

Christ's United Lutheran Church
 437 Airport Road
 Ashland, PA 17921
www.christsunited.org

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February



The CULC Messenger
God's Work,
Our Actions



Join us for Worship - Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School - October through May
1st & 3rd Sundays @ 10:45 a.m.

The CULC Messenger
God's Work, Our Actions





Christ's United Lutheran Church

One God. One People. One Purpose.

437 Airport Road, Ashland, PA 17921

www.christsunited.org

(570) 875-1591

February 2025

CHURCH COUNCIL 2024

	Phone	Term Expires
Kay Berner President	570-875-1035	Feb. 2026
Ken Dengler Vice President	570-933-5144	Feb. 2025
Morgen Sweitzer Secretary	717-858-9824	Feb. 2026
Robert Carl	570-590-7281	Feb. 2025
Darlene Stank	570-875-1644	Feb. 2025
Barbara Stepanchick	570-875-1114	Feb. 2027
Janet Towey	270-205-3420	Feb. 2027
John Towey	270-205-2682	Feb. 2027
Michael Yoder	570-205-1701	Feb. 2026

Youth Representative - Maura Sweitzer

PASTOR

Rev. Brian Beissel
570-516-1787

***Pastor Brian's Office Hours:** Tuesdays and Thursdays
9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. or other times by appointment.

STAFF

Parish Administrator Debbie Hall 570-875-1591
office@christsunited.org 570-789-9722

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:30 am- 4:30 pm

Director of Music	Jamie Johnson	570-590-1678
Treasurer	Ann Marie Dillman	570-449-2021
Indoor Custodian	Ann Ray Begis	570-590-2729
Outdoor Custodian	Dennis Wolfe	570-875-9085
Financial Secretary	Christine Brennan	570-875-0720

The February CULC Messenger is sponsored in Memory of Allen & Ruth Klinger by Donald Klinger & Family

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Status of Accounts as of December 31

Total amount in checking account: \$133,663.46.

Amount needed in offerings per month to meet our 2025 Annual Budget of \$227,589.00 is \$18,965.75.

Income for December was \$25,410.65 .

Expenses for December were \$35,562.86 , resulting in a net loss of \$10,152.21 .

Benevolence for December was \$1,022.71 .



Christ's United Ministry Teams

Christian Education
Evangelism/Outreach
Lutheran Church Men (LCM)
Social Ministry
Stewardship
WELCA
Worship & Music
Multimedia Ministry
Safety and Security Team

Christ's United Committees

Auditing & Finance Committees
Endowment Fund
Mutual Ministry
Nominating
Personnel
Property

Christ's United Lutheran Church

Mission Statement

We the members of Christ's United Lutheran Church, Ashland, desiring to be blessed together with Word and Sacrament and to become more perfectly the Body of Christ in our world, do hereby commit ourselves to a mission which includes a creative re-examination of our worship life; a quality educational program for all ages; intentional witnessing; a serving spirit; and an integrated support system which will undergird our program and the maintenance of our facilities as it encourages improved stewardship.

Christian symbol



CENSER & INCENSE — A censer (or thurible) is a vessel for burning incense during worship. Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, as well as some Protestant ones, often do this on special occasions. Censers come in many sizes, shapes and designs. A worship leader may swing a chain censer to waft the fragrant smoke over the congregation during a procession or benediction. As incense burns in a censer and smoke wafts upward, it symbolizes prayers of the faithful, floating to God. "May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice" (Psalm 141:2, NIV).

Message from Pastor Brian

Dear Siblings in Christ,

I remember winters when I was young. Nothing, and I mean nothing, has put such an indelible mark in my memory as the winter of 1993.

I remember being off of school for two weeks because of a monster snowstorm that affected much of the country. I remember many men and women from our block coming together to dig trenches along our sidewalks in Frackville so that we could have some semblance of a walking path.

I remember that also being the year that my mom was on strike. She was a CNA at what is now Broad Mountain Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (and, in tribute to its old name, its is still "The Manor" to many of us in Frackville). I remember going with her on the picket line, standing with signs in deep snow and frigid temperatures.

So when I think of cold winters, that's the one I think of. But here's the thing— it wasn't a January storm or a February storm. No, the Blizzard of 1993, the "Storm of the Century" took place in MARCH. That's right, winter was just about over (the storm formed on March 12 and dissipated on the 14th, and I had to look that up).

