

St. John's Lutheran Church
505 E. Carpenter St.
Midland, Michigan 48640

OCTOBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Where are the nets?

Contact Us

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Worship Times

Sunday at 8 & 10:45 am
Bible Study and Sunday
School at 9:30 am

Saturday at 5 pm

Live Stream:
facebook.com/sjlmidland

St. John's Worship
Services on MCTV
Monday at 5:30 pm
Tuesday at 10 am
Channel 191

Church Phone:
(989) 835-5861
www.sjlmidland.org

I had an interesting conversation with pastor Farrukh and some of the other missionaries at POBLO recently. There are many congregations that have struggled and dwindled in recent years. Pastor Farrukh's answer was to simply remind us of a Bible story:

Recall that Jesus had sent his disciples out to proclaim the kingdom. He said that they would be "fishers of men," and though they all abandoned him on the night He was betrayed, they were all restored and reinstated after the resurrection. (Well, except Judas.)

We then have an interesting little story.

Peter and some of the other disciples decide to go fishing. Even though they had left their nets previously when Jesus called them to be "fishers of men," they returned in this moment to what they knew. They returned to where they were comfortable. Here, on the waters where they had been raised, they were experts. They knew how to catch fish, and they knew where. So they went fishing, perhaps for no reason beyond the comfort of doing something familiar.

The only problem? No fish. Out all night, the professional experts caught nothing. They tried everything they knew, (and they knew a lot), and it didn't work.

Then they saw Jesus on the shore and he said, "Throw your nets on the other side." Result? The catch was too big to haul in.

Yet another miracle from Jesus, but pastor Farrukh suggested more. The sending of Jesus compels us to look beyond what is known and familiar, and to cast our "people fishing" nets in a new direction. When change comes to the context of a church, that church and her members must decide how to respond. Is it an obstacle or an opportunity? Whether it is a large influx of Muslim neighbors, or Sikhs, or Somalis, (the sort of situation POBLO specializes in), the church must see the opportunity to gather souls to Christ. When a neighborhood gradually changes so that the people living around the church don't fit the cultural or economic precedent, that church needs to find a way to reach out to them or it will dwindle and die.

At the heart of this view is the recognition that there are no accidents. Regardless of our own comfort, there is no doubt that the people we encounter were sent to us by God. We will have to answer for our response, both collectively and as individuals. Did we see the opportunity and step in a new direction, or stubbornly keep casting our net only where we were comfortable.

That is a challenging thought. But the question that rolls around in my mind is this: Where is the other side of the boat? What does it mean for St. John's? What does it mean for me? Who are the people ripe for the kingdom that God has placed me here to reach? After all, we are not here by accident, and we are not together by accident. Get the nets ready. Let's listen for the Master's voice.

See you in Church,

Pastor Kempin

Congregational Meetings

November 22nd

Communication Meeting at 2pm



From the Congregational President – Getting to Know Your Leadership Team

My name is Steven McNally, and I am honored to serve as your Congregational President. My family and I have been blessed to call St. John's our church home for many years, and I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside the many dedicated people who faithfully serve our congregation.

One of the many blessings of St. John's is the faithful service of members who volunteer their time and talents to support the ministry of our church. While you may recognize members of our leadership team, you may not always know their specific roles or the responsibilities they carry behind the scenes.

Over the coming months, the leadership team will be using the newsletter to introduce themselves and provide a brief overview of how they serve our congregation. My hope is that these articles will help strengthen connections within our church family, increase awareness of how our congregation is organized, and encourage others to consider ways they can share their gifts in service to Christ and His Church.

As Congregational President, I have the privilege of working next to our pastors, board leaders, staff, and volunteers to help support the mission and ministry of St. John's. My responsibilities include leading congregational and leadership meetings, helping establish priorities and goals, supporting stewardship of church resources, and ensuring that our various ministries are aligned with our mission of sharing God's love and making disciples. Most importantly, the role is one of servant leadership, listening to members, helping address concerns, and working collaboratively to strengthen our church community.

I encourage you to stay connected with congregational matters by attending Voters' and Communication meetings, which are typically held every two months. If you have not already done so, please also consider becoming a voting member of St. John's. Voting members help guide the congregation by electing board and leadership team members and approving the annual budget. Voting membership is also required to serve on many boards and committees.

