



Gospel January Grapevine 2025



"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

Sunday Worship Service: 10am | Life Application Classes: 9am | Music Rehearsals: 8:15am

Shepherd's Heart Fellowship
58362 Beech Road, Osceola, IN 46561
shfellowship@att.net; 574-679-4519

Check our Website: www.shfellowship.org
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/shfellowship
Subscribe to our YouTube channel: youtube.com/@shfellowship

Interim Pastor Len Smith: lensmith@tkiapps.com; 574-535-4269

Open the Door to God's Gifts

shared in part by Bob Goff

"... Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished."

Acts 12:16 (NIV)

Sometimes we can be so busy, distracted or doubtful that we don't realize what we were praying for is already knocking at the door.

Picture this: The Apostle Peter's in prison in Jerusalem, about to go on trial. He's chained to two guards while other guards stand at the prison gate. Then an angel shows up in his cell, the chains fall off Peter's wrists, and the angel leads Peter past the guards as the jail doors open. The angel disappears as soon as they're out on the street.



"Then Peter came to himself and said, 'Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches ...'" (Acts 12:11, NIV).

Peter ran from the prison to John Mark's house, where ***"the church was earnestly praying to God for him"*** (Acts 12:5, NIV). When he knocked at the door, a servant named Rhoda came to answer. But when she heard Peter's voice, she hurried to tell everyone else.

Wait, what? she must have thought. Isn't everyone upstairs praying for Peter, hoping he will escape jail? She was so stunned she didn't even open the door! Certainly, her motives were not bad, but she left the gift

standing on the doorstep.

The people gathered upstairs did the same. Rather than believe it could be true that their prayers were answered, they told Rhoda, ***"You're out of your mind ... It must be his angel"*** (Acts 12:15, NIV). As they rifled through explanations and possibilities, ***"Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished"*** (Acts 12:16).

As we approach a new year, think about what this story tells us. Sometimes God is at work doing things we either don't notice or don't believe. God has answered our prayers, but we come up with another explanation for what's occurring.

In other words, we say, ***"Nothing is impossible with God"*** (see Genesis 18:14a, Matthew 19:26 and Luke 1:37). But deep down, we don't **believe** it. We get stuck in our ruts — even in prayer — and forget to open our eyes.

God does not want us to spend our lives caught up in figuring out His will for us but instead wants us to discover an adventurous, trusting relationship with Him, one full of connection, wonder and possibility.

The new year is a great time to fling wide the door and celebrate what God is already doing in your life. To wake up each morning committed to growing closer to the God of the impossible. You are surrounded by the miraculous every day. Don't dismiss it or ignore it — and don't leave what God has done in your life standing at the door, waiting for you to pay attention.

God, thank You for the incredible things You're doing in my life. I want to open the door to Your gifts in the coming year. Help me to see the miraculous in the everyday and to pay attention to how You see me and want to connect with me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

I hope and pray that you don't miss out on the opportunity that God may have for you in 2025. As our leadership team begins to start up our meetings again in February, I want to let you know anyone is welcome to attend any team meeting or leadership meeting. This is one way to find out what each team does and use the gifts God has blessed you with! If you ever have question about something or how things are done in our church, please ask. All questions are good for the listener and the person who asks - that's how God helps us all to grow and learn together.

My finally word for 2024: REMEMBER whenever you're in the position to help someone, be glad and always do it because that's God answering someone else's prayers through you.

Be a Blessing!

Prayers and blessing,
Your Leadership Team Chair,
Tammy Victor

Pastoral Relations Ministry Team

Interim Pastor Len is available by appointment every Friday, Saturday, & Sunday in January by appointment. lensmith@tkiapps.com; 574-535-4269

Here is a preview of messages this month from Pastor Len:

1/5 Hebrews 2:1-18 "God's Answer to Sin, Suffering, & Death"

1/12 Psalm 36:5-10 "Self-Esteem"

1/19 Psalm 139:13-24 "The Value of a Life"

1/26 I Samuel 25:1-9 "Good Health"

Vern Beckman, Team Leader
Nate Wilkins & Nicole Wilkins

Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team

First I would like to thank Cindy for all the information she has accumulated from the last 7 years. With prayers I hope to half as well as she did.

Next I would like to thank Sally Whitmer, Cheryl Frick, and Tracey Gordy for volunteering to be on my team.

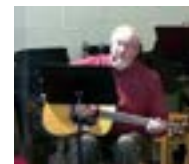
We will be having our first meeting on December 29th to plan our first three months of events.

