

# Reflections February 2025



**FUMC MONTICELLO**

317 S MAIN 870-367-2471

9AM CONTEMPORARY

10AM SUNDAY SCHOOL

11AM TRADITIONAL



Dear Friends,

Valentine's Greetings!

I trust you are doing well, and God is richly blessing your family! I wanted to take this opportunity during this very special time of the year to send a note of encouragement to all in the church.

February is the month of love. It is a month when we celebrate Valentine's Day with hearts, flowers, cupids, and my favorite of all – candy. It is a time to reminisce with the person we love – our sweetheart and valentine. This is the month so many people do their best to share their love in many ways. Yet, let me take a moment to remind you of the amazing love of our Lord Jesus Christ whose example of perfect love should be held up for all to see.

The joy and beauty of the gospel is whether you are married, single, divorced, or widowed, God loves you! You are the apple of God's eye, the heartthrob of God. God calls us BELOVED! God is always pursuing us with unconditional love, through Jesus Christ, yearning for us to respond to that love through our devotion and commitment to serving God and those whom God loves.

The true testament of our love for God and our love for one another is sharing this message of specialness and loving-kindness. We share this message by the things that we do and by the things that we say. We hold up a mirror to reflect God's love for the world.

As we travel through this month, let's be open to receiving God's lavish love into our hearts and lives. Then let us seek ways to share this love with others. If we want to see how much difference one person can make in the world, let us begin first with love and God will do the rest.

Blessings,  
Bro. Bryan



# FUMY News



February 2025

## Important Reminders:

- **February 5:** Mission Work during FUMY
- **February 9:** FUMY Super Bowl Party, Youth Rom, 5:00 pm - end of game, plus bring your favorite appetizer to share
- **February 14-15:** "Fan the Flame Weekend" @ FUMC
- **February 15:** All remaining Veritas fees are due!
- **February 17:** All FUMY "Movie, Games & Snacks" 2:00 - 5:00 pm, youth room
- **February 21-23:** FUMY to Veritas, Ft Smith, AR
- **February 28:** 7 am Prayer Breakfast, *devo by Jack*

We started 2025 off serving others through our mission work with "Feed the Kids" mission. We packed 300 bags. It is a blessing to pack these bags of food for children who do not have enough food to eat on the weekends. Our Wednesday lessons for January focused on several things: why is it important to do mission work, why does God allow evil in the world and who Jesus is. In addition to our trivia games & lesson we have opened up "Testimony Time" which allows our youth to share how God is working in their lives. It has become a favorite part of our Wednesdays! Our Sunday nights are often filled with small group time! We have 3 outstanding small groups with equally outstanding small group leaders. We've been talking about grace and what it means to trust our lives to God! We continue to take time to sit in silence to pray and we've challenged ourselves to spend more time with God. FUMY has had lots of fun, too! One of our favorite nights was spent chilling together and watching 2 movies in the youth room! And as always we are thankful for the delicious food prepared each Sunday by our amazing FUMY parents. We ended the month of January with our monthly prayer breakfast. Special thanks to Mallory for leading our devotion.

February is here! And FUMY has a LOT going on! Our mission for the month will be to pack & send goody bags to our college students. We will only meet with our small groups one time because we have other activities going on! On Super Bowl Sunday we plan to have some fun in the youth room. On Wednesdays we will continue learning about who Jesus is and begin a "pursuing Jesus" series toward the end of the month. I hope that many of our youth & their families will make plans to attend "Fan the Flame" at our church on February 14 & 15. Plus we'll have our monthly prayer breakfast AND a group of us are heading to Ft. Smith for Veritas! We are so excited to see what God has in store for us. This year's Veritas theme is 'Ardor'. Ardor, simply means enthusiasm, fire, and being passionate about something. During the weekend we will take a deeper dive into different Biblical stories and the ways which someone can experience Ardor in their life!

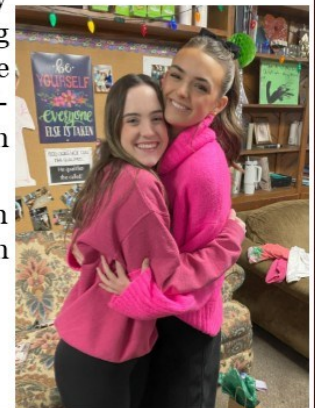
Please continue to pray for our youth and their families. God loves you more than you can even imagine!