Please watch for future newsletter articles highlighting other members of our leadership team. In the meantime, don't hesitate to reach out to me or any member of the leadership team with questions, suggestions, or concerns. We welcome your input and value your partnership as we work together to advance God's mission through St. John's Lutheran Church.

Thank you for being an important part of our church family and thank you for the many ways you serve Christ through the life of our congregation.

In His Service,

Steven McNally

Congregational President

Our Mission Statement

"We are here to share the good news of salvation and make disciples of Jesus Christ, in accordance with the Scriptures (Matt. 28:18-20) and with the help of the Holy Spirit. This mission begins with our St. John's family and extends to the Midland Community and the world."

LYDIA GUILD

IS OPEN TO ALL LADIES AT ST. JOHN'S



WHAT IS LYDIA GUILD? Lydia Guild is a women's organization designed to foster individual **spiritual growth**, provide **fellowship** with other women, to **serve** the church in allegiance with Jesus Christ, and to support the Lutheran Women in Mission organization (LWML) by providing opportunities to learn about and serve charitable groups.

The OCTOBER MEETING of LYDIA GUILD is on Monday, October 26th at 6:30 pm in the lounge. Our October presentation is a topic many of us need to hear: "How to protect yourself from Identity Theft", and will be presented by a member of the Midland Police Department. Refreshments, Christian fellowship, and a brief business meeting will follow the presentation. Please plan to join us!

Join the Handbell Choir!

Ever wanted to make a joyful noise, but with slightly more organization? The Handbell Choir is looking for new ringers! No previous experience is required, just a willingness to learn, make music, and occasionally wonder which bell you're supposed to ring! Come join us as we praise God, have fun, and make a little beautiful music together. Come ring with us! Formal rehearsals are every Wednesday at 6:00pm. Please contact director Laura Meiers at lelindg@gmail.com or Karen Kempin at kkempin@sjlmidland.org for more information.

LWML News

Lutheran Women's Missionary League will celebrate LWML weekend on October 10th and 11th. Please join the Lydia Guild members in wearing purple, the official color of the Lydia Guild, at the worship service you attend that weekend. We will be serving as greeters at all services and furnishing refreshments and children's messages on Sunday. You are invited to visit the LWML table in the mission alcove near the Lounge.

Stronghold Cambodia

Join Missionaries Tim & Diane Esala for a special presentation: Stronghold Cambodia – Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow. They will share how God is transforming lives through Stronghold Cambodia. Stronghold provides far more than education. In a country with limited public resources, Stronghold offers whole-family support, daily meals for students, English and computer training, academic advancement and most importantly, the opportunities for students to grow in their faith in Jesus. Tim & Diane will share stories of growth, impact and the bold vision ahead. Come be encouraged by what God is doing and discover how you can pray, support, and go.

Short presentation – Saturday, October 10th at the 5pm Service @ St. John's Lutheran, Midland

Full presentation – Sunday, October 11th at the 10:15am Service @ Zion Lutheran, Auburn. *SJL members are welcome to attend Sunday Service at 9am prior to the presentation.*

Come Find Your Oasis!

Looking for a place to relax, connect, laugh, and grow in God's Word? Come join the Oasis Bible Study! This fun and welcoming group combines good fellowship with meaningful Bible study—and there's no homework or long-term commitment required. Each session is a stand-alone study, so you can jump in anytime. Come for the Bible study, stay for the fellowship, and leave refreshed! The Oasis Bible Study meets on Tuesdays at 10:30am.

SJL Youth



Weekly youth programming is in full swing! Hope your student plans to join us this month at the following weekly events:

- **Sunday Bible Study**
 - Sundays at 9:30am, 7-12 graders meet in the BRICK with leaders Mr. Burkhard & Mr. Fauver for a study on discipleship
- **Girls Small Group**
 - Wednesdays from 3:00-4:30pm, 8-12 grade girls, meet at Coffee Chaos with Anna for fellowship and time in God's Word using the devotional *Confessing Christ*
- **Sr. High Youth Nights**
 - Sundays from 6:00-7:30pm, 9-12 graders, meet in the BRICK with leaders Anna & Mr. Burkhard as we walk through the Gospel of Luke
 - Youth Night on **Sunday, Oct. 18** is an offsite bonfire event at the Burkhard farm. See Anna to sign up!