Here in 2025, we have had much less snow, but very much some frigid temperatures. We had to reschedule my installation here at Christ's United. But in a few weeks, on February 16th, we will have a good today together anyway. We will come out of this freeze and life will begin to spring forth anew.

I think our faith is like that, isn't it? Sometimes we have these periods of cold, dark, and lonely moments. And then, sometimes in timing that is unexpected, signs of life show up and we are reminded that we are always under the care of a God that loves us and wishes for the best for us.



Sometimes we have to encourage those times by fostering community and showing love and care to our beloved ones. Sometimes doing that is one of those things that takes a lot of effort, like when we wake up and don't feel like getting out of bed. But remember the words from John's Gospel that spoke to us only a few weeks ago in worship- "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

And maybe, just maybe, we'll have another two feet of snow dump on us in March. (God, please don't let that happen...)

Peace to you this winter and through our journey together!
-Pastor Brian Beissel



Schedule for February:

All lunches are a time to gather and meet up with your pastor. There is no agenda, we can simply speak about whatever might be on your mind! All Lunches begin at 12 noon. The Schedule for February is as follows:

- February 5: Danny's, Ashland
- February 12: May's, Ashland
- February 19: Dutch Kitchen, Frackville
- February 26: The Donut Shop, Ashland



American Red Cross Community Blood Drive Christ's United Lutheran Church

437 Airport Road (Gordon)
Ashland, PA 17921

Monday, February 3, 2025
1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Please contact Debbie Hall or call
1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2676) or visit
www.redcrossblood.org
to schedule an appointment.

Open to the public and walk-ins are Welcome!

Stewardship Committee Report

Commitment Cards and Time & Talent Sheets were collected over a 4-week period. Our Financial Secretary, Christine Brennan, tabulated the 2025 planned giving amounts. A total of 14 cards were returned with 4 offering no comment. A total of 31 Time & Talent Sheets were returned with 29 members specifying committees in which they wish to serve. Beth Andrews tabulated the sheets and made committee chair members aware of those who signed up for their committees. Thank you to everyone who participated.





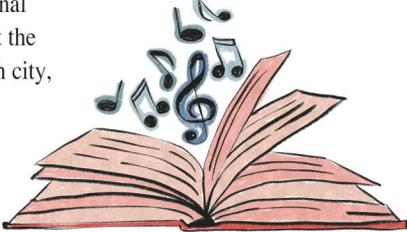
Christian Education Committee Meeting

A Christian Education meeting will be held on February 11th at 6:00 p.m. We will be looking for ideas for Sunday School and making plans for Vacation Bible School. All help will be greatly appreciated. Plan to attend if you are interested in helping.

Bible Quiz

The short Old Testament book of Lamentations is a set of communal laments (sorrowful songs) about the destruction in 587 B.C. of which city, by which people?

A. Babylon; the Assyrians
B. Jerusalem; the Babylonians
C. Rome; the Greeks
D. Caesarea Philippi; the Romans



Answer: B (See Bible commentaries.)

Give Electronically

Checking/Savings Credit/Debit Card
Christ's United accepts electronic donations

Electronic Giving is a convenient way to provide consistent financial support to our church. Go to www.christsunited.org or scan the QR code to learn how you can participate.



Church Council Highlights From January

- New furnaces in Social Hall are complete
- Council terms expiring are Darlene Stank, Robert Carl, and Kenny Dengler. Three - 3yr terms are needed to fill the vacancies.
- Next lunch with the pastor will be January 29th at Dutch Kitchen in Frackville.
- The question was raised if we would go back to hand shaking for sharing of the peace – no reason not to.



Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 16
10:30 a.m.

Immediately after worship, on February 16 we will hold our Annual Congregational Meeting. Please plan to attend and support our ministries here at Christ's United.

February Council Contact of the month is Robert Carl.

The Council Contact of the Month is the “on call” member of council, the person to contact if you have any concerns (other than pastoral concerns), or need access to the building. If you need to contact Robert, he can be reached at 570-590-7281.



PRAYER CHAIN

Each day members of Christ's United bow their heads and lift their hearts in prayer for the ministries of this congregation and people in need.

