

THE WINDOW

On a journey with the living Christ; connecting with God, others, and the world.

June 2022

A LASTING LEGACY by Peggy Kelley, Elder for Nominating



On April 25th, West Hills Church lost a creative Director of Music and Worship, a faithful servant, a gifted musician, and a dear friend. Since then, I have heard countless stories of Kevin Gibson's interaction with members of our

West Hills family, whether it be his bantering about his beloved Missouri Tigers, his inquisitive questions regarding our "Presbyterianisms", tales of his most recent Pickleball game, or his constant texting...the list goes on and on.

Kevin, and his sidekick, Heather, were among the first to bring humor and smiles back into our lives as we found ourselves isolated during the pandemic. Whether they were hosting a crazy game show, calling Bingo numbers, dangling their feet in a kiddie pool in the parking lot, or holding trivia contests...their humor and antics were a welcomed distraction from our stress-filled days.

When the rooms and hallways of West Hills fell dark due to the pandemic, Kevin introduced Pickleball to West Hills! Folks who previously had never considered spending time in the gym found themselves enjoying exercise, laughter and fellowship while attempting to maneuver the strange paddle and wiffleball in the court which Kevin had painstakingly marked with green tape.

I was blessed to serve on Kevin's Worship Arts Team which introduced West Hills to the Holy Week Devotion, the Journey to the Cross Stations during Lent, the Service of Darkness on Maundy Thursday/ Good Friday, and the Hanging of the Green Service during Advent. He taught me so much about the importance of exploring all our senses during our worship experience, whether it be with the impeccable musical selections, the explosion of color on the Sanctuary wall, or the works of art by both local and renowned artists.

And then, there were the Christmas decorations!!! Kevin Gibson was the only person that I knew who could possibly think that West Hills did not have enough Christmas decorations! When you see

the four trees under the cross, the flickering pillar candles, the garland draped sanctuary, and the glowing lanterns...remember to thank the Lord that He brought Kevin to West Hills to show us how to experience worship.

As **Elder of Nominating**, I have been thinking about Kevin Gibson's legacy. He touched our hearts and has undoubtedly left a legacy at West Hills. We are each called by God to do the same. It may be very different from Kevin's legacy, but it is essential to God's world, none the less.

In Max Lucado's book, The Touch of the Master's Hand, he asks, "Wouldn't you love to look back on your life and know you had done what you were called to do?"

Wouldn't we all want to answer this question with a resounding, "Yes!" And how does this speak to each of us? How are we using the gifts that the Lord has given us for His glory? Are we doing what we are called to do?

In his book, Bedside Blessings, Charles Swindoll states, "In an overpopulated world, it's easy to underestimate the significance of one. There are so many people who have so many gifts and skills who are already doing so many things that are important. Who needs me? What can I as one individual contribute to the overwhelming needs of our world? But the truth is, you are you—the only you in all the world."

At his funeral, one of Kevin's closest friends commented about his propensity for having a messy office. That may have been true, but Kevin was never too busy to stop to visit with a friend, text someone in need, or to serve our Lord. Let that, too, be our legacy!

The Nominating Team has begun its preparations for slating the next class of West Hills leadership. Please pray for the discernment of our team and for the individuals that God is calling to these positions. Please also prayerfully consider answering **your call** if you have not yet found your ministry niche, as we journey together with the living Christ!

CAREGIVING COMPASSION

by Ginny Jansen, Caregiving Outreach
Deacon



As I am writing this, it is cool and the rain is falling—and the news media is focused on the instances of violence that have been so prevalent in our country and world recently. I can't imagine what would lead someone to purposely kill others—especially children. As I listen to the reporters, I feel helpless but am also reminded how important it is to remember that God instructed us to love our neighbors. There are so many ways that we can show compassion to others—even those who are different than we are. West Hills has a group of Caregiving Ambassadors who periodically contact some of our members who aren't active in small groups, Bible studies, etc. through phone calls, cards, or e-mails. However, there are ways that all of us can be involved in "Caregiving". It starts with your family and friends or co-workers --- the people that you see frequently. Some of you might be involved with taking care of an infant or small child and others might be assisting an elderly relative. "Caregiving" might also be as simple as a smile or a quick "Hello" to someone at the grocery store. It might be volunteering with the homeless or contributing to a food pantry. Some acts of compassion are so small that we might not even realize that we are making a difference in someone else's day. Other acts of compassion take planning—like the upcoming ABIDE Mission Impact Weekend. I hope that all of us can start each day with a goal of being compassionate to one another.