Our next meeting will be on March 23rd after the church service.

Melba Beckman, Team Leader
Sally Whitmer, Cheryl Frick, & Tracey Gordy

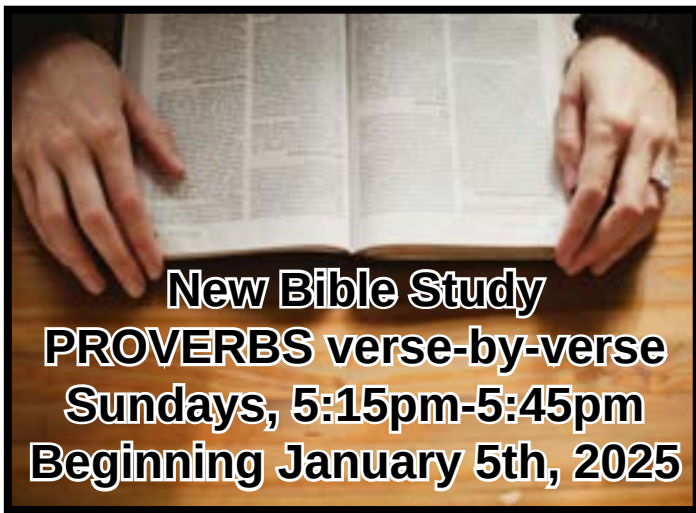
Music & Worship Ministry Team

Thank you to everyone who helped make our Christmas season fantastic! From the decorations to the music and Advent readings, each of you were so kind to share your time and talents with us in celebrating Jesus' birth.




Moving into 2025, we would love for you to share your musical talents with us! We would love to add some fresh faces to our Praise and Worship team. See someone on the team if you are interested.

God Bless,
Nicole Wilkins, Team Leader
Rick Hipsher, Steve Frick, Martha Lou Cary, Scott Hipsher



New Bible Study
PROVERBS verse-by-verse
Sundays, 5:15pm-5:45pm
Beginning January 5th, 2025



Prayer Meetings
Each Sunday, 6pm-6:30pm

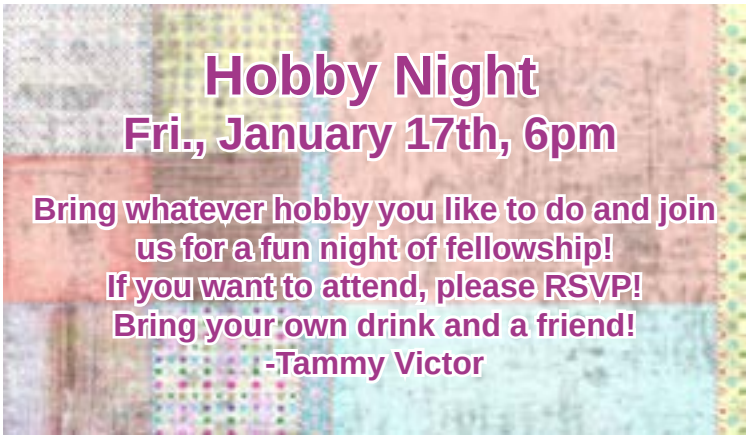
A quiet half-hour of communal prayer. Meet in-person in the church library, or pray with us FROM HOME - email us for the audio-only Zoom link: shfellowship@att.net

"Every believer was faithfully devoted to coming together regularly for...prayer" (Acts 2:42).



Paper & Hygiene Products Pantry
OPENS AGAIN
Wed., Jan 8th, 6-7pm
Volunteers to pray & pass out bags - join us at 5:30pm
ALL donations appreciated:
Paper Towels, Toilet Paper, Kleenex, bar soap, shampoo, dish soap, windex, laundry detergent, toilet bowl cleaner

Men's Breakfast
Sat., January 11th, 9am
Devotions & Breakfast - all welcome



Hobby Night
Fri., January 17th, 6pm

Bring whatever hobby you like to do and join us for a fun night of fellowship! If you want to attend, please RSVP! Bring your own drink and a friend!
 -Tammy Victor

TWO Opportunities to bring Worship, Message, & Communion to the community:

Elkhart Place Worship
Tues., January 21st - 2pm
(the 3rd Tuesday of each month)
2024 Co Rd 24, Elkhart, IN 46517



Milton Adult Day Services Worship
Tues., January 28th - 1:30pm
(the 4th Tuesday of each month)
111 Sunnybrook Ct, South Bend, IN 46637
Anyone is welcome to join us for singing, assisting, or mingling with these groups.

