



Reflections

January 2026

870-367-2471

317 S. Main St.

9 AM Contemporary

10 AM Sunday School

11 AM Traditional



Dear Church Family,

January invites reflection and renewal. As a new year begins, the Church pauses to give thanks for God's faithfulness behind us and to seek God's guidance for the days ahead. While the calendar has turned, the deeper question before us is not simply what we will do in this new year, but who God is shaping us to become.

The season following Christmas reminds us that the light of Christ continues to shine long after the decorations are put away. God's presence is not confined to a single holy day or season. The good news of Christ-with-us carries forward into ordinary days, routines, and responsibilities. In this quieter stretch of the church year, faith is formed steadily, through prayer, worship, study, and acts of love.

January often brings a desire for fresh starts. Scripture speaks less about resolutions and more about transformation. God's mercies are new every morning, not because we have perfected ourselves, but because God remains steadfast in love. Growth in faith rarely happens all at once; it unfolds as hearts are opened again and again to grace.

As a congregation, this is a meaningful time to renew commitments to worship and community life. The Church is strongest when people gather faithfully, care for one another intentionally, and serve generously. Each gift, each presence, and each prayer plays a part in God's work among us.

The coming year will bring both joys and challenges. In all of it, God goes before us. Nothing ahead is unknown to God, and nothing we face will be faced alone. Trust in the Spirit's guidance, even when the path is not entirely clear.

Thank you for the faithfulness, compassion, and dedication you bring to this community. May this new year deepen your trust in God, strengthen your love for one another, and renew your sense of purpose in Christ.

With hope for the year ahead,

Bro. Bryan

NEWS & UPDATES



January 2026

FUMY had a fantastic December! On December 12 we did one of our favorite FUMY annual events... our Progressive Dinner, Christmas Caroling and Lock-In. The youth spread Christmas cheer everywhere they sang! We sang for all of the assisted living & nursing homes in Monticello plus to some shut-ins & we ended the night singing to our special friend Steven Diffee! We had so much FUN! And the food was delicious! Special **THANK YOU** to Liz Burnett & Diantha Beer for being in charge of the 2 food courses. **THANK YOU** to Maggie Brown for going caroling with us and for Maggie & Diantha spending the night with us! And a big **THANK YOU** to all of the youth parents that provided food & drinks. On Sundays in December we had some great fun! Not only did we watch some great Christmas movies but we played some games, too. Christian fellowship at its best! On Wednesdays during mid-week we spent a lot of time talking about advent and what the journey to Bethlehem really means. Our last Wednesday together we played some fun games and we did our favorite Christmas play about the journey to Bethlehem for Jesus' birth. It was such fun & I am so proud at how well our youth know the story of Christ's birth.



We are excited to welcome **2026!** FUMY resumes on January 7 and we will go pack bags with "Feed the Kids" mission that evening. On Wednesday afternoons we will help with the children for an hour of service and then after supper we are going to dive in to "Life Choices: Life is Tough, Family Issues, Friend Issues, Sex & Dating Issues and God Issues." We're going to try some "theme" nights for Sundays this winter and we are excited to see how they turn out. We'll end our month having our monthly prayer breakfast.

Some upcoming FUMY dates: **Sunday, April 19**, we will be hosting a "THANK YOU" meal for our church family where we will be sharing about our 2025 mission trip & showing you pictures from our trip plus showing a slideshow of what we've been up to in FUMY. **Sunday, May 3**, we will be celebrating our high school seniors. This year we will be honoring 10 seniors. For our mission trip, we will be gone the week of **June 27 - July 4**. We are going to an Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Plus, we are planning to have our annual FUMY Rummage Sale in **July, 2026**.

As always, our prayer in FUMY is to truly be the hands & feet of Jesus. We pray that as we begin a new year that more will come to know Jesus and accept His love & forgiveness. In case you have not heard this... **YOU ARE LOVED! YOU ARE ENOUGH!** Happy New Year!