I recently read a devotional that ended with a story of a little girl taking an evening walk with her father. Looking at the stars she said, "Daddy, if the wrong side of Heaven is so beautiful, what must the right side be like!" Can you imagine how bright West Hills would shine if all of us made an effort to let God's love shine through our acts of compassion every day!

SPIRITUAL CORRESPONDENCE

by Jana Prescott



God Calling, April 26 - God does the work and God makes the opportunities.

So, if each of us is willing to put in mind what God has for us to accomplish, then He will help us find the task He has for us, and give us the strength of mind and the wisdom of heart we need to go forth and do what Christ has laid out for us to do. Just a few possibilities: helping each other and/or someone else, of any age: clean the house/cook/wash dishes/do laundry/buy groceries/babysit/read/write/just talk. Whatever you can think of that could help someone who needs it. Christ made us to live as one family, to stay together. To work together. To love each other.

MAY *Session notes*

- Session continued discussion of the book *Disunity in Christ* by Christina Cleveland.
- Session will not meet in June. The next regular Session meeting is July 19, 2022.
- Maintenance concerns were identified including the carpet in Geneva Lounge and the condition of the parking lots.
- Seth O'Reilly has temporarily joined the West Hills staff and is providing coverage of the front desk, assisting with doors, phones, and communication/social media duties.
- The job description for the Director of Worship and Music is being worked on.

To contact the Session, send an email to:
clerkofsession@whcomaha.org

June At A Glance

At West Hills our mission statement . . . On a journey with the living Christ; connecting with God, others, and the world, provides us with the framework for how we live our lives. Here are notable activities this month in the life of our church, seeking to connect us to God, others, and the world.

Sundays in June - Livestreaming and in-person worship service @ 10 a.m. Following the service, join us for fellowship in Geneva Lounge. For those not attending in-person, we welcome you to watch the service by livestream at: whcomaha.org/live

Kids Crosswalk and Youth JourneyGroups are on summer break. A variety of fun events have been planned for all ages; see the website, whcomaha.org, for more information or scan the QR code!



Tuesday Mornings - Men's Bible Study meets at 7:00 a.m. in the large conference rm. #182 in-person. The group studies the scripture passage for the upcoming Sunday sermon.

Wednesday Mornings - Women's book study at 9:30 a.m. resumes in-person in the chapel until June 22. The group is studying Revelation - Extravagant Hope by Margaret Feinberg.

Wednesday Evenings - Men's Bible Study at 7 p.m. meeting in-person, large conf. room #182

Friday Midday - Men's Bible Study Noon Zoom. Contact the church for the Zoom link.

June 5 - Celebration of Communion on Pentecost Sunday

June 7 - TreeRush Adventure for Youth at Fontenelle Forest at 5 p.m.

June 16 - Sloppy Joe Ministry Drop Off at the church. Come between 10-4 to the north circle drive and drop your cooked sloppy joe seasoned meat and hamburger buns in the bins. Make as much as you'd like. The food will be taken to the Stephen Center to be enjoyed by many!

June 19 - "Getting To Know You" session at 9 a.m. in fellowship hall. Come learn fun things about your church family. All ages are invited to join in on the discussion.

June 22 - West Hills Fear Factor (Youth) at 6:30 p.m. An evening of gross, scary, FUN, challenges!

June 24-26 Women's Silent Retreat at St. Benedict Center in Schyler, NE

June 26 - "Getting To Know You; Small Group Style" at 9 a.m. in fellowship hall. A one time event to meet others using the format of a small group.

June 26 - Picnic on the Playground - bring your lunch and meet on the playground for some fellowship after worship.

A NEW LIFE IN 90 DAYS! by Jeff Smith



No, this is not a diet fad or a TV commercial but a fact of life for refugees who resettle to Omaha.

Just imagine what it would be like if you and your family, with three children, lived in a one room cottage without running water in a refugee camp in Thailand for 20 years, and the next day you were flown to the United States. Upon arrival in Omaha, you were placed in a three bedroom home and assigned a case manager who had just 90 days to help you with a new language, housing, navigating a complicated bureaucracy for health care/food assistance and finding work.