A copy of the Prayer List is available at worship services each Sunday. You also have an email sent to you each week with a list of those in need of your prayers. A phone chain notifies you of immediate needs. If there is an immediate need of prayer, please call the church office. In the event the office is closed, Gail Marquardt (570-554-1075 or 570-933-1737) should be called to begin the prayer chain. Please call the church office for more information or to become a Prayer Chain Participant.



Praying Through the Directory

Each month we will be listing three of our church faith families. We ask that you take the time and uplift them in prayer for their needs and spiritual journey.

This month we pray for:

The Brown Family - Jason & Katie

The Schmidt Family - Joe, Brandy Speer & Charlotte

The Yoder Family - Michael

Arts Sunday

On January 5th we held CULC's Arts Sunday, asking anyone who does crafts to bring something for our display. Our theme was candles.

Here's a picture of the creative items brought in by our talented members.



Love makes us worthy

Unlike God, who loves unconditionally, humans often make choices and set limits when doling out affection. But Thomas Merton reminds us, "Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy. That is not our business and, in fact, it is nobody's business. What we are asked to do is to love, and this love itself will render both ourselves and our neighbors worthy."



As for how to develop and maintain that type of love? Merton shares, "It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness with which I can truly love my [neighbors]."

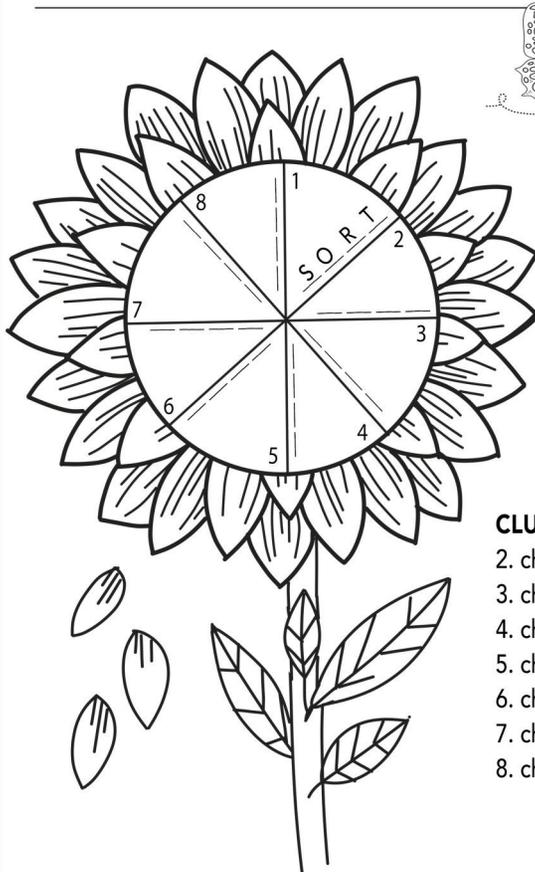




THE LOVE CYCLE

In 1 John 4, God instructs us to love other people. Where does our love come from?

Directions: Starting at #1 and going clockwise, solve each clue to create a new four-letter word.
Then write the eighth word in both blanks below to complete 1 John 4:19, NIV.



We _____
because [God] first
_____ d us.

1 John 4:19, NIV

CLUES

2. change 1 letter: a tent to play in
3. change 2 letters: a crease in paper
4. change 1 letter: a precious metal
5. change 2 letters: a beautiful dress
6. change 1 letter: opposite of up
7. change 2 letters: a type of bird
8. change 1 letter: God is this
(see 1 John 4:16).

We Offer our Prayers to...

Please note that those experiencing a traumatic event are placed onto the Prayer List and will be **kept on for one month and then taken off**. If you would like someone added, please call the office or write their name on the Prayer Request sheet found on the Prayer Podium.
Please provide updates to the office in order that the list is always current.



- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Jan 26 – Eva Price (D. Price)
Wyatt Foust & Family (G. Marquardt)
Bob Kehler (D. Wallace)
Rick Walsh (T. Shilling)
Heidi Walsh (T. Shilling)
Gail Lorady (T. Ambrose)
Emma Garnes (S. Peel)
Family of Bradley Kauffman (P. Dziczek)</p> <p>Jan 19 – Rich Cooper (S. Tice)
Helen Herb (F. Herb)
Pastor Bill Zimmerman (D. Wolfe)
Pastor Jimmy Lee Werley
Katrina Economy
Ken Dengler (T. Dengler)
Pastor Bob Hoenich (D. Hall)
Everyone affected by the wildfires in California</p> | <p>Jan 12 - Stephen Anthony (D. Price)
Claudia Yutko (T. Wolfe)
John Manhart (P. Lute)
Residents and Staff
of Mt. Carmel Nursing Home
Families of Irene Zaharick
Kathleen Chuplis</p> <p>Jan. 5 – Dan Bressler (V. Brown)
Kim Minning (A. Berger)
Michael Zaharick
Family of Frank Sawicki (A. Berger)</p> |
|---|--|

Please continue to pray for: Corrine & Josh Coward, Jim Gruber, Annette Houser, Jack Houser, Jim Houser Jr., Jim Houser Sr., Jenny Kosmisky, Barbara Liem, Gail Lorady, Pearl & Carl Lute, Dianna Monaghan, Jane Pennypacker, Kayla Werner

Remember our Home-bound: Leroy Berner, Diane Heidlebaugh, Jim Hepler, Nancy Kessler, Gail Marquardt, Anna Neumeister, Richard Shoup, Karen Smith, Linda Zerby

And Friends: Michele & Amber Adams, Michelle Ambrose, Robert Beecher, Donald Bulla, Ed Emerich, Joe Ferraro Jr., Bob Griffiths, Cathy Groody, Dan Grow, Ann Helwig, Minah Horan, Bob Kinlin, Lisa Metzinger, Angie Romberger, Bailey Romberger, Samantha Schifano, Sarah (Herb) Shanks (T. Wolfe), Elizabeth Smith & family, Pastor Sunny Stock, Elaine Stone, Linda (Herb) Szuler (T. Wolfe), Joe Towey, Rose Varndell, Karyssa Wenrich, Bev Wolfgang



- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Ross Sterling | 15 Alaina Lindenmuth |
| Kim Walacavage | Melissa Sisko |
| Shelby Weikel | 16 Daniel Sisko |
| 3 Stephen McGrath | Lois Sterling |
| 4 Dennis Wolfe | 17 Crystal Huber |
| 5 Richard Weikel | 18 Cyrus Clark |
| Kenneth Zweizig | Jacob Tice |
| 6 Brian Bolich | 19 Dean Leshar |
| 8 Kevin Clark, Sr. | Pearl Lute |
| Charlotte Schmidt | Shaun McNally |
| 9 Kevin Clark, Jr. | 20 Jim Chappell |
| Terry Kessler | Cheryl Denchak |
| Allison Rusinko | Mina Pennypacker |
| Kayla Werner | Bill Price |
| 10 Rebecca Houser | Jax Miller |
| Jason Miller | 21 Kylei Long |
| Mark Varndell | 22 Teresa Ambrose |
| 11 Vanessa Pirie | Gavin Dwane |
| Tanner Wilson | Kolton Fetterolf |
| Leo Young II | Brielle Smith |
| 12 Chantelle Klinger | 23 Ricky Williard |
| Edward Stepulitis | 24 Zalen Williard |
| 13 Rhonda Carl | 25 Charlie Klauger |
| Barb Habowski | 26 Geoffrey Dudick |
| Deana Leshar | 27 Denise Hepler |
| 14 Bobbi-Jo Hummel | 28 Ann Welker |
| | Wyatt Miller |



Puzzle!

Use the clues to fill in the boxes. Then write those letters on the correct numbered lines below to complete 1 John 4:16 (NIV).

- A place to live
1 2 3 4 5
- Opposite of dark
6 7 8 9 10
- Companion
11 12 13 14 15 16
- Hand greeting
17 18 19 20
- Male adult
21 22 23