Christ above all, *Lori*



## Snack Suppers:

- February 2 - Jaime Hunter
- February 9 - FUMY to LR for fun!
- February 16 - NO FUMY
- February 23 - NO FUMY (Veritas)





January 6, 2025

Greetings, Our Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We invite you to consider how your laity may use 2025 to look ahead in their ministries. We hope that you will consider encouraging your parishioners to look into Lay Servant Ministries.

This envelope contains a 2024 catalog of all classes available online through BeADisciple.org. It will give an idea of the classes offered to the laity each year and provide a synopsis of some of the classes available to be held in person throughout our Conference in 2025.

Classes are available as follows:

**Saturday, February 15, 2025**

9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Pine Bluff Lakeside UMC

LSM Basic Course & Spiritual Gifts

**Saturday, March 1, 2025**

9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Arkadelphia First UMC

LSM Basic Course & United Methodist Heritage

**Saturday, March 8, 2025**

9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Smackover First UMC

LSM Basic Course

As you will see, Lay Servant Ministry is a tool for equipping our laity to better understand United Methodism, learn how to be a small group leader, pray in front of a group, and even provide pulpit supply. But please know that Lay Servant Ministry is not just those things! It's a way to equip the laity to be better leaders in the church and community.

If you have any questions about Lay Servant Ministry, please visit the website at <https://arumc.org/our-ministries/lay-servant-ministries/>.

Also, feel free to email me or the assistant conference director, Karen Anderson, at the email addresses listed below.

Thanks in advance for being willing to peruse these books and being excited about the possibility of spiritual and leadership development within your church.

Grace and peace,

Teresa "Tee" Bolin ([teresa.bolin@arumc.org](mailto:teresa.bolin@arumc.org))

Karen Anderson ([karen.anderson@arumc.org](mailto:karen.anderson@arumc.org))



We are excited about ***Fan the Flame 2025.***

**February 14 & 15** will be here before we know it! This weekend is for **everyone** and will allow you to have a fresh encounter with the Holy Spirit. *We welcome all ages and all churches!*

**Sign up here:** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0945ABAD2BA1F85-54432130-2025>

We're ordering t-shirts again this year for those who do not have one already! **Order deadline for a new t-shirt is February 5, 2025.**



Our ladies in Circle 5 are already thinking about our upcoming Easter Season. We are looking for artificial flowers to use in a beautiful project for Easter Sunday. If you have flowers you are not using at home and wouldn't mind

donating them to the project, we would greatly appreciate it. We will have a tote inside the glass doors leading to the church office from February 5-26. Thanks in advance!



## The Chancel Choir

The Chancel Choir is rehearsing music for the approaching season of Lent and Easter each Wednesday evening at 6 o'clock. The choir meets in the Chancel Choir room on the second floor of the East Wing, at the end of the hallway. We welcome you to join us for an hour of fun and fellowship as the choir prepares service music for each Sunday.

We want to express a big WELCOME to our newest choir member, Debra Burt. She is a sister to our long-time choir member, Diane Pennington. Debra is a soprano and Diane is an alto. Their mother was pianist at Wilmar United Methodist Church for many, many years. It is obvious that Mrs. Fuqua inspired a love for music in her girls. We are so delighted that they are in our Chancel Choir.

## The Bells of Hope

The Bells of Hope are a group of adult handbell ringers that rehearse each Wednesday evening at 7 o'clock in the Sanctuary. We have nine regular ringers and have a spot for two more ringers. Our music is color coded and counted out for easy learning and mastery. If you think you might like to ring handbells, come to our rehearsal and give it a try. I feel sure that you will enjoy this hour of total fun! This handbell choir will play in the Traditional Worship Service on February 16 at 11 a.m.



## Children's Choir

The new year has begun and the children's choirs are off to a great start! We are learning new music along with some great, classic songs. Remember it's not too late for any child, kindergarten thru 6th grades, to join us afterschool on Wednesdays. Preschoolers also meet Wednesday (if you need more information call the church office or me).

