



From the Pastor's Desk

“Christ and the Church: The Bridegroom and the Bride.”

“Christ is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.” – Ephesians 5:23

“You cannot have God for your Father, if you have not the church for your mother.” – Cyprian of Carthage

What does it mean to love Christ? What does it mean to love the church?
What does it mean to be one with Christ and with His body, the church?

There are two essential sides to this divine coin.

Today, as has been true throughout church history, there are those who say, “I love Jesus, but I cannot stand the church.” There are also those who say “I love the church, but I cannot stand the demands of God.” Both of these statements reveal a serious lack of understanding of what it means to follow Christ as well as what it means to belong to the church. This is essential for us to understand as we consider the vows of baptism and confirmation, as well as the promises of church membership. So often people might want an “affiliation” with Jesus, but are not willing to be faithfully connected to His body, the church. Other times, people want the fellowship and the benefits of being a church “member” but they have no desire to live their lives in accordance to the Word and will of God. Let’s hear God’s Word regarding both these situations:

1. “I love Jesus, but not the church.”

For those who say “I love Jesus, but not the church,” Christ replies, “I am the church!” The church is the body of Christ, as St. Paul writes, “no one ever hated his own body, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church.” (Eph. 5:29) Christ Jesus loves His church with all His life. In fact, “He gave Himself up [on the cross] for the church.” (Eph. 5:25) So also, just as we love Jesus, we are also to love His body, His church! But, one might ask, can we be hurt by people in the church? Yes! Absolutely! This can and does happen. Unfortunately, you will experience this at some point in time, if you have not already, just as you have probably hurt your brothers and sisters in Christ at some point. Thank God for the gift of forgiveness – both for others, and from others!! As St. Cyprian said, “You cannot have God for your Father, if you have not the church as your mother.” Christ and the church come to us as one package. We are deceiving ourselves if we think that we can love and live for God while hating and avoiding His body, the church. It is in the fellowship of the church, the “communion of saints” where we are nurtured and grow spiritually.

St. Cyprian was one of the brilliant minds of the church during the Patristic Period (period of the early church fathers). He was martyred for his faith on September 14, 258 by the Roman Emperor Valerian during a time of intense persecution. He is famous for writing this profound statement regarding how essential it is for those who claim to be Christians, to also be actively involved in church.

Continued on page 3 ...

Ruthfred Lutheran Church

3401 South Park Road
Bethel Park , PA 15102
Www.Ruthfred.org

Pastor Steven P. Carlson

Pastor Bryce McMinn

Office Manager Paula Mikulan

Administrative Assistant Pat Lutz

Youth Director Brandon Fouks

Council President Joe Roman

Herald Staff

Editor Tom Glasser

Staff Writers Mettelise Ziegler

Tom Glasser

Proofreading Ruth and Alan Hinkelman

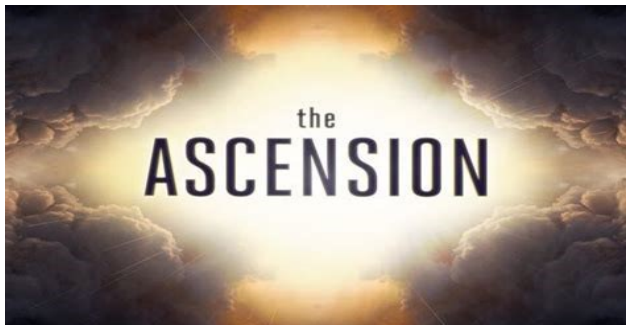
Mailing Labels Lauren Daugherty

Printing Paula Mikulan

Assembly Leader Joyce Bock

The submission deadline for the next Herald is
Sunday, May 23rd, 2021

The email publication date is
Tuesday, June 1st, 2021



In This Issue

- 3 From the Pastor's Desk**
Continued from cover page
- 4 Member Profile**
Rory & Deborah Smith
- 5 Song of the Month**
Cornerstone
- 6 News and Announcements**
- 8 Official Acts**
- 9 Catching Up With Council**
- 10 Church Calendar**
- 11 Youth Ministry Calendar**
- 12 Reading Through the Bible 2021
(Chronological Version)**
- 13 A Joyful Heart Is Good Medicine**



Continued from Front Page . . .

2. "I love the church, but not the demands of God."