Christ above all, *Lori*



FUMY REMINDERS:

- January 7 - "Feed the Kids" mission work
- January 11 - "Pizza, Pajamas & The Princess Bride"
- January 16 - Winter Jam in Little Rock
- January 25 - "Hot Chocolate, Hoodies & Horseplay"
- January 29 - Veritas form & \$90 due
- January 30 - Prayer Breakfast



FUMC CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



JANUARY 7TH 2026
WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES
START BACK!!! WE ARE SO
EXCITED TO SEE YOU!!!

LAST SEMESTER WAS SO FULFILLING AS WE STUDIED THE POWER OF PRAYER! THIS SEMESTER OUR WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES WILL FOCUS ON THE STUDY OF CREATION! BUCKLE UP AS WE DIVE INTO THE WONDERS AND BEAUTY OF GOD'S MIRACULOUS CREATIONS!



ALL CHILDREN ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US EVERY SUNDAY FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 10:00 AM ON THE 3RD FLOOR ABOVE THE FELLOWSHIP HALL!

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL, FAITH FILLED JOURNEY OF FELLOWSHIP FOR OUR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND AMAZING VOLUNTEERS!!! IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN GETTING INVOLVED ALWAYS FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT TO US!

♥ EMILY & MARY BETH

Feed Our Neighbors

A \$25 gift certificate to Sav-a-Lot was put in each Neighbor's bag the last FON distribution of 2025. THANK YOU to all of you who contributed!!!

When Susan Musick told me she had a strong 'feeling' we should give this gift of \$25 to each of Our Neighbors, it seemed like something that was a good thought, a good idea, but might not be possible right now.

My mother would have said to me: "Oh, ye of little faith!"

Not only did you, OUR CHURCH FAMILY, help us raise the \$2000 we asked for, but we received an additional \$350, which is what we needed to buy enough gift cards for each Neighbor who came that day.

Thank you, Susan, for listening to and responding to the nudge from the HOLY SPIRIT!

To God be the Glory!

Brenda, FON Ministry Team Member

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



Wesley Heritage Tour with Rev. Bryan Diffee | July 8, 2026

Join Rev. Bryan Diffee on a Wesley Heritage Tour, starting at \$5,146* from Little Rock, departing on July 8, 2026. You will see the English countryside of Coventry, the Cathedral, and the charred ruins of the old cathedral standing side by side as a tribute to the indomitable spirit of the British people. On to Epworth, the childhood home of John and Charles Wesley, St. Andrews Church, Cotswolds, Stratford-upon-Avon, William Shakespeare's birthplace, where he also courted his wife, Anne Hathaway, and Holy Trinity Church, where he is buried. Oxford is next, where you will see Christ Church College at Oxford University, the ancient port city of Bristol, the "New Room," which is the oldest Methodist building in the world, Charles Wesley home, the spa town of Bath, where the warm waters have refreshed, healed and much more!

*** Register Early & Save**

\$150 Register by August 8, 2025

\$125 Register by September 8, 2025

\$100 Register by October 8, 2025

\$75 Register by November 8, 2025

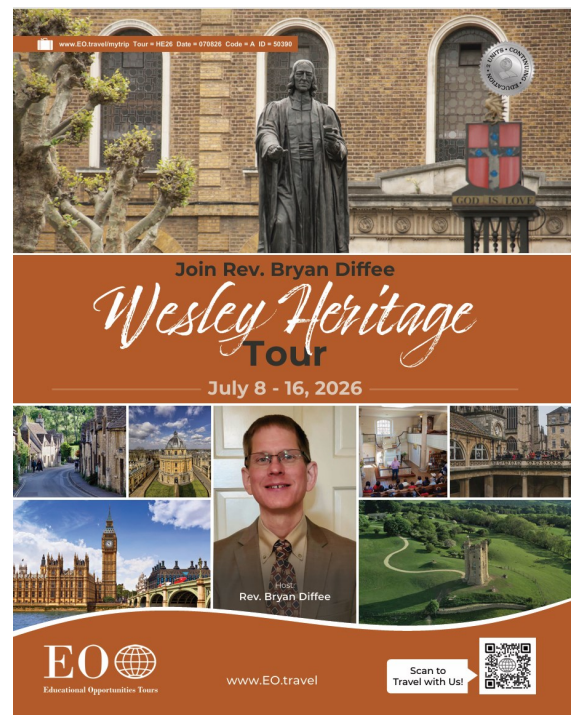
\$50 Register by December 8, 2025

\$25 Register by January 8, 2026

Full deposit required. Savings are deducted from the balance.

