



GRACE UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH
PO BOX 67
624 ELM AVE.
STORY CITY, IA 50248

Contact Information

**Pastor Jonathan
Cooney Ph.D.**
jonathan.cooney07
@gmail.com

Shannon Koppes
Administrative
Assistant
office@grace-umc.com
515-733-4712

www.grace-umc.com

"Like" us on
Facebook—Story City
Grace

Office Hours:
Monday — Friday
8:30 AM — 12:30 PM

The Visitor is a
monthly publication of
Grace UMC, Story City.
If you would like to add,
change or remove your
name from our mailing
or e-mailing list
*correct your address
*submit news to be
published in
The Visitor...
Mail us the information
Grace UMC;
624 Elm Ave.
P.O. Box 67
OR call us
(515) 733-4712
OR email us:
office@grace-umc.com

The Grace Church Visitor

VOL. 74 NO. 8

FEBRUARY 2023



Wheelchair pushers at Bethany Life



Children's Bell's

Prayer
in action
is love, *Love*
in action
is service.

MOTHER TERESA

What's Inside

- Page 2 – Feb. Birthdays, Lectionary Readings, From Our Pastor
- Page 3 – G.R.A.C.E. Teams, Sympathy, Email Lists,
Feb. Volunteers, Beware
- Page 4 – Prayers, Gifts, Presence, Witness, Service, MS Youth,
Funeral Committee, Loaves and Fishes, Thank You
- Page 5 – Mission Brunch, Adult Studies Class, Installment Service
Ash Wed., Senior Center Help, Message from Bishop
- Page 6 – Summer Camps, Inclement Weather, UWF News,
- Page 7 – Youth Update
- Page 8 – Winter Gear Swap, Moms in Prayer, Lighthouse
- Page 9 – Council Committee Meeting Minutes
- Page 10 – February Calendar of Events

Grace = God's Riches At Christ's Expense

February Birthdays

Bill Mardock	2/1
Alexandra Franco	2/2
Lorijo Lounsberry	2/4
Velda Frette	2/5
Val Gregori	2/12
Judy Brekke	2/14
Cora Hermanson	2/16
David Barclay	2/18
Tanner Blue	2/20
Jerry Spencer	2/20
Brian Jensen	2/26
Ruby Matheason	2/27

If we're missing a birthday please accept our apologies and let us know so we can update our records!



For GOD so loved the world,
that he gave his one and only
SON, that whoever believes in
him should not perish but have
eternal LIFE. John 3:16

February Lectionary

February 5

Isaiah 58:1-9a; Psalm 112:1-9;
1 Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

February 12

Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 119:1-8;
1 Corinthians 3:1-9; Matthew 5:1-37

February 19

Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 99;
2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

February 26

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7; Psalm 32;
Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

Deadline for submitting *Visitor* information is the 20th of each month. Information for the weekly bulletin and *This Week at Grace* is due in the office by noon on Wednesdays.

From Our Pastor

For some time people in the United States have recognized the month of February as Black History Month. It is really too bad that as we approach the *second quarter* (!) of the twenty-first century we still have to make such distinctions. But as one of my professors said years ago, until we're pretty sure that our history contains the facts of every group's past and the contributions of people regardless of gender or race then we have to continue to focus on one group at a time. Recently the state of Florida prohibited the teaching of an advance placement course on African-American history. I'm not sure why, although I understand that such a course is developed under the highest academic scrutiny. I have also read that when some people have visited restored Southern plantations they've been disturbed that so much of the tour focused on the lives and deprivations of the slaves. What did they think plantation life was about—just a lot of fancy dress balls?

When I was young it seemed to be the progressive thing to say that we're all alike regardless of race or that we didn't "see" race. But some recent discussions have helped me to understand that those views were not as helpful as we thought they were. Whether we intended to or not, we might have been suggesting that Americans of another race were, after all, just like us—the standard being white—when we should have been comfortable to let all people be who they were—different, but acceptable and loved in the eyes of God and God's people. By not "seeing" race we were, unfortunately, denying the uniqueness of an individual or a whole group of individuals.

Created equal but not the same, we all have made our contributions. Everyone needs to know that.