In His name we sing,

Mrs. Kathy

870-224-5631



## Children's Handbells

The FUMC Wednesday afternoon rehearsals are going really well! These boys and girls are currently learning the song, "The Gift of Love". They will perform in the Traditional Worship Service on February 9 at 11 o'clock. We hope to see you there!

Kathy Lyon



Vacation Bible School is coming the week of June 9-13.

Look for more information in future newsletters and from Emily Johnston and Mary Beth Wigley.

A volunteer meeting will be on February 23 @ 2 PM in the Fellowship Hall.

We hope to see everyone there.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

In children's Sunday school, we have been learning about seeking God, following God, and trusting God! We've learned about different people in the Bible that had to trust God to follow him, such as the Israelites that followed God by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. We have talked about how we have so many ways we can seek God and ways that we can trust him, even when it may be hard.



**Selfies are great, but we are remembering to flip the camera the other way and see the many ways we can love others!**



## WEDNESDAYS

On Wednesdays, we have been learning about being fishers of men. We have talked about humility versus pride, serving others, and loving God as well as our neighbor. We've created skits, made crafts, and had some really cool discussions of wise little minds!

Memory Verse of the Month:

"Come follow me, Jesus said, and I will make you fishers of men."  
Matthew 4:19





My sincere gratitude goes out to James Tumlinson and Tommy Smith for assessing and repairing several needed safety projects around our campus; especially handrails for this old girl to move up and down the 7+ stair wells. *Safety First* being observed and ensured by these two gifted gentlemen is ongoing and greatly appreciated.

A request to make and display restroom signs in the Fellowship Hall (FH) has been filled. I hope these signs are helpful for our congregation and guests.

The operation and use of the water cooler in the FLC have been a mystery to this layperson of a mechanic. Well, thanks to Tommy and his expertise in diagnostic engineering; we now have clean, cool, and tasty water in the FLC. Thanks again, Tommy!

Over the past few months, I have come across items that have been left or lost on our campus. Just last week, a child's nice ST puffer jacket was left in the FH after children's activities on Wednesday. I placed it in Lynne's office for now, but for future lost items, I will have a lost & found basket in the office building foyer and one in the FLC next to the ramp entrance. Items not claimed over time may be donated to our blessing box.

I'm still feeling blessed to being a part of FUMC's staff, and I thank all of you for the kind words of encouragement and support.

Nelwyn ✝

*Thank You!*

Thank you so much for the Christmas gift! February is the month of love, thanks to St. Valentine's Day, but I believe every day should be filled with love. Your generosity was a loving gesture. I can think of so many ways we show love to one another - Feed Our Neighbors, cards, Wednesday night meals, FUMY, music, children's ministries - how many more can you think of? The smallest of these can have the greatest impact when done with sincere love. We have a culture of love in the praise band. Sometimes it comes in the form of good-natured ribbing, but most often in genuine care for each other. I am so grateful for that, and the fact that it spills over to you, the congregation. It is our honor and joy to love each other and you through our music ministry.

*Hailey Greer*

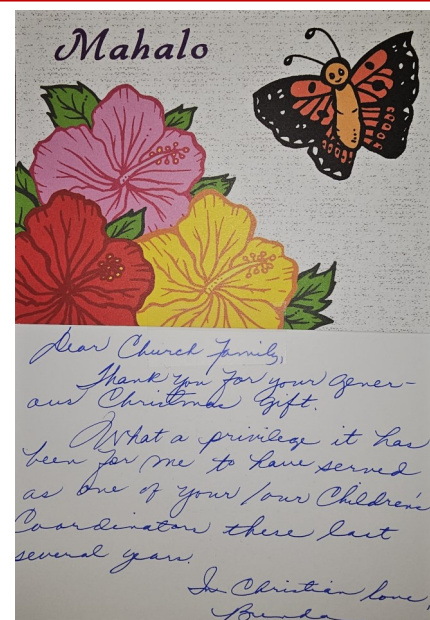
Dear Church Family,

Your generosity during the Christmas season was very much appreciated.

Thank you so much for the monetary gift you presented to me. Being in ministry with the children of our church has been a wonderful blessing in my life.

Thank you, and Happy New Year!

*Kimberly Fletcher*



The month of February is Boy Scouts of America's 115th Birthday, Happy Birthday!!