Click on this link to download the brochure

https://www.eo.travelwithus.com/files/uploads/HE26_070826A_50390_Diffee_Final.pdf



Join Rev. Bryan Diffee
Wesley Heritage
Tour
July 8 - 16, 2026

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Wednesday Evening Church Meals



Weekly Wednesday supper is at 5:30 PM.

If you are available to volunteer in the kitchen on Wednesday afternoons, your help would be greatly appreciated. Call the church office 870-367-2471 if you are able to serve in this capacity.

Below is the signup genius for desserts. Copy and paste the link into your browser.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084EA4AE23A7FFC70-58215335-fumc>

Chancel Choir and Bells of Hope

The Chancel Choir and Bells of Hope were faithful in presenting Advent and Christmas music during the month of December.

The Bells of Hope presented seasonal music on Sunday, November 30 in the sanctuary and also at the community tree lighting ceremony, "Home for the Holidays" later that afternoon on the town square. The handbells also played in the December 14 Traditional worship service. They completed their Advent seasonal ringing at our annual Christmas Eve service. Thank you to this dedicated group of ringers: **Carolyn Bulloch, Beverly Burks, Gretchen Diffie, Hannah Diffie, Walter Godwin, Elizabeth Goldthwait, Richard Goldthwait, Jaime Hunter, Sheila Maxwell, Susan Musick, Nickie Owens, and Julie Smith**

On December 7, The Chancel Choir presented the beautiful cantata, "One King," written and orchestrated by Robert Sterling, Lowell Alexander and Deborah Craig-Claar. Thank you to the following narrators, soloists, choir members, pianist and drummer: **Sophie Barrilleaux, Nelwyn Birch, Debra Burt, Belinda Carpenter, Dave Carpenter, Bryan Diffie, Mary Donaldson, Greg Fallon, Adalynn Felts, Dr. Christine Felts, Sandy Funderburg, Dr. Walter Godwin, Elizabeth Goldthwait, Michael James, Brandon Lyon, Kelsey McGraw, Hannah Musso, Dr. Terry Nugent, Nickie Owens, Diane Pennington, and David Webb**. The Chancel Choir finished their Advent and Christmas singings on December 28 with the anthem, "We Three Kings" which featured soloists, Dave Carpenter, David Webb, and Michael James.

Wednesday rehearsals will resume On **January 7th**. The Chancel Choir will rehearse at 6:00 pm in the Chancel Choir room and the Bells of Hope will rehearse at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary. If you are interested in joining either of these choirs, please reach out to Kathy Lyon at 870-308-1518.



MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS.

FEED OUR NEIGHBORS

Join us on Thursdays to put together meals for local families in need.
BRENDA WRIGHT PHONE 504-812-2812

HOPEFUL HEARTS

Widows/Widowers come together each month for a meal and fellowship provided by volunteers.
LOUISA SMITH PHONE 870-723-3560

FEED THE KIDS

FUMC supports this non-profit organization by helping prepare food bags for local children. The bags are sent home with students at their schools.
RENEE HOLLAND PHONE 870-550-1281

SHEPHERD CENTER HOST

FUMC hosts this event each October for community members over 50. A variety of fun activities are planned each week on Tuesday.
DALENE STEPHENSON PHONE 870-723-0650

SOLE PURPOSE

Provides shoes, socks, coats, Bibles, books, and hygiene kits for local children in the community.
BELINDA CARPENTER PHONE 870-723-3980

UAM WESLEY FOUNDATION

Meals are provided for students at the Wesley Foundation Ministry on the UAM campus.
DALENE STEPHENSON PHONE 870-723-0650