Your Servant for Christ's Sake,

Jonathan

Don't Stop Me If You've Heard This One Dept.

From the personals column somewhere to the north of here:

WANTED: Woman who can cook, dig worms, clean fish, and owns boat with motor.

Send picture of boat with motor.



GRACE Team "G"

Gini Michel -chair

Judy Andrew, Hubert & Rae Bickelhaupt, Alex & Claire Flaspohler, Stephanie Fournier, Tori Fournier, Eric & Shelley Hart, Jarod Hart, Luccas Hart, Kevin & Candi Holm, Ray & Betty Hults, Lorijo Lounsberry, Mike & Christine Marti, Caleb Michel, Jacob & Krystle Ness, Mark & Angie Schnurstein, Emma Schnurstein, Mason Schnurstein, Janet (Ken) Schuck, Chuck & Cheryl Semler, Virginia Swensen

Sympathy

Our condolences to the family of Kermit Miskell. Kermit passed away on January 8. His funeral was held at the church on January 13.

Email Lists

I am working on cleaning up my email lists. I send weekly emails (TWAG) typically on Thursdays and a newsletter (The Visitor) at the end of the month. If you stop receiving emails that you normally get or want to be taken off or added to one of these email lists, please call or email the office. Thank you! Shannon

*And now abide faith,
hope, love, these three;
but the greatest of these
is love.*

1 Corinthians 13:13

LOVE

February Volunteers

Sunday, February 5

Liturgist: Lauren Scruggs
Ushers: Virginia Swenson; Gini and Caleb Michel
Acolyte: Ryker Warwick

Sunday, February 12

Liturgist: Owen Hubert
Ushers: Cheryl Semler;
Raejean and Hubert Bickelhaupt
Acolyte: Isabelle Ness

Sunday, February 19

Liturgist: David Loupee
Ushers: Lorijo Lounsberry; Virginia Swenson
Acolyte: Owen Hubert

Sunday, February 26

Liturgist: Dave Doolittle
Ushers: Cheryl Semler; Janet Mason; Lily Berry
Brunch: 2 Clean Up: Gini Michel;
1 Gal. 2% Milk: Chris & Mike Marti
1 Gal. OJ: Chris & Mike Marti
Acolyte: Emma Larson

Bulletin Folder: Feb. 2: Cheryl Semler;
Feb. 9: Cheryl Semler;
Feb 16: Gini Michel;
Feb 23: Shelley Hart

Newsletter Folder: Shelley Hart

Beware!

Recently some of our members have received emails or texts claiming to be from me. Usually these ask you to contact me or to do something like buy gift cards to help someone in financial need. Please look carefully to see that these are coming from my email address or phone number. I would not refer to myself as "Pastor Jonathan." I would not ask you to help with gift cards. Please be careful and if you have any questions, contact me directly.

Jonathan



Our Prayers

Sue Bohner—Surgery; Sara Dappen; Amy Harlan—Father is ill; Marvin and Pauline Kokemiller; Loretta Parker; Gail Remis—Surgery; The Taylors; Jim Wirth

Our Gifts

Offering Jan 1—Jan 22:
\$12,481.00

Our Presence

Attendance Jan 1—Jan 22
Worship: 301 Total/75 Avg.
Sunday School (Jan 8—Jan 22):
54 Total/18 Avg.

Our Witness

We appreciate our January liturgists Gini Michel, Kurt Carlson, Becky Barclay, Gloria Sampson, Dave Doolittle.

Our Service

Thank you to those who helped with Kermit Miskell's funeral luncheon. Your service is very much appreciated.

Thank you to everyone who helped take down the Christmas decorations. It is always great to have many helpers when we need them.

Thank you to Cheryl Semler who took care of our poinsettias through Epiphany Sunday. They looked beautiful!

Middle School Youth Help

Compass meets every Wednesday night. As part of the ministry to the middle schoolers, they provide a meal each Wednesday before they begin. If you would like to help out with this ministry you can sign up at this link:

<https://m.signupgenius.com/#!/showSignUp/30e0e4aaba928a2fa7-youth/23833354>

Funeral Committee

The Funeral Committee of Grace Church provides a luncheon after a funeral for those who request one. A part of the luncheon includes bars baked by the women of Grace. This is a 10x15 (jelly roll pan) of bars of your choice. A list is kept so the same people are not called for each funeral. If you would like to be a part of Grace "bakers" please call Terry Gustason at 733-4562.

