

News From The Pews

Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran Church—ELCA Pastor Phillip Vickers

> 143 Chota Center, Loudon, TN 37774 www.shepherdofthelaketn.org (865) 816-4756

August 2025

A Christian community sharing God's love with the world.

Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m.

In Person

and
Online

On the website:

Bulletins Announcements Sermons Newsletters Livestream

Church Council

Tom Tisch
President

Otto Stutz

Vice President

Julie Claus Secretary

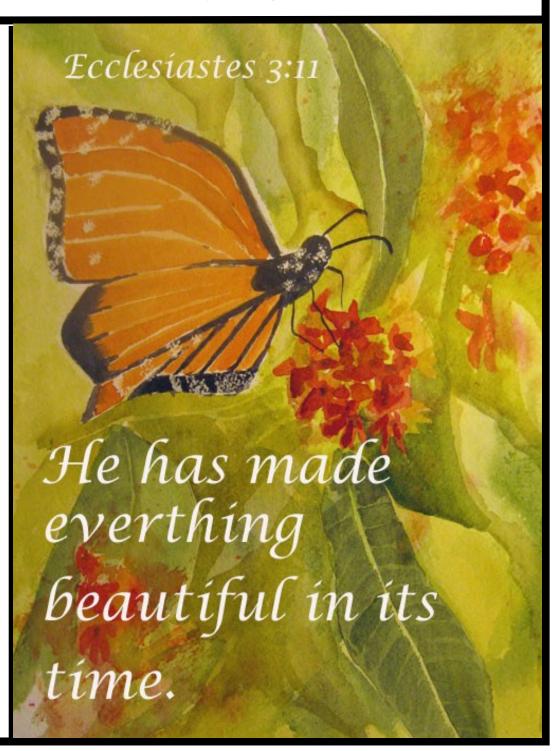
Eric Bondy

Treasurer

Claire Moxim Vivian Snellman

Members-at-Large

Office
Manager
Sandy Hagan
Shepherdofthelake13
@gmail.com



Pastor Phil's Page

What a great time to be a part of Shepherd of the Lake!

Recently we welcomed 9 new members to our fellowship. I have been blessed by getting to know these wonderful people and look forward to getting to know them better in the weeks and months and ahead. These 9 folks are the most recent new members of 22 who have joined in the last three years. The Holy Spirit is truly at work in the world.

It has been a real blessing to work with the communication team to help organize the Rally Day. This is a whole new effort on the part of our congregation. We hope this event helps us to get our name out in the community and let people know we are here.



Pastor Phil Vickers

We are also excited to be in the early stages of developing a ministry for people experiencing grief. Grief doesn't have a time limit and we honor that as a church. We want all who call Shepherd of the Lake their spiritual home to be able to gather with folks who have gone through similar experiences for conversation and mutual comfort.

Personally, our family is looking forward to a lot of changes this month. Our youngest, Sean, will be beginning a new hybrid school model that we think will be beneficial regarding his particular way of learning. Our middle child Elliot is beginning high school. Our oldest, Autumn, is beginning college at the Hardin Valley campus of Pellissippi State. I appreciate so much how supportive you the people of Shepherd of the Lake are of our family and all the care you show.

Thanks as always for the opportunity to serve you as Pastor, and as always please let me know how I can support you in your journey of faith. Blessings, *Pr. Phil*



August

Birthdays

- 06 Elliot Vickers
- 20 Bernie Sizemore
- 22 Michael DiPiazza
- 23 Lucile Duvall
- 24 Vivian Snellman
- 28 Kandie Shubeck

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Anniversaries

- O5 Cherie Oswald & Donald Eatock
- 06 Carol & Bernie Sizemore
- 07 Barbara & Dave Warfel
- 11 Irmi & Jim Newman
- 16 Lucile & Robert Duvall
- 30 Mary Lee & Glenn Froese

President's Column



August News from the Pews

As I write this column I'm looking into the future, and the future looks very, very good. The near future is bringing us Rally Day on Saturday, August 2. How did this event come about? What follows is the evolution of an idea to fruition.

Concept: something conceived in the mind, a thought, notion, a general *idea*.

Rally: to come together for a common action or effort.

Action: a thing done, and not merely thought or spoken about.

Organizers: a body of persons who arranges something, such as the inaugural "Shepherd of the Lake Rally Day", by *systematic planning, coordination, publicizing, and execution.*

Congratulations to the *CRAO* team at Shepherd of the Lake for making Rally Day happen!