Although a 90-day window may seem like "Mission Impossible," we at West Hills have had the great privilege of helping a family of five (father, mother, and three boys) adapt to their new home. The family has found a church home. They have started language training. Soon their father will begin work, two of the younger children are enrolled in a summer school program to help with language and their oldest son will soon enroll in a Job Corps program to learn a skill. This amazing adjustment was made possible thanks to the help and support of our church family (furniture, supplies, clothes, and donations), their friends/relatives, and staff from Lutheran Family Services (LFS). Although the family has made remarkable progress adjusting to life in the U.S., they still face some daunting financial challenges. Lars, the father of the family, applied for a social security card some time ago, but he is still waiting on it to arrive. While he waits, the family has no source of income other than minimal government assistance. And just this week, because their government allowance was delayed, the family had just a few

dollars to their name. Thank goodness we were able to provide some financial support thanks to donations previously received from West Hills. Since they will need some ongoing financial assistance until they can get established, some additional support /donations would be very much appreciated.

We know supporting a refugee family was a new initiative for us, and some may have had questions about doing this, but thanks to the work, effort, donations, and prayers we have the joy of giving "a new life" to this family and a significant jump start for their life in America.

Thank you, Gary Anders, Steve Burgess, and Jeff Smith.

Note: Although we had originally been paired with a family from Afghanistan, when that family left Omaha to be closer to their family—staff from Lutheran Family Services asked if we would be willing to give support to a Karin family from Thailand.



THE HISTORY BEHIND A FEW FAMILIAR OLD HYMNS by Gloria Zinn



"Amazing Grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me". Familiar words to many of us from the pen of John Newton, a slave ship captain and a man who had mocked religion for years. Newton described himself as a "wretch" and a "totally immoral man in word and deed." During a violent thunderstorm at sea in 1748 Newton's slave ship was almost destroyed, along with his crew. He had been relieved by another crew member, who was swept overboard. Newton began to pray that God would forgive him of his wicked lifestyle, and the ship and remainder of

the crew were saved. However, this "spiritual awakening" did not stop his continued work as a slave trader. When he had to retire, due to medical problems in 1754, Newton began to study theology. Ten years later he became a pastor in England and used the words he had written, "I once was lost, but now am found/was blind but now I see" in a sermon on New Year's Day in 1773. John Newton had also become an abolitionist, writing a graphic account of his experiences with slavery, and repenting of his involvement in the field of slavery. A copy of his well-read pamphlet was sent to each member of Parliament, and Newton would testify against slavery at every parliamentary hearing. He died in 1807, nine months after Parliament abolished the slave trade in the British Empire. Over the years "Amazing Grace" has become the most familiar and treasured hymn throughout the world as a testimony of God's divine grace given to anyone who seeks Him.

"When peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll; Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, 'It is well, it is well with my soul.'" Horatio Gates Spafford, a successful lawyer in Chicago, lost his 4 year old son to pneumonia in 1871, as well as most of his finances due to the Chicago fire of that year that destroyed almost the entire city. He made plans two years later to travel to England with his wife Anna and their four daughters to help D.L. Moody with his evangelistic campaign. When business required him to stay in Chicago he sent his family ahead, planning to follow them in a few days. After four days at sea the ship his family was on collided with a sea vessel and sank. His four daughters died, but his wife survived and sent Spafford a telegram: "Saved alone. What should I do." He quickly set sail on the first ship going to Europe so he could be with his grieving wife. When the ship's captain informed Mr. Spafford they were passing over the place where the other ship had sunk, and his daughters had drowned, he stared down at that dark water and later went to his cabin, being inspired to write the poem that would become a very well-loved hymn, "It Is Well With My Soul."



THE HISTORY BEHIND A FEW FAMILIAR OLD HYMNS, continued



"O Lord, my God, when I, in awesome wonder" are the beginning words to the very familiar hymn, "**How Great Thou Art.**" The poem was written by a Swedish author and editor, Carl Boberg in 1885. He and some friends were caught in a heavy thunderstorm where strong winds and flashing lightning caused the group to seek shelter. When the storm ended, the sky cleared with a "beautiful rainbow", and inspired by the sounds of the birds singing and the change in the environment, Boberg was moved to write a poem entitled "How Great Thou Art." Boberg said several years

later he was amazed to hear his poem being sung by a congregation in church to an old Swedish folk melody! It went through various translations as many other countries were impressed with the words and the music. In 1957, the Billy Graham crusade in New York City made it a standard hymn, and many denominations today use this familiar hymn as one of their favorites.