Loaves and Fishes

Our first opportunity in 2023 to volunteer at the Loaves and Fishes Pantry is Saturday, February 4. Let Louis Reeder (402-641-6722) or Janice Feil (319-350-9157) know if you are interested in volunteering on Saturday morning or if you are able to pick up donations at Hy-Vee on Friday. You can also leave a message at the church office.

Thank you!

We would like to thank everyone for their thoughts and prayers over the last year, for Chuck and our family. We would especially like to thank Pastor Jonathan for his prayers and visits, and to Mike and Patsy Jensen for their many acts of kindness and Virginia Swenson and family.

God Bless!

Ruby Matheason and Family



The hunger for love is much more difficult to remove than the hunger for bread.

Mother Teresa

Share the
love of Christ
on Valentine's Day.



Mission Brunch

Our January Sunday Brunch was enjoyed by a great group of people. Sharla Mander, Tori Fournier, Peyton Rickerl and Savannah Jensen and G.R.A.C.E. Team E members hosted this month. \$360.40 was raised for the Roland-Story middle school food pantry! Please join us February 26th for our next mission brunch that will benefit the the Good Neighbor Fund and the We Care Fund. They will be serving egg casserole.

Adult Studies Class

The Adult Studies class will begin a new study on February 12 and completing it before Easter.

“SIGNS AND WONDERS” is a look at six of the miracles of Jesus through the eyes of Jewish Studies professor, Jill Levine.

Professor Levine explores selected miracles of Jesus in historical and theological context. For each miracle, she discusses not only how past witnesses would have understood the events, but also how today’s readers can draw meaning from Jesus’s words and actions.

All are welcome to join us in the choir room after coffee to watch a video and then engage in meaningful discussion with others.

Contact Rhonda Hampton for a book and for further information. Please join us!

Bishop Installment Service

The Iowa Conference invites you to welcome Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai during an installation service at Ames Collegiate United Methodist Church Sunday, February 19, at 3pm. Light refreshments and fellowship to follow the service.



Ash Wednesday



Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 22
7:00 PM

Story City Community Center

During the months of February, March and April, we are in desperate need of 2 volunteers for each Wednesday to help with Senior luncheons. You would need to be at the Senior center from 10:30-12:30 or less. You may also order a meal, catered by local restaurants, at a cost of \$4.00.

Thank you for your consideration,
Kalen Peterson, Director
515-733-4917

Message From Bishop Kennetha

It is with great sadness that we have heard of the shooting that happened at “Starts Right Here,” an educational mentorship organization that helps at-risk youth in Des Moines.

Two students were killed, and the founder of the program, Will Holmes, was seriously injured. Please hold the families of these children, their classmates and friends, and the teachers and administrators of the program in prayer. Please also pray for Mr. Holmes and for those who are caring for him.

As United Methodists and as Christians, we must continue to pray and work for an end to violence of all kinds and for healing from the trauma that gun violence, in particular, brings to our communities. We pray for peace and healing in the Des Moines community and beyond.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).

Bishop Kennetha J. Bigham-Tsai

Adventure of a Lifetime

Registration is now available online for the 2023 Iowa United Methodist Camps at Wesley Woods and Lake Okoboji.

Please check out:

www.iaumc.org/camps.

Remember, you need to give Gini Michel a copy of your registration in order to be reimbursed.

Grace pays:

- * Methodist Camp for church members / 100%
- * Another faith-based church camp / 75%
- * Non Methodist persons attending a Methodist Camp with church member / 50%

Inclement Weather

When there is a weather related early out at Roland-Story schools, all church activities for that day will also be cancelled. As a general rule, worship services will NOT be cancelled in the case of inclement weather. But, if authorities are advising no travel in the cases of heavy Saturday night snow and severely low temperatures, we will adhere to their advice. In that case, tune into KCCI TV, check your email or consult Facebook as we will post the information there by as early as 7:00 on the Sunday morning in question. You are urged to use your own good judgment as to if you are able to attend the service when the weather is nasty.