On several occasions the idea of hosting a community event to bring greater visibility to what Shepherd of the Lake can offer to our fellow residents in Tellico Village and surrounding areas has been discussed at church Communications and Council meetings. Yes, the *concept* was to do something not just for our parishioners, but to give back, or better yet, to provide a great service to the surrounding community.

Finally, during a communications meeting this past spring the *idea* of hosting an event prior to the beginning of the school year was proposed. That idea, Rally Day, sparked a call to *action*.

The idea was refined, and the organizers committed to making it happen.

Shout-outs to the core organizers, Sandy Hagan, Donna Navratil, Meg Stutz, Pastor Phil Vickers, and Claire Moxim, who have planned, coordinated, publicized and executed the first ever such event held at our wonderful facility. Thanks also to the many volunteers for setting-up and cleaning-up, for providing grills and shade-providing tents, food preparation and serving, for logistical coordination with our parking-lot neighbors, and other important behind-the-scene efforts. Thanks also to our local sponsors: Tellico Village **Food Lion** grocery, Tellico Village **Lions Club**, Tellico Village **Top Notes Big Band**, **Thrivent Financial**, and for the **classic car owners** that put their treasured vehicles on public display for all to see.

Community can be joyful fellowship in a variety of ways. At Shepherd of the Lake Church we celebrate the Word and Sacraments together as family, we serve as volunteers in multiple church ministries, and as God's servants at the Good Shepherd Center, Water to Thrive, Karm, Habitat for Humanity, the ACT Group Home, Kairos Prison Ministry, the Friendship Kitchen, the Kiwanis Bench Project, Our Place, Stay in Tellico Village, Kiddie Kingdom Daycare, Tyson House, the Child Advocacy Center, Lutheran Disaster response, and other community partnerships.

At Rally Day, we at Shepherd of the Lake, are blest to make our church facility available to the greater community, a community who for some, may be looking for that "something" missing in their lives.

Rally Day is intended to provide a great service, which is an easily visible, permanent beacon of light emanating from Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran Church, to anyone in search of that "something," that "something" being a Christian family that worships together as we seek to build an unbreakable bond with Jesus, our Lord, the Father of our church, and perhaps a family who also enjoys classic cars and a crusty hot dog or brat off the grill while admiring our future Meditation Garden. **Tom Tisch**



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Bringing Light into the Darkness

For over 27 years, Sandy Hagan has walked alongside the incarcerated, their families, and prison staff, bringing hope, healing, and spiritual transformation through Kairos Prison Ministry International. July 24-26,2025, Sandy joined more than 500 volunteers in Augusta, Georgia for her 7th Annual Kairos Conference—a gathering that fuels the mission and celebrates lifelong friendships formed through service.

Founded in 1976 by a group affectionately known as the "Nine Old Men," Kairos began as a three-day Christian retreat in a Florida prison. Today, it serves nearly 500 prisons and communities across 37 states and 13 countries. Through its three main programs—**Kairos Inside**, **Kairos Outside**, and **Kairos Torch**—the ministry reaches incarcerated men and women, their families, and youth affected by the justice system.

Kairos Prison Ministry offers **three powerful programs** that bring hope and healing to incarcerated individuals and their families through faith-based support and community building:

Kairos Inside

- A 3½-day weekend retreat held inside prisons for incarcerated men and women.
- Builds a Christian community within the prison through talks, discussions, prayer, and fellowship.
- Followed by ongoing support groups that meet regularly to sustain spiritual growth.

Sandy serves with the **Bledsoe Correctional Complex for Women**, helping organize two transformative weekend retreats each year. These weekends, which cost over \$8,000 each, are supported by your donations and the tireless work of more than 30,000 Kairos volunteers nationwide.

Kairos Outside

- Designed for women who have been impacted by incarceration—whether they were formerly incarcerated or have loved ones in prison.
- Offers a weekend of healing, affirmation, and connection in a safe, supportive environment.
- Continues with reunions and support groups to foster long-term encouragement.

Kairos Outside, launched in 1990, extends compassion to the female family members of the incarcerated, while Kairos Torch focuses on mentoring youth aged 25 and under. Through talks, prayer, and ongoing support, the ministry empowers participants to rebuild their lives and reconnect with their faith.