On the other side of the coin, are those who do love the fellowship and benefits of the church, but have no interest in submitting one's life to the lordship of Jesus Christ. They find the law of God to be a burden, whether it be in areas of holding grudges, sexuality, giving of offerings, and living one's life for God. Interestingly, a number of years ago, an international group of atheists formed a "non-church denomination" which would meet every Sunday for fellowship and inspiration, but would not be challenged by preaching about sin, or salvation or the need to live a holy life for God. It started in England, but has spread and a branch of this group even opened in Pittsburgh a few years ago.

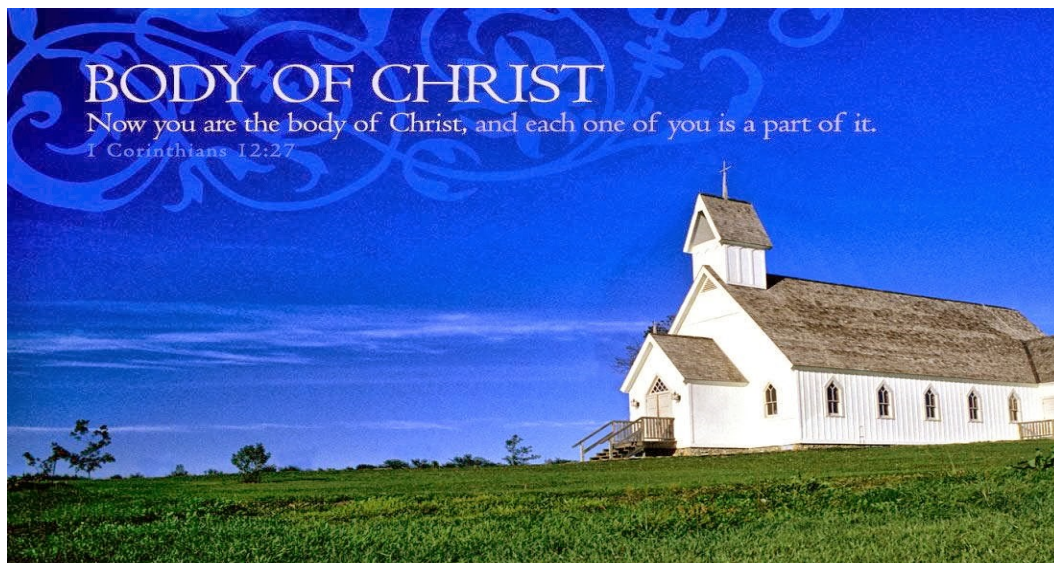
But to those who are only "playing church" and who have little interest in actively following Christ and obeying God's Word, Jesus has some straightforward words. Jesus says, "If you love Me, you will obey My commandments." (John 14:15) To those who knew some of the "right religious words" and even called out "Lord, Lord" and who even did some things in God's name, but whose life actions evidenced their lack of obedience; Jesus will say, "I never knew you, depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness." (Matthew 7:21-23)

In April, we witnessed a number of baptisms, in which vows were made before God. In May, we will witness our confirmands making their vows before God as well. In the midst of this, let us all renew our vows of love for Christ and His church. Let us live in love for God and for one another as brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.

May we continue to grow in our faith together as the family of God!

Pastor Carlson

P.S. For clarity's sake, please note that this article is not written in regards to people watching the livestream vs. being in the sanctuary. That is not the focus in any way.



Member Profile:**by Mettelise Ziegler****Rory & Deborah Smith**

Hurricane Ivan was a monster, "bad boy" storm in September 2004 causing over \$26 billion damage in the United States alone. Ivan brought serious flooding to Pittsburgh, personally impacting Rory and Deborah Smith, producing waves that carried them to Ruthfred.



When Ivan hit the Oakdale home, water filled the basement, rising briskly to chest level on the first floor. The Smiths evacuated their property in a van with their four younger children, narrowly escaping being stranded, and precariously navigating the rising flood by way of Routes 22/30. And then, they were basically adrift, homeless, as their house was so damaged it had to be demolished.

What followed was another great tale. An employee of Thermo Fisher Scientific, Rory was the recipient of aid from his employer who paid for six months rent in a furnished apartment. The employer participated with other businesses, food banks and churches who assisted the Oakdale residents impacted by the monster storm.