COMMUNITY MEAL
Wed., January 22nd, 6pm

FREE! All welcome!

Serving:
"Breakfast for Dinner":
Biscuits & Gravy,
Sausage links, &
Egg Casseroles



Please RSVP @ church or online:
www.shfellowship.org/meal

Our Role for 2025

by Interim Pastor Len Smith

Last January I shared an article introducing myself as your interim pastor. But now as we again together ponder the significance of the beginning of another new year, I have begun to consider again a very important role that I think each of us should consider for 2025. Many of us are acquainted with the concept of the ambassadors that the U.S. State Department sends all over the world to represent our Congress, our Secretary of State, and our President in foreign affairs. I can recall during my undergraduate days at college, I gave some thought to applying to the U.S. Foreign Service after graduation. After all, I spoke Spanish and had already studied and lived a year in South America. However, I read that overseas state department employees were required to frequently move from country to country as a part of their career development path. I also learned that a person would need to work many years in the U.S. Foreign Service in order to be considered ambassador material. Ambassadors do not make foreign policy on their own, but they are required to implement and communicate the foreign policy that has been developed by the Department of State in conjunction with the President and the Congress.

Proverbs 13:17 records ***“A wicked messenger falls into mischief; but a faithful ambassador is health.”*** The message that Christians are privileged to communicate is a positive message that can result in the healing of body, mind, soul, and spirit. Even young Christians can be faithful ambassadors for the Lord Jesus Christ! They do not need to wait years to report to others about the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. We too can proclaim a holistic ministry of reconciliation in 2025.

This new year we need to pray like the Apostle Paul prayed as he wrote the following in Ephesians 6:19-20, ***“... that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”*** There is no reason for us to be timid or apologetic about communicating how the Gospel has changed our lives.

II Corinthians 5: 20 states that ***“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye***

reconciled to God.” It is not enough for us to communicate by our words and actions the Gospel of reconciliation, but we too must be sure that we are not out of fellowship with the King and Kings and Lord of Lords that we represent as ambassadors. Can you imagine an ambassador of the United States of America contradicting a President’s foreign policy instructions? May our lives and our words be consistent with our Lord’s instructions to us!

Hence, the Scriptures indicate that one role that we as Christians have, is that of an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father has a message for us to implement in our daily lives, and the Holy Spirit will give us the words to communicate the Lord’s policies to people who are not yet citizens of His Kingdom. May God encourage you in 2025, as you seek to fulfill your role as an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ.



Everence Update

Every season of the year, Everence puts out an issue of **“Everyday Stewardship.”** After I read my copy, I bring it to the church and place it on the table outside the library. I put a note on it that says, “Take, Read, Return.” This gives you permission to take the magazine to read in your own home. When you return it, someone else can take it to read. I try to keep two issues there at all times. When I bring my winter issue, I will remove the summer issue.

The winter issue has some interesting topics, such as:

- “Why your employer’s 401(k) is key to retirement success”
- “The four financial fundamentals”
- “How one family is teaching their kids smart financial habits.”

It is interesting reading. Please take time to check it out.

Marcia Troup
Stewardship Advocate

Ladies:

SAVE THE DATE

**2025 NIDCOB Women's Retreat
@Cedar Lake Church of the
Brethren**

Sat., March 22nd, 2025

Hope that Thrives

Registration will be coming out soon.



Christian Education Ministry Team

Life Application Classes

- The "Be One of Us" class is studying *A Love Worth Giving* by Max Lucado.
- The "Willing Workers Class" is studying *Questions Jesus Asked* by Israel Wayne.
- The Young Adult class is studying *Romans: The Gospel of Grace* by Dr. David Jeremiah.
- Senior High Youth continue weekly Bible trivia and is working through "Talk Sheets" based on passages from the Gospels.
- We currently have Life Application Classes for both Lower and Upper Elementary
- Thanks to Jess Gordy, we now have a Nursery Teacher!
- We are grateful for all the teachers who are committed to preparing weekly lessons, Biblical studies, and discussions.

NEW! Bible Study

Beginning January 5, 2025, Pastor Len will offer a weekly Bible study to be held each Sunday evening from 5:15pm-5:45pm in the *Be One of Us* class area. These studies will be verse-by-verse style and limited to half an hour. The first book studied will be Proverbs.