SENIOR CARE

Volunteers assist seniors with transportation to doctors and other appointments and provide social outings for those who are able.
SUSAN MUSICK PHONE 318-417-9309

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES

After school activities for children | Youth activities
Free meal for everyone | Birthday celebrations | Small groups
OFFICE PHONE 870-367-2472

HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Annual Craft Fair by the United Women in Faith to support missions.
TRUDY JACKSON PHONE 870-723-5052

CHILDREN'S LIBRARIES IN THE COMMUNITY

Children's books are placed in local public locations as reading corners for children.
KATHY TUMLISON PHONE 870-723-4051

BEREAVEMENT TEAM

Volunteers provide a meal for the family after the funeral of a loved one.
SANDY FUNDERBURG PHONE 870-723-4915

MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

Choir | Handbells | Praise Band | Children's Choir
KATHY LYON PHONE 870-308-1518

feed your soul



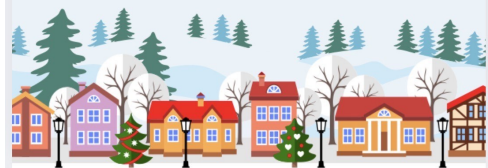


Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for the generous Christmas bonus. We are truly grateful for your kindness and support. It is a blessing to serve our children alongside such a caring and encouraging church family.

Thank you for your continued prayers, generosity, and love—especially during this Christmas season.

Love, Emily and Mary Beth



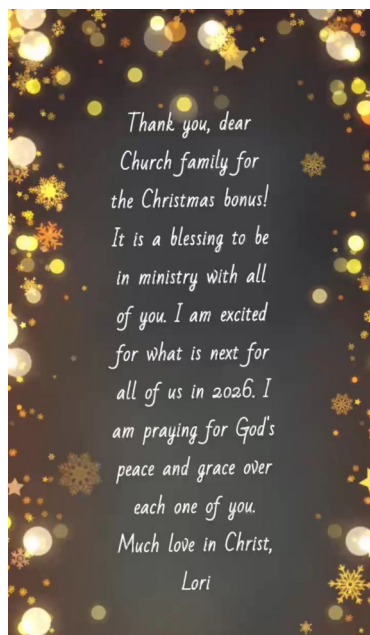
Dear Church Family:

Thank you so much for your thoughtful monetary Christmas gift. It is my honor to have the opportunity to work with The Chancel Choir and The Bells of Hope. To be acknowledged by a Christmas gift is humbling..... for your year-around support of these two choirs feels like the best gift of all. You are the best congregation, with the best hearts!

Blessings to you in 2026!!!

Kathy Lyon

Dear congregation,
A simple thank you is all I have to offer for your selfless generosity. Giving above and beyond the usual is something you choose to do, and I appreciate it very much. I hope I can match your gift with my efforts and intentions.
Love, Haley



*Thank you, dear Church family for the Christmas bonus! It is a blessing to be in ministry with all of you. I am excited for what is next for all of us in 2026. I am praying for God's peace and grace over each one of you.
Much love in Christ,
Lori*

Dear Church Family,
I am deeply grateful for the generous Christmas bonus you so thoughtfully shared. Your kindness, encouragement, and care are a true blessing, not only to me but to my family as well. I am continually thankful for the privilege of serving among such a loving and supportive congregation.
Bro. Bryan



*Dearest Church Family,
In writing to express my deepest gratitude for the Christmas gift. It was most generous and kind. You truly are a blessing to my family and me.
I pray you all had a merry Christmas and here's to a wonderful new year.
God Bless,
Inelburg*

Dear FUMC family,
Thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift!
It is such a pleasure to work for this congregation, and I love it here. I hope you all had a blessed Christmas and have a blessed and Happy New Year!