Kairos Torch

- Focused on incarcerated youth (ages 25 and under).
- Begins with a weekend retreat and continues with a mentoring program for six months.
- Encourages better decision-making and builds character through guidance and faith.

"The prison environment is often dark and isolating," Sandy shared. "Kairos offers a chance for those living inside to experience grace and community in a powerful way. We've seen gang leaders become peacebuilders and entire facilities shift toward hope and healing."

"We know we can't change someone's past," Sandy said. "But we can walk with them into a future filled with hope and forgiveness. That's what Kairos is all about—God's special time."

To learn more or support the Bledsoe Correctional Complex Advisory Council, visit <u>kairosprisonministry.org</u>. Donations go directly toward creating these life-giving weekends and expanding the reach of a ministry that's changing lives—from the inside out. You can also contact Sandy at <u>shagan39@bellsouth.net</u> if you'd like to be a volunteer, offer donations, or have her speak at your organization.

Checks can be made to: Kairos of TN - BCCXW, P.O. Box 1161, Lenoir City, TN 37771

You will receive a tax donation receipt at the end of the year for your giving.

Sandy Hagan

Our New Members







Elaine & Frank Gott



Janet & Donald Larkins











Evelyn Smith



Church News & Events

Welcome New Members

On Sunday, July 20, Shepherd of the Lake joyfully welcomed nine new members into our church family:

Michael DiPiazza
Elaine & Frank Gott
Freddie Jacob
Lisa Nass
Janet & Donald Larkins
Barbara Smith
Evelyn Smith

Following the worship service, our congregation gathered in Friendship Hall to celebrate with cake and coffee during a special fellowship hour. It was a beautiful moment of connection and hospitality.

Our thanks to Otto Stutz for taking pictures of the new members and to Susan Tisch for posting them in the Narthex.

Stay tuned for more about our newest members in the September edition of *News From the Pews*, where we'll share their stories and introduce them more personally to our church community.



Women's Fellowship Upcoming Events

Thursday, August 21 11:30am

Meet at Jean Clesen's for a Dock Party!

Lunch includes: Sloppy Joes, Chips, Watermelon, Cookies, Water, Lemonade, & Ice Tea

no charge for lunch; collecting donations for CAC. Bring swim suits for cooling off and enjoying the water!

Saturday, September 13 Vonore Card Project

9:00am-12:00pm Meet in Friendship Hall- Vonore Elementary Christmas Project

Please bring any Christmas card fronts to be glued onto

gift bags for the kid's shop.

Breakfast snacks and beverages provided!

Saturday, November 8 9:00am-12:00pm

Vonore Mug Project



Rally Day at Shepherd of the Lake Church

Saturday, August 2 10:00 AM - 1:30 PM Church Parking Lot

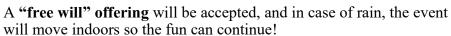
Rain or shine!

The Communications Team at Shepherd of the Lake is thrilled to launch a new initiative to foster deeper community engagement and raise visibility for our church. To kick things off, we're hosting **Rally Day**—a festive celebration of fellowship, food, and fun for our members, neighbors, and friends throughout Tellico Village.

What's Happening!

- **Live Music** by the *Tellico Top Notes*
- Classic Cars on display from local clubs
- Free Food including:

Hot dogs & brats with sauerkraut Chips & cookies Bottled water



RSVP:

To help us plan food quantities, please sign up via **SignUpGenius** if you plan to attend. And don't forget to invite your family and friends!

Special Thanks:

We're grateful to the many generous contributors who are making this event possible:

- **Lions Club** for distributing over 6,000 flyers
- Tellico Top Notes for providing music
- Food Lion for donating 300 hot dogs, buns, and condiments
- **Thrivent donor** for a \$250 card to purchase brats, buns, cookies, and chips
- Member donation of multiple cases of bottled water
- Classic car clubs for sharing their beautiful vehicles
- Volunteers for their time and enthusiasm

Let's come together to celebrate our vibrant community. We can't wait to see you there!







So+L has many recurring activities throughout the month. They are on our website should you wish to check them out and just maybe participate. See below what's happening! Go to the website and select:

GET INVOLVED — COMING EVENTS.