Fall Fest

Mark your calendars, invite your friends and neighbors, and plan to join us for Fall Fest happening 2:00-4:00pm on Sunday, October 25th! This event is fun for the whole family featuring music, trunk-or-treating, games, face painting, concessions, and more.

Candy donations are appreciated and can be dropped off to the Church Office anytime. Sign up to volunteer in the Lounge or on Sign Up Genius using this link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0548A8A62DA7FA7-65956206-fall/72108524#/>



4th - 6th Grade Autumn Party

Join us on October 11th from 3:00-4:30pm for a 4th - 6th Autumn Party in the St. John's gym! Come for a time of games, cider, and donuts. These evenings are open to students in 4th through 6th grade for the 2026-2027 school year. Scan the QR code to register.



Confirmation Prayer Mentor Pizza Party

Confirmation students, their parents, and prayer mentors are invited to a pizza party on Sunday, October 4th. Meet in the Lounge following the 10:45am worship service to share a meal and time getting to know each other!



Earn rebates for SJL!

Raise money for St John's Lutheran Church & School when you buy gift cards to pay for purchases, shop online, dine out, or book travel through RaiseRight (aka Scrip). It's a fundraiser that works with your routine—not against it.

How it works



Earn from hundreds of brands as you shop, dine, or book travel.



The brand gives a portion of each purchase back to St John's as earnings.



Did you know? E-Gift cards can be bought instantly - while in the checkout line!

Start earning in 3 easy steps

- 1 Scan the QR code to join St John Midland's program
- 2 Create your RaiseRight account
- 3 Start shopping and earning for St John's—without changing your budget



SCAN TO JOIN



Questions? Contact your
RaiseRight coordinator
Melissa Brown at (989) 980-7465

Visual Faith Class

Tapestry

Women In The Gospels Bible Study



Monday, October 19th 6:30 - 8 pm

ENROLL BY October 12th

A Sign Up sheet is located outside of office or
e-mail Linda Bebeau at llsmb@chartermi.net

Book Club

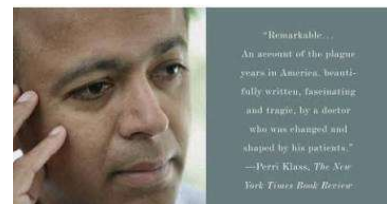
Monday, October 19th, 6:30-8:00pm in Room 2.



MY OWN COUNTRY

A Doctor's Story

ABRAHAM VERGHESE



"Remarkable...
An account of the plague
years in America, beauti-
fully written, fascinat-
ing and tragic, by a doctor
who was changed and
shaped by his patients."
—Patti Kalish, *The New
York Times Book Review*



HARVEST DINNER

St. John's Lutheran Church
505 E. Carpenter St. Midland, MI 48640

OCTOBER 15, 2026

Tickets **\$14**

Menu

- Roasted Turkey
- Dressing
- Dinner Roll
- Mashed Potatoes and Gravy
- Green Beans
- Squash
- Cranberry Relish
- Assorted Pies for Dessert

Take out only.

Pick up at St. John's Lounge between 4:30 and 6:30pm.

Don't wait—purchase your tickets today!
A limited number of tickets will be available at the door.

Tickets can be purchased after Saturday and Sunday services, or
visit the Church Office Monday–Friday from 9:00 AM–2:00 PM.

Please make checks payable to **Women of St. John's**

www.sjlmidland.org

989-835-5861

Women of St. John's

Harvest Dinner. Women of St John's are entering the homestretch for Harvest Dinner. Tickets are being sold after each service (Saturday & 10:45 in the church office, 8am in the Lounge). Sign-ups are out on the tables in the Lounge or through the Sign-Up Genius link (<https://www.signupgenius.com/tabs/1357EDA02AFCDE9C17-harvest>). You can also use the QR code below. If you have any questions contact Joyce Battjes (989.430.7166), Cynthia Benner (989.600.9463), or Joy Miller (989.600.5437).