I would like to thank the Executive Counsel for providing Christmas bonuses this year. It was truly a blessing at just the right time and allowed me to have a little more Hope during this season.
Thank You So Much!
Michael

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
5:30 PM FUMY Bible Study
6:00 PM FUMY Supper
6:30 PM FUMY Small Groups

Mondays:

5:30 PM Cub Scouts FH
6:30 PM Boy Scouts FH
6:00 PM Bible Study for Ladies Beg. 1/26

Tuesdays:

10:00 AM Prayer Team/weekly
12:00 PM Hopeful Hearts — 1/6
1:30 PM Wilma Hankins-Wesley Room 1/6
1:00 PM Staff Meeting 1/13
6:00 PM Executive Council — 1/13
7:00 PM Bible Study for Young Adults FH

Wednesdays: Weekly

3:30 PM Wednesday After-school Activities
3:30 PM FUMY Hang Time
5:30 PM Wednesday Night Supper
6:00 PM FUMY Midweek
6:00 PM Chancel Choir
6:30 PM Small Group FLC Foyer/weekly
7:00 PM Bells of Hope
7:00 PM Praise Band

Thursdays:

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

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

Beverly Davis:

Diane & Mark Pennington

Mary Hawkins:

Bennie & Buck Henderson
Kathy & Jere Johnston
Judy & Jack Lassiter
Linda Magness

Chad Gibson:

Bennie & Buck Henderson
Judy & Jack Lassiter
Tommy Maxwell
Charlotte McGarr
Susan Musick

Faye Guess:

Kathy & Jere Johnston

Rose Kinaga:

Kathy & Jere Johnston
Susan Musick

Preaching Schedule for January

January 4, 2026 Scripture: Proverbs 1:1-7 Rev. Bryan Diffie
January 11, 2026 Scripture: Ecclesiastes 2:1-13 Rev. Bryan Diffie
January 18, 2026 Scripture: Job 1:20-22; 38:1-7 Rev. Bryan Diffie
January 25, 2026 Scripture: Song of Songs 2:10-13 Rev. Bryan Diffie

December Giving General Fund

December 7, 2025 — \$12,679
December 14, 2025 — \$8,200
December 21, 2025 — \$13,582
December 28, 2025 — \$29,975
Four-week Total — \$64,436
Weekly Amount Needed to Make Budget — \$11,827
YTD Budget Giving \$580,587
YTD Budget deficit \$34,442



**Communion in January will
be on January 4 during the
9 & 11 AM services.**



**Hopeful Hearts will meet on
January 6 @ noon in the
Family Life Center.**

December Attendance

December 7, 2025: 9:00 AM — 81; 11:00 AM — 79
December 14, 2025: 9:00 AM — 58; 11:00 AM — 44
December 21, 2025: 9:00 AM — 70; 11:00 AM — 55
Christmas Eve 6:00 PM — 216
December 28, 2025: 9:00 AM — 72; 11:00 AM — 65

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

Meeting was brought to order at 6:05 P.M. by Walker Jarrett. Rev. Bryan Diffie opened the meeting with prayer.

Motion: to accept the November meeting minutes as presented. All in favor. None opposed.

Old Business:

The Consultation was sent to ARUMC by Walker Jarrett. At the time of transcribing, we have not received receipt of this document.

Sanctuary Doors and railings: We need to ask Max Fuqua if he would be willing to strip and stain the Sanctuary doors. This project will have to wait for warmer temperatures.

Power washing of the sidewalks and stairs at sanctuary entrance has begun.

New Business:

It has been brought to the council's attention that the double glass doors at Administration, Prayer Garden, and handicap entrance need to have weather stripping applied. There is a large gap between the doors. Also, some of the doors allow leaves and pine straw to come under them.

Entergy may come out to businesses to assess issues. Lynne Russell to call and see if they will come out at no charge.

SPPRC:

Employee self-evaluations turned in today during the staff meeting.

Trustee Report:

- Should have installation date for ramp at Family Life Center gym, back door by the end of the year.
- We have received one of the donations for the ramp. A second donation will be coming.
- No action on selling the busses yet.
- Tommy Smith will finish the projects ongoing from 2025, and John Kidwell will take over selling the two vans.
- The toilets and the sinks in the Family Life Center are cleaning up with a new cleaner, but water is still brown. It is not as bad as it was. Michael James has said that the City has fixed the problem.

