want to leave you with this wondering from Kate Bowler - from "a blessing for beginnings and endings."

This life is made up of so many beginnings and so many endings.

We start new jobs and leave old ones.

We move to new cities and leave

our childhood hobbies in our parents' basement. (Sorry, Mom.)

We become new people slowly (hopefully kinder and funnier?).

Friends and relationships come and go.

Dreams blossom and then they wither.

And we find ourselves here once again at the precipice of change.

Afraid to let go, and afraid of what will happen if we don't.

Might this be a place of blessing too?

Many blessings, dear friends,

### Melodie

Andrew Root, The Congregation in a Secular Age, pg. 28.

Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie, The Lives We Actually Have, pg.182.





Recently the Session voted to establish three task forces following their review of the Leaderwise report.

• A task force to consider restructuring the boards of the church. We wonder what we might be able to do as a community if our board structure looked different and required

fewer elected leaders. Co-chairs: Robin Hadfield and George Kilpatrick.

- A task force to consider membership and belonging. Co-chairs: Chris Boden and Hope Shortridge.
- A task force to consider the other recommendations and wonderings from the Leaderwise report, including but
  not limited to: how can the communities that gather on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays bless each other; in
  what ways do our staff job descriptions need to be changed to better reflect their roles as resources to the faith
  community; and what other recommendations and wonderings need to be considered. Co-chairs: Alinda Stelk and
  Carolyn Brandle.

These three task forces have been hard at work this past month! Look for more information from their meetings/ findings to come.



**This August,** we want you to stick around following the worship service for some intentional community and conversation! Our deacons are providing food following worship each Sunday in August.

Thank you to our deacons (especially our moderators, Tim & Ivy Hanson) who helped prepare and serve food on our Back-to-School Sunday.

Presbyterian Church





Photos from recent activities at Eastridge:









**Staff Announcement:** Brent Shaw will be joining our staff as the Adult Choir Director. This quarter-time position began August 1, and provides staff leadership for our Kirk Ringers and Chancel Choir. His experience directing choirs in many different musical settings is a great addition to our music ministry, and we are excited to welcome him to the staff in this position! Brent will also continue with us as organist. An accompanist for

the Chancel Choir will be hired. Thank you all for your prayers as our committees have followed the search process. We were impressed by the applicants and their qualifications.



**New Worship Time:** Starting in September, we will worship together at **ONE service beginning at 9:30 am**. This is following the results of our recent worship survey.









# "Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth!"

My grandfather always said if you can't make a joyful noise, make a righteous racket! How blessed we are to be a church family where so many members and friends are willing to bless us in worship!

Chancel Choir will begin fall rehearsals Wednesday, September 6

Kirk Ringers (handbells) on Tuesday, September 12.

I would love to also start a fun, beginner handbell group (trio, duet, quartet?) sometime so if you have always wanted to learn how to play bells, let me know!

-Brent Shaw, organman77@gmail.com, 919-609-5362.

# **Upcoming Eastridge Music in Worship:**

August 20 - Beka Bevans (cello)

August 27 - John Lozier (folk/celtic harp)

September 3 - Sarah and Joel Herrera (vocals/guitar)

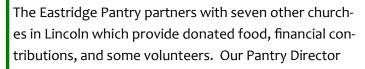
September 10 - Chancel Choir and Beka Bevans (cello)

September 17 - Chancel Choir and guest Daniel Ikpeama

September 24 - Kirk Ringers; Will McGuire (vocals/guitar)

**EASTRIDGE FOOD PANTRY:** Food insecurity remains a serious issue in Lincoln. Accordingly, the Eastridge Pantry has been serving a large number of clients since re-

opening after the pandemic. We have consistently served more than 300 households representing over 1200 individuals monthly throughout 2023. We provide in-person shopping experience on Wednesday afternoons and box distributions on Sunday afternoon.



recently resigned, and the Pantry Committee is managing all pantry activities until there is a new Director. The number and availability of volunteers remains a very

serious problem, especially considering the increased client load. We continue to struggle to get volunteers without sending out multiple emails each month asking for more help. Please consider volunteering!

 ${\it Respectfully submitted, Kris\ Brenne is\ and\ Steve\ Taylor}$ 

Sign up:

Distributing food: https://bit.ly/FPDistFood

Filling boxes: https://bit.ly/FPFillingBoxes

Faith Partners: Eastridge Faith Partners' mission statement: The Eastridge Presbyterian Church Faith Partners offers alcohol, drug, and other addictions awareness, prevention, education, referral assistance and recovery support to the people served by this congregation in a safe, non-judgmental en-

vironment. Contact the office if you'd like to be a part of this committee!