UWF News

On Wednesday, January 11, 2023, 13 members of Grace United Women in Faith met in the Fellowship Hall of Grace Church. Also present was our district president, Sharon Boen, from Ames. She presented us with a Grace Church United Women in Faith Certificate of Recognition. Patsy opened our meeting with a Bible verse from Philippians 4 verse 13, followed by a prayer. We then sang verse one of Go Tell It On The Mountain followed by reciting The Purpose.

Patsy then presented our Mission Moment, which was our Pledge Service. This celebrated 150 years of giving and Patsy reminded us of the local women before us who have been an inspiration to all of us.

Treasurers Report was given. We have a balance \$419.44. We had \$4,337.63 in disbursements which included Christmas gifts, Treasurer to Riverview Park District and our annual giving of \$3,000.

The Secretary's reports for November and December were read and approved. Thank you's were read from those we delivered cookies to in December and the Roland-Story Food Pantry for our gift of \$300.

Patsy thanked those who helped with the community dinners in December and told us we are already on their list for December 2023. She also thanked Claudia for our awesome program books. Patsy had flyers about a zoom book study "Just Peace" by Mattie Stepanek and Jimmy Carter and a Martin Luther King breakfast to be held in Des Moines. Registration will be needed for both and information was included on the flyers.

Gail Remus then gave an interesting program on Resolutions. She began with a history of resolutions. We participated in an exercise where we first wrote down a feeling or thought we felt we needed to get rid of in our life, tore it up and threw it away, we then wrote down a resolution and then a love letter to ourselves which will be mailed to us this summer. Gail ended with an interpretive dance.

Hostess for January were Jan and Lena.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, February 8, 1:30 PM. Mission Moment: Mindy Kardell; Program: Marilyn Webster: (Story City Churches from the beginning) Hostess: Tep Reeder Submitted by Terry Gustason

Hello to All three Congregations,

I would like to first start by saying thank you to everyone for supporting this ministry and understanding that the youth is the next generations of Christians. That is why I love youth ministry so much? Reaching out to the future of our faith is why I do what I do. That and I love being around the kids. They make my job what it is. This crazy and amazing job. Working with the youth makes me think, "I can't believe I get paid to do what I do!" Getting to spend an hour and a half on a Wednesday night creating a safe, fun, Christ centered atmosphere where kids can come and enjoy fellowship as well as learn about Jesus!

I want to highlight our retreat that we took the weekend of January 6-7. The kids all rolled into Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp at around 4:45 and got to meet our three other adult volunteers for the weekend. My girlfriend Reegan and her close friend Emmy stayed in the girls' cabin, while my friend Conner and I stayed in the guys' cabin. All four of us had worked at Riverside last summer. We enjoyed some delicious food provided by camp Friday night, Saturday morning, and Saturday lunch. Pastor John Sheahan from Bergen came up and gave a message to the kids about epiphany on epiphany which was Friday night. Then, the kids broke out into 4 Coed small groups to discuss what they learned and read a little from the scriptures that tied how to be an ambassador in with pastor John's message. Saturday morning, we got the chance to engage in some contemporary worship which personally was my favorite part of the weekend. Getting to show the kids that as long as you are glorifying the Lord, there is no wrong way to worship. Whether you are singing traditional hymns, contemporary songs, or just reading and praying, all are accepted and heard by the Lord. I then spoke about temptation and how to work around temptation to reach the people that need Jesus the most. And once again the kids broke off into small groups and discussed what they had learned. The rest of the weekend was filled with hanging out, eating smore's and playing games! The kids unanimously and very excitedly said that they would love to do another retreat that was a whole weekend!

Another thing I would like to touch on is what's next. Compass is meeting on Wednesday nights where we will start to adopt the large group/small group idea into the lesson portion of the night. For this, I will be giving a quick devo or message, no more than 10ish minutes about the night's topic. This is more for the group as a whole, me included because I am aspiring to be a pastor someday and would like the practice of giving messages even if they are a little shorter than normal, and for the kids because it will teach them that some really good things can come out of paying attention to the pastor's sermon on Sunday morning. I am asking for a few volunteers a week to come and lead a group of kids in a bible study.