Cub Scout Pack 69 has been busy with learning about imagination with design, estimating the height of a tree using a stick and geometry, and good sportsmanship. Scouts are currently working on their Pinewood Derby Cars for race day on February 24.

Scouts BSA Troop 67 has been working on service hours and rank advancements. They have had an opportunity to meet the AOL den from Pack 69 who will be crossing over in March to the Troop. The troop also participated in the Annual Winter Camp at Camp De Soto in January where they worked on a merit badge and completed a Bigfoot Expedition using Scout Skills.

February brings lots of activities to celebrate Scouting with our Troop Court of Honor on Monday, February 3rd; Eagle Court of Honor for Aaron McMahon on Saturday, February 8 at Immanuel Baptist Church; Scout Sunday during both services on February 9; and our De Soto District Recognition Banquet in Camden on February 15. Our Annual Charter Renewal will be this month, year 2025 brings 61 years under Monticello First United Methodist Church. We want to express our sincere gratitude for supporting a program that directly impacts the youth in Drew County.







**Feeding the  
Community**

## The FON Ministry Team



**Feeding the  
Community**

This ministry continues to feed more than 65 families every other week. Some are still being delivered to, but most pick up their own bags at our Fellowship Hall's kitchen door. Some of our Neighbors we've known for years now. Others that come we've never met before.

All are welcome who need food. Our bags are small yet they provide two of each of these items: protein, starch, vegetable or fruit, breakfast item, and cracker. For those that are food insecure, free food with no strings attached is a blessing.

Thank you, Church Family, for providing this blessing to Our Neighbors. We wouldn't be able to do this without your generosity and prayers.

In Christian love,  
FON Ministry Team

"As you did it to one of the least of these, my brethren, you did it to me." Matthew 25:40



**Sole Purpose** is no longer a once-a-year experience but, instead, an ongoing effort to support our community's families. So, with that thought in mind, we are continuing the work in a new way that will be ongoing all year long.

Because we have been so blessed in receiving donations of books for children, we will now be sharing these books through an entirely new avenue—our local laundromats! Where do we most often see families spending hours of their day in a place where there is nothing else to do but sit and wait? And they often sit and wait with their children.

This setting offers a perfect opportunity to spend *quality* time with their kids—a time reading with them, talking with them, and sharing with them. Or maybe the children want to pick up a book and read a new story silently or to each other. We can make this possible for them.

We are hoping to soon have children's books in all of our Laundromats in Monticello. These will be placed there to read or to use in the homes of these families. This is an exciting new venture for FUMC. If you would like to work with this ministry, contact Kathy Tumblison, and she will share with you what needs to be done.

We are especially appreciative of Kathy, as she brought this idea to us, and to James. James has been busy building book racks to hold these treasures! These will be placed in each location. We are also most appreciative to Janice Knighting-Gneiting. Janice and her church, The Church of Latter Day Saints, have been invaluable partners with us, in all of our Sole Purpose work. Through Janice we learned that Options had books to share with us—and they have! So we also offer a very special thank-you to Options!

We all know it takes a lot of people working together with the same vision to make things happen. We are blessed to worship alongside people with like-visions that enhance so many lives.

*We are blessed to be a blessing!*

## Weekly Events

### Sundays:

- 9:00 AM In-person & Online Service  
11:00 AM In-person & Online Service  
10:00 AM Adult, Youth, and Children's  
Sunday School  
5:00 PM Jr. High FUMY  
5:30 PM FUMY Small Groups  
6:00 PM FUMY Supper  
6:30 PM Sr. High FUMY

### Sunday:

- 3:30 PM Executive Board — Feb. 9

### Mondays:

- 1:00 PM Disciple Bible Study  
5:30 PM Cub Scouts FH  
6:30 PM Boy Scouts FH  
7:00 PM College Ministry Small Group

### Tuesdays:

- 10:00 AM Prayer Team/weekly  
12:00 PM Hopeful Hearts — Feb. 4  
1:00 PM Staff Meeting — Feb. 4  
1:30 PM Wilma Hankins-Wesley Rm Feb. 4

### Wednesdays: Weekly

- 3:30 PM Wednesday After-school Activities  
3:30 PM FUMY Hang Time  
5:00 PM Wednesday Night supper  
5:30 PM FUMY Midweek  
6:30 PM Small Group