Wkly.	Al-Anon Meeting	Mon	10:00am
	Women's AA Meeting	Mon	11:30am
Bi-Wk.	Dream Study Circle	Tues	2:00pm
Wkly.	Bible Study	Wed	10:00am
Wkly.	Small Group	Thu	3:00pm
Mthly	Card Making Ministry	2nd Thu	10:00am
Mthly	Creative Hands	2nd Thu	9:30am
Mthly	Women's Fellowship	3rd Thu	11:30am
Bi-Wk.	Sisters in Sobriety (SIS)	Fri	11:30am
Mthly	Men's Fellowship B'fast	3rd Sat	8:30am



SAVE THESE DATES

August 2	10:00am	Community Rally Day
August 3	10:15am	Biblical Storytelling Information Session
August 10	10:15am	Kairos Prison Ministry
August 14	10:00am	Card Making Ministry
August 14, 21, 28 & Sept. 4	6:00pm	Biblical Storytelling Series
August 16	8:30 am	Men's Fellowship Breakfast
August 21	11:30am	Women's Fellowship Dock Party—Jean Clesen's home
August 24	10:15am	The House That Mercy Built Presentation
September 13	9-12pm	Vonore Card Project
November 8	9-12pm	Vonore Mug Project



Saturday, August 16 at 8:30am Friendship Hall

Join the men for coffee and breakfast items of your choice as they fellowship together.

Go to SignUpGenius and make your reservation and select the food you plan to bring. It will be a great time to socialize.

Men's Fellowship: Men's Fellowship Breakfast (signupgenius.com)

For questions, email Howard Kastner (howardkastner285@gmail.com) or call Sandy in the church office 865-816-4756



Women's Fellowship Come and join us!

Go to SignUpGenius and be a participant. Women's Fellowship: Women's Fellowship (signupgenius.com)

Thursday, August 21 Dock Party, at Jean Clesen's

11:30am

Saturday, September 13 Vonore Card Project

9:00-12:00pm

Saturday, November 8 Vonore Mug Project

9:00-12:00pm

Church Financial Update & New Tithe.ly Platform



We're excited to announce that our church is now using **Tithe.ly**, a new digital platform to help manage member information and contributions more efficiently.

As part of our financial stewardship, second quarter financial statements will be emailed shortly by Vivian Snellman, our Financial Secretary.

If you would prefer to receive a *printed* copy instead of an email, please contact **Vivian** or **Sandy (Office Manager)**. We'll be happy to make that adjustment for you.

Thank you for your faithful support and for helping us grow in generosity and connection!



It's Here! Biblical Storytelling Series Begins August 14



Stories change us. Stories inspire us. Stories, especially sacred stories, teach us about God's love and God's will for our lives. They were handed down and repeated in families and faith communities for many years until finally we have received them in the written scriptures we have today. Jesus taught that we should love God with all our heart, soul and mind and our neighbor as ourselves. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 instructs: *Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart*.

Join us for an in-depth bible study, giving us an opportunity to dwell on a passage for a month at a time. Some of you have expressed concerns about what to expect. If you are worried that you will be required or expected to "memorize" scripture passages, never fear! The study's

primary purpose is to allow you to deepen your knowledge of God by immersing yourself in the Word. As we explore the text from many angles and "fill in the gaps," you can learn the process of making the story your own and therefore, begin to "write it on your heart." Yes, we can share techniques for planting the words in your mind, but that too can be a part of your spiritual discipline, if you so choose.

Not quite sure? Attend the information session (with no obligation) after worship on Sunday, **August 3** (in the sanctuary). You will receive the outline of what we will cover in the four sessions and can ask any questions you have.

Pastor Phil and Linda Schuessler will lead the four-week series:

Thursdays, 6:00-7:00 pm

August 14, 21, 28 and September 4

Questions: Linda Schuessler, tellicoschuess@gmail.com or text 865-312-1537.