Books for sale

Please note that there are some additional books in the hall for sale. Suggested price is \$1.00 each. More may be coming! All proceeds go back to the library budget.



We always invite your input. Give us your ideas, suggestions, areas of interest, and we welcome volunteers to lead or participate.

Jeff Tuholski, Team Leader

Cheryl Hipsher, Marcia Troup, Denise Tuholski



January Library Update

It's a new year! 2025 is here! Have you considered reading a book every month? Our modest library has a lot of inspirational books for you to consider.

We have both fiction (20) and non-fiction (21) books. There is a teen and a children's section.

There are other sections that deal with more Biblical topics, marriage, family, recreation, crafts, and health. Check out the listing on the bulletin book for the classification numbers.

Could this be one of your new year's resolutions – to read more? If you have questions or want a general introduction to the library, please feel free to ask Marcia or Pat. We are here to help you.

Happy New Year!

Your Librarians
Pat Gordy
Marcia Troup

St. Margaret's House

Their weekly **Donations Day** is **Thursday from 10am-4pm**. If you need to bring items outside of these hours, please contact them first. phone: 574-234-7795. St. Margaret's House is located at 117 N. Lafayette Blvd., South Bend, IN 46601

Please bring donations to the front desk. To enter, please press the call button and walk up the steps to the first floor. If we have a large donation, please contact them in advance.

If you are able to help deliver donations from our church, please let Marcia know. We are no longer limited to one bag/person!

St Margaret's is currently accepting women's and children's new and lightly used clothing that is in season.

PLEASE take time to ensure that all donated items are in good shape: clean with no stains or tears and all zippers working/buttons in place. *Thank you for helping us to serve our guests with dignity and respect!*

WE REALLY NEED:

Clothing

- coats (new or gently used; especially plus sizes)
- hats and gloves for women and children
- boots for women and children
- warm comfortable clothing such as sweatpants and sweatshirts for women and children
- Please: no "professional" clothing or high-heeled shoes

Household items

- linens: bath towels, sheets (please mark size, if possible)
- kitchen utensils/silverware
- pots, pans, dishes

Toiletries

- shampoo, conditioner, lotion, body wash (both large and small)
- deodorant
- bar soap
- sanitary pads (light, medium, heavy)
- diapers (sizes 4, 5, 6, 7, 2T-5T)
- baby wipes

Missions & Evangelism Team 2025

Our Year on YouTube in 2024

Congratulations on a fantastic 2024 on YouTube! Here's a look back on how we've grown as a creator:

(last year's comparison aside)

23

(26)

New Subscribers

6516

(4523)

Views

136

(129)

Uploads

356

(278)

Likes

68

(29)

Comments

80

(59)

Shares

Most Viewed from this year:



Top Video

"Dinosaurs & the Bible" | Ask the Pastor

364 views, 11.7 Hours Watched



Top Livestream

"Sunday Worship LIVESTREAM 1/28/24"

73 views, 4.0 Hours Watched

And that's a wrap on a great year!

Missions & Evangelism Ministry Team

Christmas Cards

We blessed several pantry patrons with Christmas Cards in December, as well as residents of Elkhart Place & Milton Adult Day Services. They were all so grateful to be remembered. Thanks to all who helped write them encouragement this season!

Cookie Walk & Craft Sale Collection

This year brought in the most funds raised to date - **\$1420!** Praise God! 50% goes to our Paper Pantry, 25% to Community Meals, & 25% to St. Margaret's House. Thanks to Cindy and all the hardworking volunteers who made this possible.

Mitten Tree

We completely filled a large box of mittens, gloves, and hats for the children at Moran Elementary School. This was certainly the most we've ever collected. Thank you for helping local children stay warm!

Food Drive

14 Families were blessed - another new record! Thank you all so much for your awesome support to bring food to families who needed it.



Brethren Faith in Action (BFIA) Grant Received

Earlier in December we received a **\$5,000 grant** from the Brethren Faith in Action (BFIA) to support our outreach ministries including the Paper Pantry, Hands of the King, and Community Meal. The BFIA funds are given to Brethren congregations for ministries that serve the community, strengthen the congregation, and expand the reign of God. Thanks to all who volunteer their time and talents to make these ministries work!



RETA

Reason Enough To Act

Mission of the Month - RETA of Elkhart

Reason Enough To Act (RETA) is a faith-based organization that provides free, discreet, non-judgmental services for those facing a pregnancy - planned or unplanned, parenting challenges, or regret following an abortion decision. They offer pregnancy testing, first trimester ultrasound, prenatal care for the first 20 weeks, pap/pelvic/breast exams, well-woman check-ups, STD testing & treatment, HIV testing, abortion pill reversal, mentorship for women, men, couples, & teens, mental health counseling, family resources, and abortion recovery support.