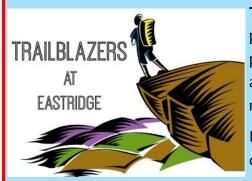






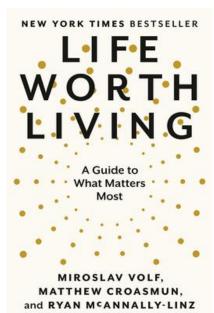






**Trailblazers:** Trailblazers is a group of older adults at Eastridge that provides an opportunity for men and women, singles as well as couples, to participate together in the life of the church—in service and fellowship. We usually meet the third Friday night of the month, September through May.

If you are interested, please contact Susan Taylor at 402-488-6477 or 402-617-8414.



# Fall Zoom Study: Beginning September 7.

The writer of Ecclesiastes 3 wonders, "what is the meaning of life?" It's a question for every age, and Yale professors Miroslav Volf, Matthew Croasmun, and Ryan McAnnlly-Linz have turned its exploration into the most popular class in school. Using thinkers and authors from many disciplines and perspectives, this book will lead us through explorations of the meaning of our own lives.

# Led by Pastors Melodie and Thomas via Zoom, Thursdays at 10:00 am

Sign up in the church office or:

https://bit.ly/lifeworthlivingstudy



The **EPC Book Club** meets the second Monday of each month September through June at 7:00 pm. Locations vary...check the Welcome Center for info when you arrive!

A copy of the list can also be found on the church website, in the "What's New" pull-down menu, then click on "calendar".

Our September selection is below!



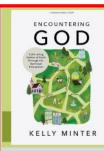
Our EPC Book Club begins again in September, with **Bittersweet: How Sorrow and Longing Make Us Whole by Susan Cain.** This group meets the second Monday of each month from September to June.

Check out the entire list on the Eastridge website, under the menu "What's New" and by clicking on Calendar. Or, just head here: Book Club - Eastridge Presbyterian Church - Lincoln, Nebraska



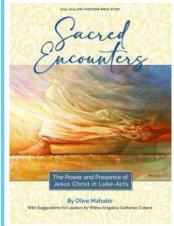








Bible/Book Study for Adults: The Wednesday morning Bible study (continuously meeting for 8 years!) will start the study "Encountering God" by Kelly Minter in September. This study meets on Wednesday mornings at 10:30 am and is led by Donna Gustafson.



# **Eastridge Presbyterian Women:**

EPW starts a new year in September. Bible studies (in four Circle groups) meet the first Wednesday of each month and we gather as a group on the third Wednesday four times a year. If you are interested in joining one of the Circles, please contact Susan Taylor at 402-617-8414, or email office@eastridge.org.

This year our monthly study is "Sacred Encounters: the Power and presence of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of Luke/Acts"

"What does the LORD require of you but that you do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God?". So writes the prophet Micah.

Last fall members of about twenty faith communities in Lancaster County began to meet in small groups to consider the justice needs of our community and how they might address them. They got organized, called themselves "Justice in Action", and determined that at this time they would focus on access to mental health care and criminal justice reform.

Over a thousand **Justice in Action** members assembled in May and presented their proposals to members of the Lincoln City Council and Lancaster County Board of Commissioners, advocating specific programs.

Now, in our second year, the goal of these sacred community conversations is to strengthen relationships, gather stories to support these two issue areas, and to expand our justice ministry network as we reflect on our shared values and experiences with injustice.









# Join "Holy Friends" for a Meaningful Interfaith Connection - Don't Miss the First Meeting!

After a short hiatus, we are excited to announce the new season of "Holy Friends," a gathering that celebrates and fosters interfaith connections within our church community and beyond. This unique series offers an opportunity to explore and learn about faith traditions beyond our own, recognizing and embracing the diversity of belief and practice in our community.

We invite you to mark your calendars and join us for the first meeting of the season on September 7th at 7:00 PM. We are privileged to have Dr. Philip Schwadel, Happold Professor of Sociology at UNL, as our guest speaker, who will share his enlightening insights on "Trends in the Religious Makeup and Diversity of Lincoln and Nebraska."

## **Event Details:**

- Date: September 7th

- Time: 7:00 PM

- Location: Ayers & Ayers, 2436 N. 48th St. (East side of Street), between Huntington and Walker

Avenues (University Place)

Feel free to invite your friends, family, and colleagues who may be interested in exploring diverse faith traditions and connecting with fellow seekers of knowledge and understanding.

"Holy Friends" meetings will take place monthly on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM. Look out for future announcements about our upcoming speakers and their unique perspectives.