Prayer Ventures—August

- 1 We are church for the sake of the world, celebrating the abundant life that has been promised by God and fulfilled in Christ's life, death and resurrection. Pray for the Spirit to guide and inspire the discussions, \decisions and work of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly, that our church will proclaim and exemplify the grace we have in Jesus.
- 2 Give thanks for those who participated in the Churchwide Assembly and ask God to protect them as they return to their faith communities.
- 3 Pray that when our interest is drawn to specific issues in our communities and the world, we will not lose sight of other issues that persist but have slipped away from public awareness.
- 4 Pray for worship leaders and musicians gathering for the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians conference in Raleigh-Durham, N.C., that their passion, creativity and skills for leading music will grow as a means of expressing faith and sharing the gospel.
- 5 Give thanks and praise to God for the joy, freedom and new life we have in Jesus Christ and for the promise of eternal life in the kingdom of God. Hallelujah!
- 6 Pray for lasting and resilient peace where there is conflict and war in the world, especially in Ukraine, Russia and the Middle East. Pray that we will not grow weary in supporting and caring for those who continue to live in uncertainty and suffering amid violence, injustice and displacement from their homes and communities.
- 7 Praise God that our new life in Christ empowers us to renew ourselves in the image of the Creator and to oppose and cleanse ourselves of anger, hate, slander, abusive language, racism, dishonesty, self-centeredness and greed.
- 8 Thank God for the ELCA's special relationship with the Moravian Church in America, a full communion partner since 1999. Pray for the church, its members and its leaders, that together we will find strength and resources for the work of sharing the gospel and serving our neighbor.
- 9 Pray for local, state and national leaders, that they will respect and respond to our neighbors on the fringes of society, including people who suffer poverty and hunger, who need shelter, who live with illnesses and conditions requiring constant care, and whose rights and protections have diminished. Pray for compassion, strength and persistent courage to advocate and care for our neighbors in need.
- 10 Pray for the Spirit's guidance and wisdom in understanding the parables Jesus shared over two thousand years ago, and for insight into the admonitions and wisdom they offer us today.
- 11 Pray for our missionaries and Young Adults in Global Mission who accompany global partners in 10 European countries, serving in ministries that provide education, pastoral leadership, social services and care for vulnerable populations.
- 12 International Youth Day Half the people on our planet are age 30 or younger. Pray for every nation to honor the gifts of young people, address the challenges they face and provide easy access to resources that contribute to their physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual and economic well-being.
- 13 Ask God to bless those who have chosen to use their gifts, faith and time in long-term volunteer service with Lutheran Volunteer Corps, Urban Servant Corps, Holden Village or other domestic ministries.
- 14 Open our hearts and minds to see problems in the world as opportunities to encourage and care for one another, to seek new paths toward justice and peace, and to share the good news of God's mercy and love for humanity.
- 15 "Go my children, with my blessing, never alone. Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own. In my love's baptismal river I have made you mine forever" (WOV 721). Praise God for being ever present in our lives and the world in times of turmoil, peace, fear, joy, failure and achievement.
- 16 Pray for students attending ELCA colleges, universities and seminaries, and other institutions of higher education, that they will grow in faith, knowledge, wisdom and commitment to serve others.

- 17 Ask the Spirit how we might align ourselves with the commandments, desires and priorities of God, the very things Jesus made clear to us through his life, suffering, death and resurrection.
- 18 Pray for the church leaders gathering for the Ecumenical School on Governance, Economics, and Management for an Economy of Life in Seoul, South Korea. Organized by the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation and other ecumenical organizations, the school helps leaders to bridge theology and economics and to advocate for a global economic system that meets the needs of humanity and responds to the crises we face today.
- 19 Give thanks to God that, through our collective generosity, our church provides grants and scholarships to support the ministries of individuals, communities, congregations, synods, and ELCA partners and companion churches.
- 20 "Am I a God near by, says the Lord, and not a God far off? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord" (Jeremiah 23:23-24). Give thanks that God sees all evil and deception in the world, and promise to be vigilant and discerning so that we might uplift our neighbors and please God.
- 21 Pray for the work of Sumud, an initiative of our church that works for justice in Palestine and Israel, proclaiming that all humans are beloved children of God who deserve safety, security and dignity.
- 22 Give thanks for the ELCA New Congregations ministry and for the 340 new-start congregations and ministries under development in the United States and the Caribbean, supported by local leaders and their synods' bishops and directors for evangelical mission.
- 23 Pray for congregational leaders and volunteers who are preparing fall programs and community ministries to share the gospel, nurture faith, serve neighbors in need and equip people of all ages and abilities to do God's work in the world.
- 24 There is no convenient or more suitable time to respond to the suffering of our neighbors. Pray that we will be mindful of those around us near and far and promptly respond with respect, kindness, generosity, sustainable solutions and concern for their short- and long-term needs.
- 25 Pray for teachers, student teachers, administrators and other school staff, that their strength, knowledge, creativity and commitment to students will be nourished throughout the school year. Ask the Spirit to help us express our thanks and support them in tangible ways.
- 26 "Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me, and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free" (ACS 1087). Lift up praise and thanks to God!
- 27 Give thanks for people who play a significant role in your life, including those who inspire your faith, teach you life skills, influence your values, treat you with love and respect, and show up when you need someone to lean on.
- 28 Remember in prayer children, youth and adults whose lives have been touched and inspired by outdoor ministry experiences this summer. Pray that they will bring back to their home congregations their rekindled faith, enthusiasm, confidence and commitment to love their neighbors.
- 29 Rejoice in the daily care, support and sustenance we receive from God and our siblings in Christ. Pray that we, in turn, will freely share the same with our neighbors.
- 30 Each of us has a unique faith story to tell. Ask the Spirit to help us find our own way of describing our faith journey how God works through us and how Jesus Christ defines our lives.
- 31 Ask the Spirit for the faith needed to be both confident and humble. Promise to focus on neighbors in need and to resist personal desires for reward, status or advantage.