I am also attending Iowa State again this semester taking 12 credit hours (4 classes) majoring in public relations. As such, my hours at the church have gone from 25 to 15. I want you all to know that I will be making the most of those 15 hours making sure the kids are still my main priority.

The last thing real quick I am trying to gauge interest from compass and axis, (middle school and high school age, you don't have to attend regular sessions) in interest for a trip to 7 oaks to do some tubing, as well as some snowboarding and skiing if you feel so inclined so please reach out if you have interest in that!

Joel Chambers



Winter Gear Swap

Community Winter Gear Swap

Brought to you by RScityserve!

Bring the old stuff in and pick up some new ones!
Or just come check out what we have in stock!

Accepted Donations:
Gently used, clean, any size (Infant-Adult)

*socks *gloves/mittens *boots
*hats *snow pants *coats
*sweatshirts

Donations are not required to take items!

*Open Dates for 2022-2023 Winter Season:

NOV. 5, 12, 19 - DEC. 3, 10, 17

JAN. 7, 14, 21, 28 - FEB 4, 11, 18, 25

*10-Noon on Saturdays, 403 Broad St. in Story City.



RScityserve.org || facebook.com/RScityserve

Moms in Prayer

Rise Up
& Pray
for your children
and their schools!

MomsInPrayer.org



Ladies, you are welcome to join **Moms in Prayer** as we begin a new semester!

We'll meet the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays to pray 10-11am at Jennifer Frank's home starting **January 10th**.

Moms in Prayer is for ALL women who desire to be united in conversational prayer to pray for ALL children, whether newborn to school age to adult, special needs, prodigals, and military. ALL children will be covered in prayer including our schools, teachers, and community. Please contact Jennifer

Frank at miprolandstory@gmail.com or 515 202 5928 for more information.



Lighthouse

THINK YOU MAY BE PREGNANT?



Lighthouse offers free & confidential pregnancy testing in Story City at Immanuel Lutheran Church, located just 20 minutes north of Ames. **Call 621-648-4198**

FREE & CONFIDENTIAL SERVICES:

- *Pregnancy Tests
- *Medical Referrals
- *Adoption Referrals
- *Parenting Classes
- *Encouragement
- *Post-rape Support
- *Infant Loss Support
- *Abortion Grief Support
- *Sexual Health Facts
- *Mentoring

MYRTLE'S CLOSET

Children's clothing NB - 3T; diapers, wipes, books, toys & quilts available free to families enrolled in Lighthouse Center's programs.

Myrtle's Closet is located in Immanuel Lutheran Church, 604 Lafayette Ave, Story City. Private parking in the alley on the north side of church - follow the **Lighthouse** signs into the building and head upstairs. Volunteers register & assist you with shopping.

Myrtle's Closet Story City Facebook page for hours & to volunteer.



Happy Valentine's Day



Church Council Notes

Unofficial Minutes January 23, 2023 meeting

Present: Gloria Sampson (Chair, Missions), Becky Barclay (Finance), Jim Hassebrock (Trustee), Louis Reeder (Trustees), Pastor Jonathan, Cheryl Semler (Worship), Gini Michel (Education), Patsy Jensen (UWF), Krystal Ness (SPRC), Cathy Hermanson (rec. secretary)

Jonathan offered prayer and Gloria opened the meeting.

Gini/Patsy moved the November minutes be accepted. Motion carried.

Finance: Becky reported the church is in good financial condition at the beginning of the year. Paying two months of apportionments in January.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Jonathan cited good attendance at Christmas Eve and Christmas services, not so good on New Year's Day. Ash Wednesday service will be at 7:00 pm on February 22nd. Wondering about moving Finance meeting time to 5:45 to give people a less hurried chance to get to the meeting after work. May also flip meeting times for SPRC and Worship committees on the second Monday since all the Worship committee members are retired and may have an easier time meeting at 5:30. Jonathan remains as clergy chair of the Story Co. circuit. The circuit desires to build congregational connection between Story Co. UM churches. He cited the joint holiday service that has been shared the past couple years. Jonathan is chair of the Roland-Story Kiwanis also. He continues to recover from neck surgery. RS MAST students will be present to sing during our worship service on January 29 as a fund-raiser for their spring break trip to NYC and Carnegie Hall.