Join us on this transformative journey together, celebrating the beauty of diversity and fostering connections that transcend our differences.

Contact Pastor Thomas to learn more, or to be added to our email list: tdummer-muth@eastridge.org





Monday Night Book Study: Starting Monday Sept 11 at 6:30 pm in Huxtable Lounge. Led by Doug and Mickey McDaniel.

# **Everybody Always** by Bob Goff

EVERYBODY ALWAYS

What does it mean to live like Jesus and become love in the world? That's the question Bob Goff attempts to answer in *Everybody*, *Always*. Through spiritual guidance and examples from his own life, Bob provides a blueprint for how to grow deeper in your faith and become the person God meant for you to be. Part of fulfilling your purpose in God's world is learning to open yourself up to His love and mirror it back to others. If you can find the courage to live as Jesus did, you will experience the power of His love in your life.



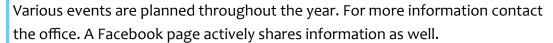






THE GATHERING PLACE: Eastridge Presbyterian Church arranges to provide 4-5 volunteers at The Gathering Place, a local soup kitchen, on the 4th Monday of each month. For more information on what this entails, contact the church office. Thank you to all Eastridge members who volunteer to serve at The Gathering Place. A sign up for 2023 is here: https://bit.ly/TheGatheringPlace2023

**Ladies Night Out:** this group meets for fun outings, mostly "off campus". This past year we toured Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha and are planning a visit to the UNL Dairy Store.





# **Prayer Shawl Ministry:**

Do you knit, crochet or quilt? The EPC prayer shawl group welcomes those with these skills to join them in helping to make prayer shawls and baby blankets to be given to our members and church friends during times of difficulty and times of joy.

For questions about this group or making shawls and blankets, contact Patty Niemann at 402-432-8353 or the church office.





## YANA:

**You Are Not Alone,** a group for those who have lost a spouse, meets the first Tuesday of each month for a meal and fellowship. Contact the office or Berna Stading for more information.









# Eastridge Presbyterian Community Facebook page:

Different from our regular Facebook page, the Eastridge Presbyterian Community Facebook page is yours as a congregation to share thoughts, ideas, information.

Let the office know if you would like an invitation to this group.

# Presbyterian Church





**Lefler Food Market:** We need volunteers again to help with the Lefler Food Market! In 2017 Lefler Middle School started the Lefler Food Market to serve students and families. Eastridge Presbyterian Church provides 3 volunteers each month to help for this once-a-month Food Market from 1:45 pm-3:30 pm. The Market takes place during the school year, September-May.

If you are interested in volunteering for this worthwhile project or would like more information about volunteering, please contact Susan Budler at sbudler1@unl.edu. Volunteers who want to help at the Lefler Food Market will need to fill out a volunteer application. Please contact the office or Susan Budler if you can help!

Please check out the sign up: https://bit.ly/LeflerFoodMarket

# or whom we sing. Whether we sing just once for a

This fall, the Eastridge Hospice Singers will begin their 6th year of "bringing the peace and comfort of music

to those journeying

**Eastridge Hospice Singers:** 

through hospice care". With God's blessing and the dedication of our 22 hospice trained singers, it has been our honor to provide 110 singing visits during the first eight months of 2023. Since our first singing visit in December 2018, over 650 "in person" and virtual visits have been

shared with those who request our presence during their end-of-life journeys and while receiving hospice care

Our own personal hospice singing journeys have been blessed with developing relationships with the individu-

als for whom we sing. Whether we sing just once for a person or multiple times, music has a special way of helping ease, and of making more beautiful, the transition from this world to the next. And especially at end-

of-life, we find that "When words fail, music speaks".

Our unique singing ministry is so appreciative of EPC and the support given to us by staff and members of our congregation. Brochures and business cards for the Eastridge Hospice Singers are located on the Welcome Desk. For more information or the sched-

uling of a singing visit for a family member or friend receiving hospice care, contact Patty Niemann at epc.hospice.singers@gmail.com or 402-432-8353. We also provide programs for community groups as a way for others to learn more about our ministry.



# **Stephen Ministers:**

The Eastridge Stephen Ministry team continues to have the opportunity to put their training, skill, and knowledge to tremendous need in caring for the hurting of our church and community. Contact the office, Susan Taylor, or Shirley Flynn if you are interested in Stephen Ministry!

# Presbyterian Church





We are adding an option to provide treats on Sunday mornings! Click here: https://bit.ly/coffeeateastridge

If you're signed up to serve coffee and would like to bring treats, please add your name to that portion of

the sign up. Those of you who prefer not to sign up for coffee but would like to share treats for fellow-

ship, please head to the sign up above. Store bought cookies, homemade goodies, whatever you'd like to share!