Holiday Roll Bake. After discussion at the September meeting it has been decided that there **will not** be a holiday roll bake this year. The members are looking at doing a different time of roll bake after Christmas.

Kitchen Floor. The new floor in the kitchen is installed and looks great. Thank you to the congregation and Board of Operations for completing the project this summer. We took the opportunity to do a deep clean in the kitchen and to streamline supplies. The cabinets have all been labeled so you can (hopefully) find the new locations. In addition, we have taken the opportunity to work with the Board of Ops to update the kitchen use policies to align with the current food safety rules.

Kitchen Use and Training. For each group that will be using the kitchen for meal preparation, a contact person will need to meet with a Kitchen Manager. The training will need to take place before the first event each school year. This training will ensure that everyone is up to date on the food safety regulations and kitchen processes.

Donations. Thank you for your ongoing support over the years in keeping our kitchen fully stocked with all the essential equipment. Since we have recently completed a full inventory of the kitchen, please contact one of the Kitchen Managers before donating any equipment, supplies, or other items.

Food Prep Area. The area on the Reardon St. side of the kitchen (stove/ovens to the refrigerator) and the steam counter is considered the food prep area. To prevent contamination of food, there should not be any dishwashing in this area. The sinks should be used to clean food items only.

Dishwashing. The dishwasher and 3-compartment sink area are for washing all dishes. This is the only place to use dish soap so that we can prevent chemical contamination. In addition, all cleaning supplies are now stored on this side of the kitchen.



Onward & Upward:

A BOARD OF CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

CHRIST IN THE CENTER



A New Year Together

As we begin another school year, the Board of Christian Day School gives thanks to God for the opportunity to serve the families of St. John's Lutheran School and the congregation of St. John's Lutheran Church. We are grateful for the continued trust, support, and partnership that make this ministry possible.

We are especially thankful for our teachers and staff, who faithfully serve our students each day. Through their dedication, compassion, and commitment, they will continue to move our school forward while educating and nurturing our students in the knowledge and truth of Christ Jesus.



*⁹ The heart of
man plans his
way,
but the Lord
establishes his
steps.*

PROVERBS 16:9

As we begin this new year, we pray that God would bless our students and families with peace, meaningful friendships, hope, opportunity, kindness, grace, growth, courage, and love. May our school community continue to be a place where children are encouraged to learn, serve, and grow.

We look forward with confidence and optimism to all that God has planned for St. John's in the year ahead.

Day School Retirements

After 40 years in ministry, including the last eight years serving at St. John's Lutheran School, Mr. and Mrs. Brad and Alaine Massey will retire at the conclusion of the 2026-27 school year.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Brad and Alaine Massey for their years of love, dedication, and commitment to our students, our school, and the ministry of St. John's, and we pray that God continues to richly bless them as they enter this next chapter.

Board of Christian Day School *Members*

Alyssa Nett
Board Chair

Abbie McGuire
Secretary

Steve Keinath
Member

Darlene Jones
Member

Harry Smith
Member

Kristin Martin
Member

Amy Browning
Ex-Officio



Day School Retirements, cont.

While this is a significant transition for our school community, the Board of Christian Day School has been working proactively to prepare for the future and ensure a strong path forward.

To date, the Board has taken several important staffing and planning actions:

- Obtained the necessary budget approvals to hire a full-time Principal.
- Documented and approved a revised Principal job description aligned with the Board's vision for the future of St. John's Lutheran School.
- Seeking budget approval for full-time Grades 1 and Grade 2 teaching positions.
- The Principal and Building Operations team are evaluating how our current facilities and future opportunities might best support the continued growth and development of our Day School.
- The Board will meet with our District representatives in October to officially begin the search process for qualified, synodically trained replacement staff.

These actions reflect our commitment to thoughtful planning, responsible stewardship, and continued investment in the future of Lutheran education at St. John's.

As we move through this transition, we ask our families and congregation to join us in prayer. Please pray for divine guidance, wisdom, and discernment as the Board works to identify and call the right individuals to serve our school and continue this ministry.