Their mission: "Providing life-affirming services, building Christ-centered families through community and connection."

We are praying for and collecting donations for RETA as our mission of the month for January & February. If you'd like to support their ministry, please just mark your giving envelopes for RETA.

Community Meal

Our Community Meal in January will be "Breakfast for Dinner", including egg casseroles, sausage, & biscuits & gravy!! Tammy & Joel Victor are hosting. Come enjoy some good supper and fellowship with the family!

Paper Hygiene Pantry

Our Paper Pantry will be open January 8th from 6 to 7 pm. All are Welcome to Join us to pray or pass out bags, just come about 5:30 for instructions. Thank you church for your continuous support & generosity for this ministry!!

Nate Wilkins, Team Leader
Jeff Tuholski, Denise Tuholski, Marcia Troup

Bible Character's New Year's Resolutions

Adam

"Seems like everyone's all about high fiber, but I plan to eat LESS fruit next year."

Mrs. Lot

"Longing for the past helps no one! Don't look back!"

Esau

*"Hereby to resolve to draft Fair Trade Act & enforce it!"
#saynotostew*

Joseph

"This is the pits. If I meet my brothers again, they'll really see me uncloaked."

Moses

"No longer using the phrase 'people problems'" #redundancy

Joshua

"Words to live by: build a city a fire and it'll be warm for a day, set a city ON fire and it will be warm the rest of its life."

Ruth

"Turning over a new sheaf. Done with multi-faith online dating - ready for good old fashioned matchmaking."

Haman

"More hangin' with the king in the new year!" #ironic

David

"Done fighting lions & philistines. Taking a safer job playing harp for the King." #can'tlose

Balaam

*"Booting all Dr. Doolittle movies from Netflix."
#beentheredonethat*

Jeremiah

"Buy stock in #kleenex."

Ezekiel

*"Books are for reading, not for eating"
#whatwasinthatthing?*

Naaman

"Start bathing more - does wonders for your health."

Bathsheba

"Start bathing less - who puts a bath on the roof?"

Zechariah

"Voicing a new motto - NEVER second guess an angel of the Lord."

Mary

"Joe & I want to finish our family tree - thanks to David, it means fewer branches!"

Thomas

*Last year I resolved to be less glib, and it didn't go so well. This year I won't care if you fool me!"
#trustimmediately*

James

"No matter what happens this year, count it all joy. Yes, I'm serious. No, I'm not joking. Why are you looking at me like that?"

C A M P M A C K

O R N E R



December

Website: <http://www.campmack.org>

Phone: 574-658-4831 | Email: info@campmack.org

Upcoming Events:

December 7 Wreaths and Swags Get-A-Way Day:

Make a traditional Williamsburg Wreath, Christmas wreath, or a swag using greens and fresh fruit to grace your door this Christmas season. 9a–12p. Ulrich basement. \$35 (includes lunch and all materials). Bring gloves.

December 7&8 Christmas Cookies Get-A-Way Day:

Camp provides ingredients, measuring utensils, and mixing bowls. You bring the family and friends, mix the dough, and decorate cookies. Camp cleans up the mess! Choose 4 batches of cookies (each makes about 3 dozen). Saturday 9a–1p or 12p–4p. Sunday 12p–4p. *The Saturday morning session is currently full.* \$55 (1 lunch and all baking materials included; option to add additional meals and batches of cookies). Bring an apron and containers to take home your cookies. Leader: Jess Kreider. Choose from chocolate chip, chocolate crinkles, gingersnaps, sugar, monster, oatmeal raisin, peanut butter, snickerdoodles, snowballs, or butter cookies (pre-baked and ready to decorate).

December 21 Summer Staff Reunion!

Dec 30–Jan 3 Winter Break Day Camp: Spend your school breaks with Camp Mack. Your day will be filled with fun exploring nature, doing crafts, enjoying free play, making new friends, playing games, and enjoying what camp has to offer. Adult to child ratio, 1:10. Grades: Kindergarten–5th grade. \$150 with additional fees for before and after care. Some scholarships may be available. 8:30a–3:30p with options for before and after care.

Thank you for your continued support! We are sincerely grateful that you volunteer, donate, and pray.