### Thursdays:

- 11-12 PM Feed Our Neighbors  
(Every other Thursday)

*Memorials were given to the glory of  
God and in loving memory of:*

### Pauline Cockrell

Kathy & Jere Johnston

### Frank Lee

Sue & David Anderson  
Joy & Dennis Holley  
Kathy & Jere Johnston  
Charlotte McGarr

### Thomas Leggett

Liz & Scott Burnett

### Nancy Thompson

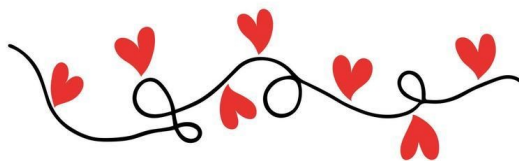
Judy & George Harris  
Joy & Dennis Holley  
Judy & Jack Lassiter  
Diane & Mark Pennington  
Patty Ross

### Mary Jo Wisener

Kathy & Jere Johnston  
Kim & Bob Lee, Jr.  
Brenda Wright

### Rick Wilson

Sue & David Anderson  
Judy & George Harris  
Joy & Dennis Holley  
Kathy & Jere Johnston  
Judy & Jack Lassiter  
Charlotte McGarr  
Diane & Mark Pennington  
Kathy & James Tumlison



Hopeful Hearts will meet on  
February 4 @ noon in the  
Family Life Center.



**Communion in February will  
be on February 2 during  
both services.**

## **FUMC College Ministry**

Our Small Group meets on  
**Monday nights @ 7 pm** in the FLC.  
*We invite anyone out of high school to  
join our group!*



For more info, contact:  
Maggie Brown @ 870-723-4051

# EXECUTIVE COUNCIL NOTES

## Class of 2025

Walker Jarrett, Lay Leader/SPPRC Leader  
Tommy Smith, Trustees  
Dalene Stephenson, Finance Leader  
Bryan Diffie, Senior Pastor  
Lori Fallon, Associate Pastor

## Class of 2026

Michael Blazier, SPPRC  
John Kidwell, Trustees  
Valerie Harvey, Treasurer

## Class of 2027

Belinda Carpenter, SPPRC  
Loyd Oxner, Trustees  
Audrea Stephens, Finance

Mr. Tommy Maxwell spoke at the Executive Council meeting to encourage the Council and staff on the job they are doing. He will help with anything needed.

January 12, 2025 Executive Council Meeting brought to order at 3:03 PM by Walker Jarrett  
Opening prayer by Bro. Bryan Diffie

**Motion:** to accept the December 2024 minutes as presented made by John Kidwell seconded by Dalene Stephenson. All in favor. None opposed.

**Financial Report** – Dalene Stephenson gave report on December Special Accounts. A motion to accept December Special Accounts report made by Stephanie Brown and seconded by Valerie Harvey. All in favor. None opposed.

Lynne Russell reported that December Financials are not ready. Working with Searcy to correct and make journal entries on liability/expenses accounts. December financials will be reported at the February meeting.

### **2025 Budget**

The Finance Committee brought a plan for the 2025 budget. Discussion on reducing the 2025 budget on certain budget line items. Further discussion needed to finalize the 2025 budget. It will be publicized in February 2025.

### **Old Business**

The handrail to the back ramp from Family Life Center is loose. No update. Tommy Smith will investigate and recommend repairs.

### **New Business**

The roof has seven areas of concern. Michael James received an estimate of \$3525 to remove and replace shingles on seven elevations of the church roof.

The roof has been repaired multiple times and Deeb Roofing expects that there will be more repairs in the future.

**Motion:** to contract with Deeb Roofing to remove and replace damaged shingles at the estimated cost of \$3525 made by John Kidwell and seconded by Dalene Stephenson. All in favor. None opposed.

### **SPPRC Report**

No report given.

### **Trustees Report**

Under the parsonage, there is water pooling in the corner of basement/crawl space. Tommy Smith will investigate the problem to see what, if any, repairs needed.

The ceiling above stairs on the West wall of Fellowship Hall leading to the second floor Sunday School rooms is crumbling. Tommy Smith will investigate the problem and recommend needed repairs.

When the weather is warmer, the sprinkler system needs to be evaluated.