Mountain Views-August

Recently at Shepherd of the Lake our Sunday worship focused on the parable of the Good Samaritan. "Good Samaritan" has come to mean anyone who performs an unexpected, good deed for another, but ironically the phrase would have sounded very different to Jesus' audience. Samaritans were a group who shared a lot in common with the Jewish people, but the Jewish people suspected them of worshipping gods besides the God of the Bible. Samaritans may have been treated with even more suspicion than Gentiles. Gentiles were at least completely ignorant of the law of God and therefore had an excuse. Samaritans had the law but treated it as one way of devotion among many and therefore treated it poorly. The phrase "Good Samaritan" then was an oxymoron. Samaritans were not thought to come in good.

And yet, in Jesus' story, a priest and a Levite both pass by a robbed and wounded man while the Samaritan is the one who is moved with compassion, stops, and takes care of him. "Which of these three was a neighbor to the robbed man," Jesus asks. The lawyer who had stood up to test him answers: "the one who showed him mercy." Jesus tells him to go and do likewise.

Neighborliness had come from an unexpected place. Jesus' parable serves at least two purposes. First, it challenges prejudice. People very different from us can be our neighbors, and neighborliness can overcome our suspicions and prejudices.

Secondly, this story gives a blueprint for action. In the dictionary neighbor is a noun, but in Jesus' language of faith neighbor is a verb. We are called to go out and neighbor those we encounter. Jesus wants us to treat all people with the same compassion we show those who are closest to us. This isn't always easy. Sometimes it might include sacrifice on our parts. When we do so however, we know that we are following the way of Christ.

Thanks be to God for the people that God places in our lives! Every day brings us the opportunity to neighbor those who need us. The blessing we get in return is a deep sense of fulfillment and purpose. We are made in God's image and so when we do those things that come from God we are rewarded in our hearts.

Taking Jesus' advice is always a good idea. Go and do likewise! Go and neighbor someone in Jesus' name.

*Pastor Phil**





Hot dogs and brats, sauerkraut and all the trimmings Chips, Cookies, Drinks - Soda & Water

Contributors

Food Lion (Tellico Village)

Lions Club

Top Notes

Thrivent Financial

Top Notes





2025 Study

Bible Study Opportunities

Lectionary study with Pastor Phil Vickers Wednesdays at 10am, in Friendship Hall For any questions call the church office 865-816-4756.

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Small Group Ministry

The small group ministry will begin in September with a new book. Friendship Hall

For questions contact: Shari and Tom Lillestolen,

SCHEDULE FOR OUTSIDE GROUPS AT SO+L

- ⇒ Monday (1st) Top Notes Rehearsal, 5pm to 9pm (FH)
- ⇒ Monday (Weekly) Alanon, 10am to 11am (FH)
- ⇒ Monday (Weekly) Women's AA, 11:30am to 12:30pm(FH)
- ⇒ Monday (4th) –GFWC Women 2:30pm to 5:30pm (FH)
- ⇒ Tuesday (2nd)—GFWC Book Club & Board Meeting, 10am (CR)
- ⇒ Tuesday (1st & 3rd) —Lions Club of TV, 8am to 10:30am (FH)
 ⇒ Tuesday (1st & 3rd)—Kiwanis Club of TV, 11am to 1:30am (FH)
- ⇒ Friday—(Weekly) Sisters in Sobriety, 11:30am to 12:30pm (FH)

September Newsletter





AUGUST 28