Family Fun Day! Calvin Crest Camp and Conference Center is having a Family Fun Day on August 19, 2023 from 10:00 AM -4:00 PM. It is a chance for families and campers to have a reunion and to raise money for the Camp. We want to offer the day as a place of fellowship and spending time in God's creation so we are asking that churches help us out.



# **SESSION HIGHLIGHTS: JULY 27, 2023**

The Session approved the minutes of the Session meeting of June 22, 2023.

The Session acknowledged that communion was served at the 10 a.m. service on July 2, 2023.

The Session acknowledged that the Rev. Thomas Dummermuth officiated at the graveside service of Jeanette Smith on July 14, 2023, at Fairview Cemetery in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Terri Sherman, Homestead Presbytery moderator, was welcomed as a guest and provided an overview of the current presbytery structure.

The Session carried a motion from the Personnel Committee to hire Brent Shaw as Adult Choir Director for the term of August 1, 2023, to May 31, 2024. He will continue to serve as organist. An accompanist will be hired for the choir.

The Session received a letter thanking Eastridge for its contributions to the Theological Education Fund, which supports theological institutions.

Bill Wehrbein was elected as a commissioner to the

Homestead Presbytery meeting on August 12, 2023, at Calvin Crest Camp and Conference Center.

The Session reviewed the results of the survey concerning worship times. A motion to schedule worship at 10 a.m. beginning in September was defeated by a vote of 4 yeses, 5 nos, and 1 abstention. A motion to schedule worship at 9:30 a.m. beginning in September was carried by a vote of 5 yeses, 3 nos, and 2 abstentions.

The Session received a report from the Pantry Committee. Hope Shortridge reported that Tami Rembolt, pantry director, resigned. It continues to be difficult to find enough volunteers to serve. The client load increases at the end of the month. The Sunday drive through creates traffic problems because clients arrive too early.



# EASTRIDGE Presbyterian Church





## MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN

**Faith Connection for Preschool Children**: This year we would love to be able to offer our preschool class for 3-year-olds through Pre-K during the 9:30am service. Children will attend worship through the worship connection and then gather for class where they will hear a Bible story and participate in a craft.

Faith Connection for Elementary Children: Our elementary aged faith formation program will resume on Tuesday, September 12th. This is an after-school program that allows two hours with our children to build relationships and develop faith. On Tuesday afternoons, we begin with some free play time, have a snack, engage in Bible study with age appropriate activities, and provide worship education. The Tuesday afternoon daily schedule begins with the completion of the school day (including early out days) and con-

cludes at 5:30pm.

Acolytes: We would like to resume with our acolytes during the 9:30am service. If you have a 2nd through 5th grade student that would like to be part of worship as an acolyte, please contact Kris Adler-Brammer in the church office. If you would be willing to coordinate the acolytes each Sunday morning, we could use a volunteer or two to help the acolytes get robed and cue them when to light and extinguish the candles.



### **MINISTRY WITH YOUTH**

**Faith Connection for Youth:** Youth programming will resume on Wednesday, September 6th from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. For this school year, our time together will include dinner, recreation, fellowship, and study.

**Service Opportunity for Youth**: On the 3rd Sunday of the month, the youth of EPC join with the youth of First Presbyterian, Lincoln and staff the Food Pantry at Eastridge. This is from 12:45pm to 3:00pm.



### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:**

We have some wonderful opportunities in place for our children and youth coming this fall. In order for these opportunities to happen, we need volunteers!! Our volunteer opportunities vary in commitment and preparation – they can be a weekly, twice a month, or even monthly commitment. We will need:

**Teachers** – prepare and teach a lesson. At this time, we do not have enough people to cover our class needs.

Youth Group advisors – lead recreation, prepare and

teach a lesson/activity

Meal Providers – prepare a snack for the afterschool program or provide dinner for the youth group

If you think you might be interested in assisting the children and youth programming and

would like additional information about these opportunities, please talk with Chris Boden, Alinda Stelk, or Kris Adler-Brammer.

Presbyterian Church





# We are a Sudan/South Sudan Mission Network Congregation!

Throughout the year, we receive updates from Sudan and South Sudan through our mission co-workers. Also, this past summer Nyabuoy Chan and Nyabuok Dak attended the annual network meeting in New Wilmington, PA on behalf of our congregation. We are excited to welcome mission co-workers Bob and Kristi Rice this October as we share our connections with our siblings in South Sudan. More information to come!



# Fourth Friday Women's Coffee:

On the fourth Friday of each month, join this (mostly) retired group of ladies that meet in Huxtable Lounge here at Eastridge for coffee at 8:30 am. Join us August 25 and September 22!