Deborah was raised in Bethel Park, a member of Bethany Lutheran Church. Rory was raised a Roman Catholic. The two had been previously married when they met riding the "T" to and from work. They were married in 1991, and will be celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary in December. Between "yours, mine and ours" they have seven children and ten grandchildren. Only the youngest, Michael, still lives at home. Deborah works part time now so she can be a proper grandmother as much as possible. Deborah enjoys scrapbooking. Rory enjoys gardening, with vegetables and fruit being his specialties.

Church member, Sue Swan became acquainted with Deborah at the library in West Allegheny, as Deborah took her children there frequently. At the time, the Smiths had not yet found a permanent home after the flood. Rory and Deborah attended a non-denominational church there. When the Smiths finally moved to Bethel Park, they searched for a new church home, as well. They visited Ruthfred in August of 2007. Pastors Dennis, Molstre and Olsen were serving at that time. About a month later, they decided to join.

Rory claims he is the "beneficiary of so much." Not only did the Lord care for the Smith family during and after the flood, but He brought them to a church that holds to the Word of God. Having always been musical, Rory sings in the choir and plays guitar on the Worship Team. He and Deborah are faithful to attend various church-sponsored programs including Bible studies and Sunday worship. Feeling a calling to be an advocate for conservative, Judeo-Christian values in our schools and community, Rory is also currently running for Board of Education in Bethel Park

Even floods can be agents of good in the Hands of God!

Song of the Month

By Tom Glasser

CORNERSTONE

... built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ... **Ephesians 2:20**

Words and Music by Jonas Myrin, Reuben Morgan, and Eric Liljero

By way of full disclosure, I have never considered myself a contemporary Christian music enthusiast or aficionado. But when our now sainted sister in Christ Stacy Klick asked Peggy and myself if we would be willing to be part of a team to introduce more contemporary music into worship at Ruthfred, we felt honored and agreed to do so. It has been a great experience. It has not only made me more acquainted with contemporary Christian music, but has even allowed me the privilege of helping to lead others in worship with such songs. Add to that the wonderful fellowship with the other members on the team.

One of the songs sung at the contemporary liturgical worship service in April was "Cornerstone". As noted above, *Cornerstone* was written by Jonas Myrin, Reuben Morgan, and Eric Liljero. These artists are affiliated to various degrees with the Hillsong Church based in Australia. A brief inquiry reveals that there is some controversy surrounding this church, but I have so far not been able to detect any false doctrine in the many songs that have come out of this organization. This may be especially true of *Cornerstone* since most of the lyrics are borrowed straight from the well-known hymn "My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less".

***My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly trust in Jesus' name.***



Thus goes the first verse. The song goes on to also include verses 2 and 4 from the hymn. It departs from the hymn, however, when it comes to the refrain. The hymn's refrain is the familiar "On Christ, the solid Rock I stand; All other ground is sinking sand." The refrain in *Cornerstone* goes like this: "Christ alone, Cornerstone; weak made strong in the Saviour's love. Through the storm He is Lord, Lord of all." Different, but certainly nothing controversial there that I can see. Another difference is the melody composed by Jonas, Reuben, and Eric. It differs from the "Melita" tune in our SBH hymnal, which in turn differs from the "Magdalen" tune in my TLH Missouri Synod hymnal. All three are beautiful.

This article would not be complete without a word about the composer of the original *My Hope* lyrics. That would be Edward Mote (1787-1874). Mr Mote was the son of pub owners who became a cabinetmaker and eventually a Baptist minister.

American Methodist hymnologist and hymnal editor Robert Guy McCutchan notes that the hymn was probably written in 1834 ... Mr. McCutchan cites the origin of this hymn narrated by the composer as it appeared in a London periodical, *The Gospel Magazine*: "One morning it came into my mind as I went to labour, to write a hymn on the 'Gracious Experience of a Christian.' As I went up to Holborn I had the chorus ... In the day I had four verses complete, and wrote them off ... On the Sabbath following ... by the fireside I composed the last two verses." ... Baptist hymnologist William Reynolds summarizes the rest of the story: "The next Sunday Mote visited the home of some fellow church members where the wife was very ill. The husband informed Mote that it was their custom on the Lord's Day to sing a hymn, read the Bible, and pray together. Mote produced the new hymn from his pocket, and they sang *The Solid Rock* together for the first time.