8 2 16 13 4 6 2 19 5

17 9 2 5 19 5 12 6 7 19 5 4

13 15 6 2 19 20 6 7 19 14 4

13 15 8 2 16 18 15 16

8 2 16 13 23 10 1 14 21

1 John 4:16, NIV

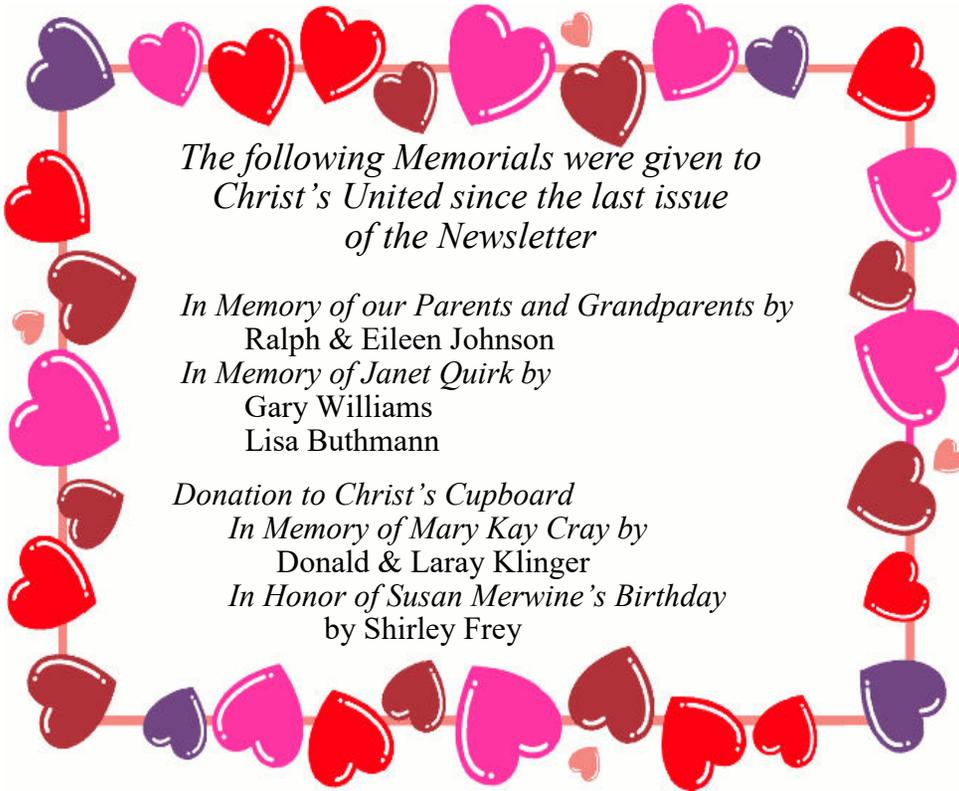
Answers: house, light, friend, wave, man; God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. 1 John 4:16, NIV



All are welcome to attend the
Women of the ELCA's
 next meeting on
Wednesday, February 5, 2025
6:00 PM



- 02/13/93 Ron & Donna Wallace
- 02/14/10 Nelson & Angie Berger
- 02/16/95 Traci & Donald Smith Jr.
- 02/21/53 Cy & Joan Clark
- 02/23/85 David & Denise Hepler
- 02/28/70 William & Corrine Coward



The following Memorials were given to Christ's United since the last issue of the Newsletter

In Memory of our Parents and Grandparents by Ralph & Eileen Johnson

*In Memory of Janet Quirk by Gary Williams
Lisa Buthmann*

Donation to Christ's Cupboard

In Memory of Mary Kay Cray by Donald & Laray Klinger

In Honor of Susan Merwine's Birthday by Shirley Frey



INSTALLATION Service

Come welcome our new Pastor! Food and fellowship to follow.

FEBRUARY 16, 2025
4:00 PM
437 AIRPORT RD
ASHLAND, PA

With Pastor:
REV. BRIAN BEISSEL

More Information
www.christsunited.org

~ NEW DATE - FEBRUARY 16, 2025 ~

**COVERED DISH MEAL
 FOLLOWING THE SERVICE -
 PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE BULLETIN BOARD!!
 AND INDICATE WHAT YOU WILL BE BRINGING.**

LCM will provide stuffed chicken breast, gravy and southern style potatoes.



In 1990, Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group:

“Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those without a bowl of soup to eat.”

Since then, more than \$170 million has been generated for local charities across the country through Souper Bowl of Caring. It has become a powerful movement that transforms the time around the Big Game into the nation’s largest celebration of giving and caring for those in need.

Through this mission, people learn they can make a positive difference in the world as they collect food, raise money and serve at hunger-relief charities and show caring and compassion in local communities across the country.