Rev. Dr. Melodie Jones PointonSenior Pastor
Rev. Thomas DummermuthAssociate Pastor
Kris Adler-Brammer Youth and Children's Ministries
Donna GustafsonOffice Manager
Andy KalninsNight/Weekend Custodian
Brent ShawOrganist & Adult Choir Director
Will McGuireWorship Leader
Vince RuhlDirector of Online Ministries
Brett MeierAudio/Visual Technician
Laura SiemsenAdministrative Assistant
Office number402-488-7844
Melodie Jones Pointon: mjonespointon@eastridge.org
Thomas Dummermuth: tdummermuth@eastridge.org

# MEET THE STAFF

# **Devotion Ministry:**

We are always looking for new writers for our online devotion ministry. If you are interested in writing, even just

occasionally, please contact the office for more information. If you'd like to receive a prompt and the link five days a week via email, let the office know as well.



# Men's Tuesday Morning Group:

Join us at *The Mill* on Prescott/48th street (near Union College) every Tuesday at 8:30 am for discussion and coffee.







# **Ministry for Children:**

- Acolytes
- Children's Music
- Faith Connection for Preschool
- Faith Connection for Elementary

# **Ministry for Adults:**

- Bible/Book Studies
- Chancel Choir
- Serve at The Gathering Place
- EPC Book Club
- EPW Gatherings
- EPW Circle Groups
- Eastridge Hospice Singers
- Faith Partners
- Fourth Friday Women's Coffee
- Volunteer in the Food Pantry
- Justice in Action (Interfaith Justice Organization)
- Kirk Ringers (Handbells)
- Ladies Night Out
- Volunteer with Meals on Wheels
- Men's Fellowship Groups
- Prayer Shawl Group
- Stephen Ministry
- Trailblazers

# WORSHIP

# Learn SERVE



# **Ministry for Youth:**

- Chancel Choir
- Faith Connection for Youth
- Serve at The Gathering Place
- Volunteer in the Food Pantry

- KirkRingers(Handbells)
- Youth
  Interest
  Groups





# Programming Schedule for 2023/2024













Age Broup (key on each page)

Acolyte (for 2nd-5th grades)	W, S	Sundays	O
Adult Studies and Committees (see newsletter for specific studiesmany are available!)	W, L, S	various	K
Chancel Choir	W	Wednesdays at 7:00pm	A, Y
Devotion Ministry	S	Write as often as you'd like!	A, Y
Eastridge serves at The Gathering Place	S	Last Monday of every month	Ш
Eastridge Hospice Singers	W, S	TBD	A
EPC Book Club	Γ	Second Monday of the month during school year	A
EPW Gatherings	L, S	Third Wednesday of the month 4 times a year	<b>*</b>
Faith Connection for Children in Preschool	W, L, S	ТВD	C
Faith Connection for Elementary-Age Children	W, L, S	Tuesdays during school year	O
Faith Partners at Eastridge	S	Meetings the 2nd Thursday most months; special events	А, Ү
Food Pantry	S	Volunteer to help distribute food or fill boxes	А, Ү
Fourth Friday Women's Coffee	Γ	Fourth Friday of each month	A
Interfaith Justice Organization in Lincoln/Lancaster County	L, S	various	A
Kirk Ringers	W	Tuesdays at 6:30 pm	А, Ү

# Programming Schedule for 2023/2024



C=MINISTRY FOR CHILDREN E=MINISTRY FOR EVERYONE W=MINISTRY FOR WOMEN A =MINISTRY FOR ADULTS Y=MINISTRY FOR YOUTH M=MINISTRY FOR MEN







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Ladies Night Out		Quarterly throughout the year	<b>*</b>
Lefler Middle School Food Market	S	Volunteer to help distribute	А, Ү
Meals—Advent and Lent	W, L, S	This ministry will look different	Ш
Meals on Wheels	S	Call the office to volunteer!	A
Men's Tuesday Morning Fellowship Group	L, S	Every Tuesday at 7:30 am at The Mill @ Telegraph	×
Monday Night Bible Study	7	Mondays at 7 pm during the school year	A
Prayer Shawl Group	W, S	On your own!	A
Stephen Ministry	S	Contact the church office for more information	A
Trailblazers: a group for retired individuals and couples	L, S	3rd Friday of the month except summer months	A
Wednesday Morning Bible Study	T	Every Wednesday at 10:30 am	<b>M</b>
Women's Circle Groups	L	First Wednesday of the month; times vary; except summer	W
Youth—Faith Connection	W, L	Wednesdays during the school year	<b>\</b>



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