CAT report – pleased to have had 78 complete the survey – wish we would have had greater participation from those under 50 years old. Overall, we believe we are in a good place though there continues to be some wariness about past conflict. Are we flexible or just unwilling to rock the boat? Ryan Christianson (Annual Conference rep) would like to visit to discuss how we use the information learned thru the CAT going forward. Jonathan will try to schedule his 30-40 minute visit for the latter half of our February Council meeting.

Committee Reports: Ministry Areas

Worship: Cheryl reported 126 people attended the Christmas Eve service. Scout Sunday is set for February 12th. A laminated copy of the Apostle's Creed has been made for a member of the congregation to use each Sunday. Cheryl cited a couple concerns that had been shared with her. Mentioned Pastor Jonathan's report about a recent visit to Bethesda Lutheran church in Jewell concerning their sound and monitor system.

Christian Education: Gini reported the Sunday school materials for the third quarter have been distributed to the teachers. SS attendance is down significantly in January as it is most years after the holiday season. Confirmation Day for our four students will likely be April 23 and Baccalaureate for our graduating student on May 21.

Missions – Gloria shared copies of the end of year mission report. \$17,542 was raised for our various missions in 2022 – it was a very good year. In December our mission focus was on the Taylor family - \$2,072.90 was raised for that concern. At our January mission brunch, \$296.40 was raised for the RS Food Pantry. Our February mission focus will remain "in house" as we replenish our Good Neighbor and We Care funds for as needed use.

UMW: Patsy reported 18 members/friends of Grace were visited and gifted with a plate of cookies as a part of the December meeting. Four families were provided for through Grace church members participation in the RS Angel Tree program in December. Over 100 children benefitted from the Angel Tree program. Grace provided 2 volunteers to help out at the December Wednesday Sr. Citizens luncheons. 1 prayer shawl was delivered.

Committee Reports: Administrative Area

SPRC: We welcomed the new representative, Krystal Ness. Staff appreciation Sunday was January 8. SPRC meets every other month. Next meeting in the second Monday in February.

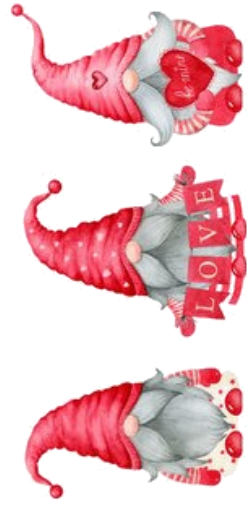
Trustees: New Trustee reps, Jim and Louis outlined current ongoing projects. Cited the Ness family for providing funds for a new, safer loft ladder – makes storing Christmas decorations a bit less hazardous!

Endowment equity accounts were down 15%. \$170 was given to the youth account. \$52 to the camping account. \$1050 will likely go to Trustee projects.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Jonathan shared the letter he sent thanking Bethel Church for their donation to Grace Church as they dissolved their congregation in 2022.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:09.

Next meeting will be **MONDAY, February 27 at 6:30, Respectfully submitted,** Cathy Hermanson, Rec. Sec.



February 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 5:00 Children's Bells 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir	2	3	4 9:30-12:00 Loaves and Fishes
5 9:15 Worship Communion 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 6:00 Axis	6	7	8 1:30 UWF 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir 7:50 Bells	9	10	11 7:00-10:00 Trivia Night Bethany Foundation
12 9:15 Worship Scouting Sunday 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 6:00 Axis	13 5:30 SPRC 6:30 Worship Comm.	14	15 5:00 Children's Bells 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir	16	17	18
19 9:15 Worship 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 3:00 Bishop Installment Service -Collegiate UMC	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday 7:00 Ash Wednesday Service 7:30 Choir	23	24	25
26 9:15 Worship 10:15 Brunch 10:30 Sunday School 6:00 Axis	27 5:45 Finance 6:30 Council	28 Year End Reports Due				