[www.umcdiscipleship.org]



Mask Optional Worship Services:

Last month our church council, upon the recommendations of our Re-entry Committee, voted unanimously that all worship services at Ruthfred will be “mask-optional” beginning Sunday, May 9th. People are asked to wear masks while entering and exiting the sanctuary, but may remove them while they are in their pews. (The May 2nd, 6:00pm service is mask-optional). The adult Sunday school room behind the chapel will also be opened for seating for those desiring some extra space.

UPCOMING YOUTH RETREATS:



Spring TNT Retreat (9-12 Grades)

On May 14th - 16th the annual high school (TNT) retreat will be held at Seneca Hills Bible Camp. During this retreat there will be games, worship, a guest speaker, and great food. Additionally, this year we will be utilizing the climbing wall!

If you would like for your child to attend, please grab a registration packet outside the youth office.

Summer ARC Retreat

This year's summer trip will be the Onward Bible Camp at the Association Retreat Center in Osceola, WI, June 27 - July 2. The ARC is a retired Air Force base purchased by members of the AFLC and turned into a Bible camp! This camp will have standard programming featuring Bible lessons, food, games, swimming, worship, and much more. There will be approximately 300 people from many different parts of the country in attendance.





Confirmation Sunday will be on Pentecost Sunday,
May 23rd, at the 11:00am service.

The 2021 Confirmation Class

Alana Agnew
Neil Agnew
Emma Bianco
Layton Cameron
Faith Coleman
Sydney Felicetti

Heidi Miller
Evan Ng
Colton Pfeuffer
Tanner Pfeuffer
Amanda Sperandio
Lauren Tarrant

Please keep these young people in your prayers as they confirm their Christian faith and pledge to continue growing in that faith.

Looking for something FUN this summer??

VBS 2021 IS COMING!!

Seeking a group of individuals who love to serve the LORD!! We are teaming up again with South Hills Bible Chapel, and we need a team of YOU to help with painting, cutting, and tracing to make the scenery for VBS! (NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED!!) If you love to serve the Lord in this way or want to try something new and fun, please consider being a VBS scenery helper!

If you are interested, the date is: **April 27th from 12:00 - 4:00**

Please email Lauren Compel to sign up to go to the Bible Chapel to help.
VBS_laurencompel@yahoo.com



If you know of one of our members who is graduating from high school, college, trade school, etc., please provide relevant information to Paula in the church office so he or she can be recognized.

Life Quotes from Lutherans For Life

"God has placed each of us here at this very moment in time for His purpose: to be lights in the darkness, to be warriors in His battles, to be the hands and feet and voices that bring the good news of salvation to the whole lost world. He asks us to strengthen our feeble arms and weak knees, to open our mouths to the words He will give us, and to run the race to the finish line."

Dr. Barbara Geistfeld, Regional Dir. of Texas Lutherans for Life – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

Official Acts -- April 2021

Baptisms: (*indicates member)

* Charlie Fabiola Hinton -- 4/11/21

* Otto Ernest Fouks -- 4/25/21

Joanna Praise Phoebe Morden -- 4/25/21

Funerals: (*indicates member)

* Stanley Kletch -- 4/9/21

* Jack W. Moore, Jr. -- 4/13/21

* John M. Bender, Sr. -- 4/20/21

Catching up with Council . . .

RUTHFRED LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES April 12, 2021



Council voted to accept a quote from Hollowood Music and Sound to upgrade the current sound system with an additional 10 inputs in the front of the sanctuary. The inputs would tie into the existing sound system and would work with any future upgrades that may be needed and will improve the live stream service.

Pastor Carlson shared that he is thankful for the wonderful Lenten season at Ruthfred and that so many people invited others to attend Easter services. He also shared that someone visiting the church noticed Ruthfred's increased community outreach. We also still need someone to organize the church picnic.

TNT will have their weekend retreat in May. Brandon added that there are a lot of new kids at TNT. 7-8 new kids are friends of others and not members of our church.

The Sunday school attendance has increased over the last four weeks. We are at our highest numbers since the pandemic closure.

The trustees reported that the kitchen will be painted before the rest of the cabinets are installed. The police will increase their patrol of the parking lot and encouraged a wireless camera to be used if necessary to control trash being left in the lot. Mark will look into having the large pot hole at the entrance of the church fixed.