Board Leadership

Effective September 2026, Alyssa Nett will step down from her position as Chair of the Board of Christian Day School.

We are grateful for Alyssa's leadership, professionalism, thoughtful perspective, and commitment to St. John's Lutheran School. Her willingness to serve and lead has been a blessing to the Board, our school, and our ministry.

Information regarding the Board Chair transition and replacement will be forthcoming as the Board works through the process.

We ask our families and congregation to join us in thanking Alyssa for her service and praying for continued blessings upon her and her family as she enters this next season.

Looking Ahead

Change brings both responsibility and opportunity. As a Board, we remain committed to responsible stewardship of the ministry entrusted to us, and to building a strong foundation for the future of St. John's Lutheran School.

We are encouraged by the growth we are experiencing and excited about the opportunities ahead. With the continued prayers and support of our families and congregation, we look forward to what God will accomplish through St. John's.

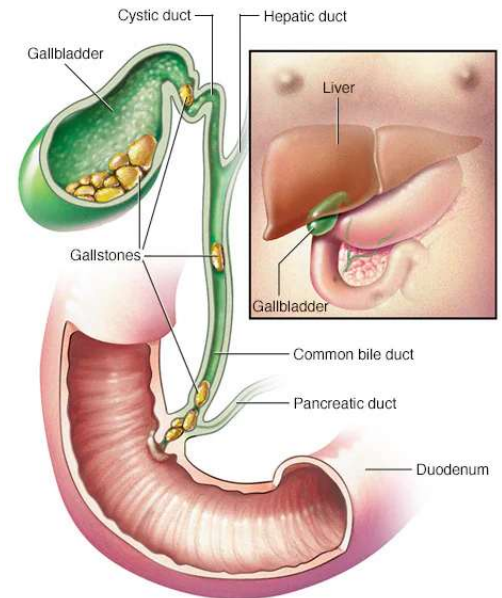
May God continue to guide our school, bless our students and staff, and keep Christ at the center of all we do.

Blessings to each of you this school year,
The Board of Christian Day School

Gallstones and Bile Duct Stones (Part 1 of 2)

About 10% of people have gallstones that form in their gallbladder, and about 15% of those people will have them in their common bile duct. Only 20% of people with gallstones will have complications that require surgery. Gallstones are solid rock-like, that are made from cholesterol and bilirubin, a chemical made in the bile your liver makes. The stones are stored in the gallbladder, a pear-shaped organ that sits just below the liver on the upper right side of the abdomen. The gallbladder collects and stores the digestive fluid made in the liver called bile. (The bile is like Dawn detergent that breaks up fat in your dishwasher). When needed, the bile is dripped into the intestine to break up fat for digestion.

Gallstones are often too small to cause a problem (but larger stones, sometimes as large as a golf ball) and can block the bile duct and cause painful attacks that can lead to infection and the need for surgery. You should get medical help immediately if you have sudden and severe pain that lasts for a few hours. This can be a sign that a gallstone(s) are stuck in the bile duct, a tiny canal that allows bile to flow out of the liver or out of the gallbladder to the small intestine. Blockages in the bile duct can slow or stop the flow of the bile to back up and collect in the liver. The result can feel painful and pose serious health risks without treatment.



Removing the Gallbladder

A cholecystectomy (koh-le-sis-TEK-tuh-me) is a common type of surgery to remove the gallbladder and relieve the pain. Your gallbladder isn't necessary for healthy digestion. In most people a laparoscopy surgery is done by using three small incisions in the abdomen. The surgery is usually done by inserting a tiny video camera and special tools through the small incisions to see inside your abdomen and remove the gallbladder. The surgery takes about one hour. If you're among the few who have complications, a larger incision may be necessary to remove the gallbladder.

After Gallbladder Removal

Due to the anesthesia, your bowel may become constipated and may need a stool softener. There might be some tenderness around your incisions, or pain in your shoulder for the first week from the air pumped into your body during the surgery. You may try some cold compresses to help with the discomfort.



Bile will now flow directly from the liver into the small intestine, which can lead to changes in digestion. Most people adapt over time, but some may experience temporary digestive issues, such as diarrhea or difficulty digesting fats. A follow-up appointment with your doctor will be scheduled in about 2 weeks.