Share in God’s love for our neighbors in need and give generously on Souper Bowl Sunday - Feb. 9. All of the donations collected will go directly to our Souper Bowl of Caring Charity of Choice:
Christ’s Cupboard Food Pantry



Scholarship Thank you

Dear Christ’s United Lutheran Church congregation and Endowment Fund Committee,

I would like to thank you for the scholarship that you have given me. I will use this scholarship to help continue my journey in college. It is greatly appreciated and will help me with my college expenses.

Sincerely, Jacob Tice



2025 Sponsorships

The sponsorship sign up sheets are posted on the bulletin board. Sign up for:

- Altar Flowers \$35.00*
- Worship Bulletins \$15.00
- Special service bulletins \$10.00
- Sanctuary Candle \$10.00
- Children’s Bulletins \$10.00
- Monthly Newsletters \$40.00
- Palms for Palm Sunday \$15.00

*For Altar Flowers:

Please sign up by the bulletin board for week(s) you would like to sponsor Altar Flowers and call “Flowers From the Heart” 570-339-2519 to place order. **Cost is \$35.00.**

Please place order and make payment directly to the florist.

All other sponsorships, please make payable to CULC and give to Debbie in the Church Office.

Kindness kickbacks



Random Acts of Kindness Day, observed each year on February 17, is a reminder of the power of altruism. Followers of Jesus express kindness selflessly, out of love for God and our neighbors. Yet in return, we reap emotional — and even physical — benefits.

Researchers have identified a “helper’s high” that can ease anxiety and depression. Spontaneous or planned acts of “pro-social spending” have been shown to reduce blood pressure, improve heart health, reduce pain and even extend longevity.

For maximum impact, experts recommend getting creative with random acts of kindness and mixing them up. But no matter how you spread kindness, you’re bound to experience blessings in return!

SOCIAL MINISTRY



Fellowship Hour will be held after worship on only the first Sunday of each month September through May. See schedule below for your committee's turn to serve. Please sign up on the bulletin board to help.

- ~ 2025 ~
- February** - Church Council
- March** - Social Ministry
- April** - Evangelism/Endowment/Stewardship
- May** - WELCA
- June/July/August** - No Social Hour



We will be collecting the following items for February:

Peanut Butter & Jelly

Please place your donations in the shopping cart. Thank You!

The next food distribution date is Thursday **February 13, 2025**



Serving Our Community of Faith in February:



Date	Congregational Rep/Announcements	Lector	Ushers	Communion Assistants	Acolyte	Crucifer
February 2		Angie Berger	Becky Spencer b Allen Johnson c/d Dennis Wolfe so	Erik Tice AM Angie Berger Barb Anczarski	Nelson Berger	Bianca McAndrew
February 9		Deb Hubler	—————→		Joey McAndrew	—
February 16		Cheryl Varn dell			Remington Stehr	—
January 23		Barb Anczarski			Logan Walacavage	—



February 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Presentation of Our Lord 9:30 Worship w/Holy Communion 10:30 Social Hour 10:45 Sunday School, Confirmation Class, Learning Series	3 1:00 - 6:00 Red Cross Blood Drive 6:00 Social Ministry Mtg.	4	5 10:30 Seniors 12:00 Lunch With Pastor Brian @ Danny's 6:00 WELCA 7:00 Church Council	6 6:30 Choir Practice	7	8
9 9:30 Worship 10:45 Learning Series	10	11 6:00 Christian Ed, Mtg.	12 10:30 Seniors 12:00 Lunch With Pastor Brian @ May's	13  10 - 11:30 Christ's Cupboard 6:30 Choir Practice	14 Valentine's Day 	15
16 9:30 Worship 10:30 Annual Congregational Meeting 4:00 Pastor Brian's Installation Service & Dinner	17 Newsletter Deadline	18	19 10:30 Seniors 12:00 Lunch With Pastor Brian @ Dutch Kitchen 6:00 Bible Study @ Green's, Lavelle	20 6:30 Choir Practice	21	22
23 9:30 Worship 10:45 Learning Series	24	25	26 8:30 Newsletter Assembly 10:30 Seniors 12:00 Lunch With Pastor Brian @ The Donut Shop	27 6:30 Choir Practice	28 The CULC Messenger God's Work, Our Actions 	