Pete Huwe updated council on the Youth Director search. A final candidate, Regan Johnson, will be coming to visit Ruthfred in a few weeks to tour the church and local area and meet some of the youth and Brandon. Brian Schmidt gave an update on the search for a new Office Manager. There is currently one candidate. Hopefully there will be some progress before the next meeting so that there can be some overlap with Paula.

The Reopening Committee will meet and discuss the current CDC guidelines and make recommendations to be considered by council at the next meeting. The Bibles and hymnals will be returned to the back of the pews along with the friendship pads. Council voted to make the May 2nd Communion Sunday 6PM service mask optional. At this time, the offering baskets will remain in the back of the church because additional ushers would be needed and people may be uncomfortable having it passed through the entire congregation.

The preschool is receiving a lot of applications. As a result one or two new teachers will need to be hired.

Pastor Carlson closed in prayer and Brian adjourned the meeting at 8:56.




Respectfully Submitted,
Kris Wente



MAY 2021



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|--|------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2  <i>Communion Svc 8:30</i> <i>Sunday School 9:45</i> <i>Communion Svc 11:00</i> <i>Communion Svc 6:00</i> | 3 <i>Elders' Mtg 7:00</i> | 4 <i>Craft & Sew 9:30</i> <i>Sr. Conf. Class 4:00</i> <i>Worship Team 7:00</i> | 5 <i>Children's Choir 5:45</i> <i>Jr. & Sr. Conf. Classes 6:30</i> <i>Senior Choir 7:00</i> | 6 | 7 <i>Women's Spring Dinner 6:30</i> | 8 <i>Mary Bible Study 9:30</i> |
| 9 <i>Worship svc 8:30</i> <i>Sunday School 9:45</i> <i>Worship svc 11:00</i> Recognition of High School Seniors at both services | 10 <i>Confirmation Public Exam 7:00</i> <i>Council Mtg 8:15</i> | 11 <i>Sr. Conf. Class 4:00</i> <i>Worship Team 7:00</i> | 12 <i>Jr. & Sr. Conf. Classes 6:30</i> <i>Senior Choir 7:00</i> | 13 ASCENSION DAY | 14 | 15 <i>Contemporary Liturgical Worship 5:00</i> |
| 16 <i>Worship svc 8:30</i> <i>Sunday School 9:45</i> <i>Worship svc 11:00</i> | 17 | 18 <i>Craft & Sew 9:30</i> <i>Sr. Conf. Class 4:00</i> <i>Worship Team 7:00</i> | 19 <i>Sr. Conf. Class 6:30</i> <i>Senior Choir 7:00</i> | 20 <i>Ruth Bible Study 2:00</i> | 21  | 22 <i>Sanders/Willmott Wedding 4:00</i> |
| 23 PENTECOST CONFIRMATION <i>Worship svc 8:30</i> <i>Sunday School 9:45</i> <i>Worship svc 11:00</i> | 24 <i>Preschool Closing Program 10:30 (Fellowship Hall)</i> | 25 <i>Worship Team 7:00</i> | 26 <i>Last day of Preschool</i> | 27 | 28 | 29  |
| 30 <i>Worship svc 8:30</i> <i>Sunday School 9:45</i> <i>Worship svc 11:00</i> | 31  MEMORIAL DAY | | | | | |

MAY 2021

RUTHFRED YOUTH MINISTRY

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----|--|-----|-----|------------------|----------------------|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP 6-7:30 pm @ Church | 3 | 4 TNT 7-9 pm @ Church | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 Sunday School 9:45 NO SWAP | 10 | 11 TNT 7-9 pm @ Church | 12 | 13 | 14 <u>TNT</u> | 15 <u>Retreat</u> |
| 16 Sunday School 9:45 NO SWAP <u>Seneca Hills</u> | 17 | 18 TNT 7-9 pm @ Church | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 Sunday School 9:45 <u>Picnic at Mingo</u> TNT + SWAP 3-8 pm | 24 | 25 TNT 7-9 pm @ Church | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 |  | | | | |