One of the pine trees in the playground area needs to be removed. It was struck by lightning a few years ago and has subsequently died. It poses possible damage and needs to be removed.

### **Pastor Report**

Read through the Bible sermon series began January 5, 2025. Reading plan available in Narthex, FLC, and in the Office.

Fan the Flame will be on February 14-15, 2025.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025. Information on a Lenten Bible study coming soon.

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL NOTES CONT.

### Class of 2025

Walker Jarrett, Lay Leader/SPPRC Leader  
Tommy Smith, Trustees  
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Bryan Diffee, Senior Pastor  
Lori Fallon, Associate Pastor

### Class of 2026

Michael Blazier, SPPRC  
John Kidwell, Trustees  
Valerie Harvey, Treasurer

### Class of 2027

Belinda Carpenter, SPPRC  
Loyd Oxner, Trustees  
Audrea Stephens, Finance

### Assoc. Pastor Report

- I will be a moderator for Jr High Quiz Bowl – community involvement
- I have a pastoral mentor meeting on January 27 in Pine Bluff
- I will begin pre-marital counseling for a couple on January 23 and will continue for 4 weeks before their March nuptials
- Youth group has the chance to go to the Arkansas conference event Veritas in Fort Smith, AR, February 21-23. If anyone is interested in sponsoring a youth financially to go, please let me know.
- Youth small groups on Sundays and regular FUMY Mid-week every Wednesday, plus monthly mission work

**Motion** to adjourn made by Dalene Stephenson and seconded by John Kidwell. All in favor. None opposed.

Meeting adjourned 4:50 P.M.

Next meeting Tuesday, February 4, 2025 @ 6:00 PM (Meeting was later changed to February 9, 2025 at 3:30 PM)

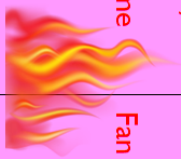
Closing prayer Rev. Bryan Diffee





# February 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><b>Wednesday Activities</b> After school pick up and kids' activities FUMY Afterschool homework and hang time</p>	<p>5:30-7p FUMY Midweek 6-7p Choir 7p Hand bells</p>					1
<p><b>2 Communion</b> FUMY Jr High 5p FUMY Small Group 5:30p FUMY Supper 6:15 p FUMY SR. High 7p <b>Ground Hog Day</b></p>	<p>3 Cub Scouts 5:30 p Boy Scouts 6:30 p College Ministry Small Group 7p</p>	<p>4 Prayer Team 10 a Hopeful Hearts Noon Wilma Hankins Circle 1:30 Staff Meeting 1p</p>	<p>5 Wednesday Activities Pork Loin, Roasted Veggies, Stick of Butter Rice, Rolls Birthday Cake Small group 6:30p</p>	6	7	8 EHC Work Day FH
<p>9 Wigley/Gongora Shower 1:30 p Executive Council 3:30 p FUMY Super Bowl party 5 p</p>	<p>10 Cub Scouts 5:30 p Boy Scouts 6:30 p College Ministry Small Group 7p</p>	<p>11 Prayer Team 10 a</p>	<p>12 Wednesday Activities Poppy Seed Chicken, Green Beans, Corn, Rolls, Dessert Small group 6:30p <b>Lincoln's Birthday</b></p>	13 FON	<p>14 <b>Valentine's Day</b> <b>Fan the Flame</b></p> 	15 <b>Fan the Flame</b>
<p>16 NO FUMY</p>	<p>17 <b>President's Day</b> <b>No School</b> All FUMY 2 p College Ministry Small Group 7p</p>	<p>18 Prayer Team 10 a</p>	<p>19 Libby Annulis 1p Wednesday Activities Pork Butt, Baked Beans, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad &amp; Dessert Small group 6:30p Circle 5:30 p</p>	20	21 FUMY to Veritas 2 p	22 <b>George Washington's Birthday</b>
<p>23 VBS volunteer meeting 2 p Home from Veritas NO FUMY</p>	<p>24 Cub Scouts 5:30 p Boy Scouts 6:30 p College Ministry Small Group 7p</p>	<p>25 Prayer Team 10 a Circle 3 6p</p>	<p>26 Wednesday Activities Chicken Spaghetti, Salad, Bread, Dessert Small group 6:30p</p>	27 FON	28 FUMY Prayer Breakfast 7 a	