Prayer Request: Please pray for positive guest experiences throughout retreat season. We continue to have an open position of an evening closing kitchen supervisor.



January's **Worship Service** *Ministry Volunteers*



Children's Life Application Class Teacher Schedule

Early Elementary (4yrs-pre-K)- Cheryl Frick

Elementary (K-5th grade) - Denise Tuholski

Youth Leader (6th grade-1st year college) - Jeff Tuholski

Attendance Schedule - Sally Whitmer

Prelude/Offertory

1/5 Teresa
1/12 Cindy C.
1/19 Donna
1/26 Teresa

Praise Team

1/5 Steve, Marcia, Darrel
1/12 Rick, Tammy, Dawn
1/19 Rick, Tammy, Darrel
1/26 Rick, Sue, Dawn

Welcome Center

1/5 Jeff
1/12 Sally
1/19 BZ
1/26 Denise

Projector

1/5 Cindy C.
1/12 Cindy C.
1/19 Donna
1/26 Teresa

Praise Prayer

1/5 Marcia
1/12 Jeff
1/19 Tammy
1/26 Jeff

Stewardship

1/5 Steve & Cheryl - Martha Lou
1/12 Ron & Donna - Tammy
1/19 Ron & Donna - Tammy
1/26 Ed & Fred - Cindy C

Livestream

1/5 Nicole
1/12 Nate
1/19 Brian
1/26 Jayden

Worship Leader

1/5 Cindy C
1/12 Denise
1/19 Marcia
1/26 Cindy C

Nursery

1/5 Sally
1/12 Jess
1/19 Denise
1/26

Sound

1/5 Ron H
1/12 Jensen
1/19 Nate
1/26 Ron W

Greeter - Door A

1/5 Fred
1/12 Vern
1/19 Laura
1/26 Katie

Bible Fun Day

1/5 Denise
1/12 Marcia
1/19 Katie
1/26 Melba

Chorister

1/5 Steve
1/12 Rick
1/19 Rick
1/26 Rick

Greeter - Door B

1/5 Sally
1/12 Melba
1/19 Marcia
1/26 BZ




Message

1/5 Len Smith
1/12 Len Smith
1/19 Len Smith
1/26 Len Smith

2025

JANUARY

**please pray for the names in italics*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	01	02	03	04
<p>NEW AVAILABILITY: Interim Pastor Len Smith is available by appointment every Friday, Saturday, & Sunday lensmith@kiapps.com 574-535-4269</p>						
05 12pm Deacon Meeting 5:15pm-5:45pm Bible Study 6pm Prayer Meeting <i>Pam Hipsher</i>	06 <i>Laura Wiley</i>	07 <i>Barb Fox</i>	08  <i>Pat Gordy</i>  6-7pm Paper & Hygiene Product Pantry Open <i>Michelle Gee</i>	09 <i>Ida Mae Murray</i>	10 <i>Cindy Carlisle</i>	11 <i>Rick Hipsher</i>
12 <i>Pam Hipsher</i>	13 <i>Laura Wiley</i>	14 <i>Barb Fox</i>	15 <i>Michelle Gee</i>	16 <i>Curtis Gee</i>	17 <i>Mike Maes</i>	18 <i>Kathy Maes</i>
19 5:15pm-5:45pm Bible Study 6pm Prayer Meeting <i>Kevin Bernaert</i>	20 <i>Dawn Bernaert</i> 	21 <i>Madison Morris</i> 2pm Elkhart Place Worship	22 <i>Chuck Davies</i>  6pm Community Meal Serving: Breakfast	23 <i>Vern Beckman</i>	24 <i>Melba Beckman</i>	25 <i>Nik Hipsher</i>
26 5:15pm-5:45pm Bible Study 6pm Prayer Meeting <i>Danielle Sheldon</i>	27 <i>Chris Stachowski</i>	28 <i>Tammy Victor</i> 1:30pm Milton Adult Day Services Worship	29 <i>Joel Victor</i>	30 <i>Jim Schmucker</i>	31 <i>Austin Schmucker</i>	01 <i>Sharon Hipsher</i>
29 5:15pm-5:45pm Bible Study 6pm Prayer Meeting <i>Carissa Hipsher</i>	30 <i>Clara Hipsher</i>	31 <i>Ethan Hipsher</i>	01 <i>Sue Ann Miller</i>	02 <i>Peggy Miller</i>	03 <i>Jenn Adams</i>	04 <i>Rick Hipsher</i>