Reading Through the Bible 2021

Schedule for May

| | | | | | | |
|------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 1st | 2 Samuel 22 | Psalms 18 | | | | |
| 2nd | 2 Samuel 24:1-9 | 1 Chronicles 21:1-6 | 2 Samuel 24:10-17 | 1 Chronicles 21:7-17 | | |
| | 2 Samuel 24:18-25 | 1 Chronicles 21:18-30 | 1 Chronicles 22 | | | |
| 3rd | 1 Chronicles 23 | 1 Chronicles 24 | 1 Chronicles 25 | | | |
| 4th | 1 Chronicles 26 | 1 Chronicles 27 | 1 Chronicles 28 | | | |
| 5th | 1 Chronicles 29:1-22 | 1 Kings 1 | | | | |
| 6th | 1 Kings 2:1-9 | 2 Samuel 23:1-7 | 1 Kings 2:10-12 | 1 Chronicles 29:26-30 | | |
| | Psalms 4 | Psalms 5 | Psalms 6 | Psalms 8 | Psalms 9 | Psalms 11 |
| 7th | Psalms 11 | Psalms 12 | Psalms 13 | Psalms 14 | Psalms 15 | Psalms 16 |
| | Psalms 17 | Psalms 19 | Psalms 20 | Psalms 21 | | |
| 8th | Psalms 22 | Psalms 23 | Psalms 24 | Psalms 25 | Psalms 26 | |
| 9th | Psalms 27 | Psalms 28 | Psalms 29 | Psalms 30 | Psalms 31 | Psalms 32 |
| 10th | Psalms 35 | Psalms 36 | Psalms 37 | Psalms 38 | | |
| 11th | Psalms 39 | Psalms 40 | Psalms 41 | Psalms 53 | Psalms 55 | Psalms 58 |
| 12th | Psalms 61 | Psalms 62 | Psalms 64 | Psalms 65 | Psalms 66 | Psalms 67 |
| 13th | Psalms 68 | Psalms 69 | Psalms 70 | Psalms 86 | Psalms 101 | |
| 14th | Psalms 103 | Psalms 108 | Psalms 109 | Psalms 110 | Psalms 122 | Psalms 124 |
| 15th | Psalms 131 | Psalms 133 | Psalms 138 | Psalms 139 | Psalms 140 | Psalms 141 |
| | Psalms 143 | | | | | |
| 16th | Psalms 144 | Psalms 145 | Psalms 88 | Psalms 89 | | |
| 17th | Psalms 50 | Psalms 73 | Psalms 74 | | | |
| 18th | Psalms 75 | Psalms 76 | Psalms 77 | Psalms 78 | | |
| 19th | Psalms 79 | Psalms 80 | Psalms 81 | Psalms 82 | | |
| 20th | Psalms 83 | 1 Chronicles 29:23-25 | 2 Chronicles 1:1 | 1 Kings 2:13-46 | | |
| | 1 Kings 3:1-4 | 2 Chronicles 1:2-6 | 1 Kings 3:5-15 | 2 Chronicles 1:7-13 | | |
| 21st | 1 Kings 3:16-28 | 1 Kings 5 | 2 Chronicles 2 | 1 Kings 6:1-13 | 2 Chronicles 3:1-14 | |
| | 1 Kings 6:14-38 | | | | | |
| 22nd | 1 Kings 7 | 2 Chronicles 3:15-17 | 2 Chronicles 4 | | | |
| 23rd | 1 Kings 8:1-11 | 2 Chronicles 5 | 1 Kings 8:12-21 | 2 Chronicles 6:1-11 | | |
| | 1 Kings 8:22-53 | 2 Chronicles 6:12-42 | | | | |
| 24th | 1 Kings 8:54-66 | 2 Chron. 7:1-10 | 1 Kings 9:1-9 | 2 Chron. 7:11-22 | 1 Kings 9:10-14 | |
| 25th | 2 Chron. 8 | 1 Kings 9:15-28 | 1 Kings 10:1-13 | 2 Chron. 9:1-12 | 1 Kings 10:15-29 | |
| | 2 Chron. 9:13-28 | 2 Chron. 1:14-17 | | | | |
| 26th | 1 Kings 4 | Psalms 72 | Psalms 127 | | | |
| 27th | Proverbs 1 | Proverbs 2 | Proverbs 3 | Proverbs 4 | | |
| 28th | Proverbs 5 | Proverbs 6 | Proverbs 7 | | | |
| 29th | Proverbs 8 | Proverbs 9 | Proverbs 10 | | | |
| 30th | Proverbs 11 | Proverbs 12 | Proverbs 13 | | | |
| 31st | Proverbs 14 | Proverbs 15 | Proverbs 16 | | | |



A joyful heart is good medicine.

Proverbs 17:22a



**Time flies like an arrow;
Fruit flies like a banana.**