Finance Report:

- Valerie Harvey gave report on Special Accounts. To make up the deficit in the Dep & Maint. account, funds will be taken from the Building Fund. Lynne Russell gave report on finances for November.

Motion: to approve the financial report was made by Tommy Smith and seconded by Michael Blazier. All in favor. None opposed.

- The Pony Express was successful. At the time of this meeting, the amount pledged is \$488,336 with \$30,000 more expected from non-pledgers. The updated amount at the time of publication is \$497,936.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL NOTES CONT.

Finance Report Continued:

- An idea was presented to the Council to take money from the PPP fund to give employees a Christmas bonus. This fund was put aside during COVID and has never been used. (We have asked church members for bonus donations in the past, but with the financial issues and how much we have asked the members to give, it was thought that to ask for another donation was in excess.)

Motion: to use the PPP Special Funds to give the staff a Christmas bonus made by Belinda Carpenter and seconded by Audrea Stephens. All in favor. None opposed.

Pastor Report:

- First, let me thank the outgoing members of the Executive Council – Walker Jarrett, Tommy Smith, and Dalene Stephenson. We will welcome three new members next month – Anthony Brown, SPRC; Jaime Hunter, Trustees; and Amanda Gilbert, Finance.
- The staff met today and their self-evaluations were turned in. This evaluation is more of a “how can we help you” than a critique.
- The sermon series for 2026 is planned out with preaching dates for Pastor Lori and I mapped out. Pastor Lori will continue to serve the Delta Charge in 2026.
- The candlelight Christmas Eve service will be at 6:00 P.M.
- The Christmas Eve special offering will be split between Feed Our Neighbors and Feed the Kids this year.

Associate Pastor Report:

- We were able to bless 42 families with Thanksgiving baskets with the help of donations from our church members.
- The ladies’ Bible Study will finish this week with a Christmas party.
- The Young Adults, Bible study, and small groups have finished for the year.
- The Delta Charge continues on the first and third Sundays with communion on the third Sunday of the month.
- Charles Graham will sing at the Christmas Eve service.
- We will have the staff Christmas party on December 16 at 5:30 PM.

Motion: to adjourn meeting at 6:40 PM made by Dalene Stephenson and seconded by Valerie Harvey. All in favor. None opposed.

Next regular meeting January 13, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

A special Budget Meeting to be held on January 11, 2026, at 2:00 PM to finalize the 2026 budget to be presented to the Executive Council on January 13, 2026.





January 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Children Activities until 5:15	Supper 5:30p Small group 6:30p Chancel Choir 6p Praise Band 7p			1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2	3
4 Communion NO FUMY	5	6 Prayer Team 10 a Hopeful Hearts Noon Wilma Hankins Circle 1:30 p School Starts back	7 Poppy Seed Chicken Green Beans, Corn, Rolls, Birthday Cake Small group 6:30	8 Men's Pryer Breakfast FLC 6a Feed Our Neighbors 11a	9 FUMY Winter Jam 3:30 pm	10 EHC workday FH 9a
11 ALL FUMY Pizza & Movie night 6-8 pm	12 Cub Scouts 5:30p Boy Scouts 6:30p	13 Prayer Team 10 a Staff Meeting 1p Executive Council 6p Circle 3 6 p Small Group 6:30 FLC Young Adults 8p	14 Lasagna, Caesar Salad, Bread, Dessert Small group 6:30	15	16 FUMY Winter Jam 3:30 pm	17
18 NO FUMY	19 Martin Luther King Day Office Closed	20 Prayer Team 10 a Young Adults 8p	21 White Chicken Chili, Chili, toppings, Dessert Libby Annulis 1p Small group 6:30	22 Feed Our Neighbors 11a	23	24
25 ALL FUMY 6-8 pm	26 Cub Scouts 5:30p Boy Scouts 6:30p	27 Prayer Team 10 a Young Adults 8p	28 Chicken Dorito Casserole, Corn, Salad, Dessert Small group 6:30	29	30 FUMY Prayer Breakfast 7 am	31