What to Eat After Surgery

Drink plenty of water. Stay away from high-fat food for at least a week or two after your operation. Eat smaller meals during this initial adjusting period and eat food with fiber too. This strategy can help you from having to strain when you go to the bathroom. That way, there will be enough bile to help digest what you eat. Look for lean protein, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Too much caffeine, dairy, or sugar can worsen any diarrhea that you may have.



When To Call Your Doctor

You normally will see your doctor in about 2 or 3 weeks after the operation, however, if you can't eat, drink, or go to the bathroom call your doctor. If you have other complications, such as a fever more than 101 F, serious pain in your belly, your skin is yellowish, nausea, vomiting, or breathing problems call your doctor.

For more information:

<https://www.webmd.com/digestive-disorders/ss/slideshow-gallbladder-surgery-what-to-expect>
<https://www.uofmhealth.org/our-care/specialties-services/bile-duct-stones>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 10am Bickford Bible Study 2pm Brittany Manor Worship 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	2	3 8am Men's Bible Study 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
4 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study/ Sunday School 10:45am Joyful Praise 12pm Confirmation Prayer Mentor Pizza Party 6pm Sr. High Youth Group	5 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30pm Board of Operations	6 10am Worship on MCTV(Ch.191) 10:30am Oasis Bible Study 12pm Prayer Warriors 1pm Colonial Villa Worship 7pm Board of Christian Day School	7 8:15am Chapel 9am Quilters 9:30 Backpack Buddies 10am LifeLight 12pm Archives 3pm Girls Small Group 5:30pm Confirmation 6pm Handbell Choir Practice	8 10am Bickford Bible Study 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	9	10 8am Men's Bible Study 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship LWML Weekend
11 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study/ Sunday School 10:45am Joyful Praise 3pm 4 th -6 th Grade Autumn Pary 6pm Sr. High Youth Group LWML Weekend	12 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30pm P.T.S. Meeting	13 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 10:30am Oasis Bible Study 10:30am Cascades Bible Study 12pm Prayer Warriors 7pm Board of Elders	14 8:15am Chapel 9am Quilters 10am LifeLight 10am Stratford Pines Worship 12pm Archives 3pm Girls Small Group 5:30pm Confirmation 6pm Handbells 6:30pm FORGE Discipleship Group	15 NO SCHOOL 10am Bickford Bible Study HARVEST DINNER 4:30-6:30 	16 NO SCHOOL	17 8am Men's Bible Study 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
18 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study/ Sunday School 10:45am Joyful Praise 6pm Sr. High Youth Group	19 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30pm Visual Faith 6:30pm Book Club Newsletter Submission Due	20 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 10:30am Oasis Bible Study 12pm Prayer Warriors 6:30pm Leadership Team	21 8:15am Chapel 9am Quilters 9:30 Backpack Buddies 10am LifeLight 10:30am Washington Wood Worship 12pm Archives 1:30pm Kings Daughters Worship 2pm Meridian Acres Worship 3pm Girls Small Group 5:30pm Confirmation 6pm Handbells	22 10am Bickford Bible Study 3pm Riverside Place Bible Study 5:30pm Joyful Praise Rehearsal	23	24 8am Men's Bible Study 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship
25 8am Worship 9:30am Bible Study/ Sunday School 10:45am Joyful Praise 2pm Fall Fest 6pm Sr. High Youth Group	26 5:30pm Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 6:30 Lydia Guild	27 8:45am Toddler Bible Time 10am Worship on MCTV (Ch. 191) 10:30 Oasis Bible Study 10:30am Cascades Bible Study 12pm Prayer Warriors 6:30 Mission Board	28 8:15am Chapel 9am Quilters 10am LifeLight 12 Archives 1:30pm Story Point Worship 3pm Girls Small Group 4pm Parent/Teacher Conferences 5:30pm Confirmation 6pm Handbells	29 10am Bickford Bible Study 4pm Parent/Teacher Conferences 5:30 Joyful Praise Rehearsal	30 NO SCHOOL	31 8am Men's Bible Study 9am Visit with Pastor 10am Joyful Praise Rehearsal 5pm Worship