"**What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear!**" This very familiar hymn was first written as a poem by Pastor Joseph Scriven, a native of Dublin, Ireland. He graduated from Trinity College, becoming a minister and was anticipating his marriage to his childhood sweetheart. However, the day before the wedding his fiancée was riding her horse to meet Joseph when her horse was startled by something and she was thrown into a nearby river, where she was knocked unconscious and

drowned. Joseph could no longer stand to continue living in Ireland, and moved to Canada. There his life was dedicated to good works, caring for others, and tutoring children. He fell in love and in 1854 planned to marry, however again tragedy struck and his young 23 year old fiancée died of pneumonia. He stated his commitment to God helped him throughout his life struggles, and he wrote finding solace in "the nearness of God who is my closest friend." In 1855 he sent his poem to his mother in a letter "intending that it be seen only by her," although he had originally published the poem anonymously. By 1865, a well-known publishing firm published it and three years later music was composed by Charles Converse. It had been criticized as being "too much on the order of the sentimental gospel type" but its popularity grew and it has become a favorite hymn for many churches over the years.

FATHER'S DAY POEM - "SO GOD MADE A FATHER" by May Patterson

As we celebrate fathers this month, this is a special poem by May Patterson on the role fathers may hope to live out here on earth. *Note: This poem was inspired by Paul Harvey's "So God Made a Farmer."*

At the dawn of time, God looked down on all He had made and said, "Now, I need a caretaker."

So, God made a father.

God said, "I need someone to teach children to fish, and to ride a bike without training wheels, and to play catch in the backyard. It must be someone who's tough enough to run a chainsaw and wield a machete and yet, gentle enough to join his little girl and her dolls for tea."

So, God made a father.

"I need someone to bring the car around when it's raining, so everyone else can stay dry. Someone who will keep jumper cables in his truck, just in case he needs to help a stranger. I need someone to notice practical things, like how the tread on the tires is wearing and if the weather stripping around the front door needs replacing, for no one else will."

"I'll create someone who's strong enough to open a tightly sealed jelly jar and tall enough to place the angel on top of the Christmas tree. Someone who will be gracious enough to let his son fish the best fishing hole or to let his daughter win at least one hand of gin rummy."

"Yes, he will struggle to find his glasses and keys," God thought. "But I'll help him find time for the important things, like tumbling with the kids in the den floor, or saying 'I'm proud of you, son,' or giving Mama a hug."

So, God made a father.

God said, "I need someone brave enough to carve the Thanksgiving turkey, for no one else seems to want the job. Someone who's not afraid to go into Grandma's dark cellar, or to check on what goes bump in the night, or to remove the dead mouse from the mousetrap."

"I need someone wise enough to know when to let his child fail. Someone who will pick her up, dry her tears and say, 'Honey, I know you can do it! Give it another try.'"

"I need someone who listens more than he talks. Who will stand by his family through laughter and tears, tornadoes and snowstorms, good times and bad. Someone who will love his kids and love their mother even more."

So, God made a father.



Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6 (NIV)

God said, "I need someone to provide for the family. Someone who will get up early and stay up late and never complain. I need someone who's willing to make unpopular decisions and stand by them. Someone to provide authority and discipline, as well as love."

"I need someone with broad shoulders, broad enough to carry a little child around town and broad enough to pull more than his fair share. Yes, I need someone who will work the second-shift, or take second-best, or play second fiddle, so that his family can have it better than he did."

"I need someone who is willing . . . willing to man up and provide the love, support and strength his family will so desperately need."

So, God made a father.

"Sometimes, he will not feel worthy of the love his family gives him. There will be times when he fails to live up to my ideal standard. But when his family needs him, he will show up, or give up, or do whatever needs to be done."

"Yes, that's exactly what I need," thought God as He shook His head. "A father to love my children, and if necessary, to lay down his life for them. Someone . . . well, someone like Me."

So, God made a father.

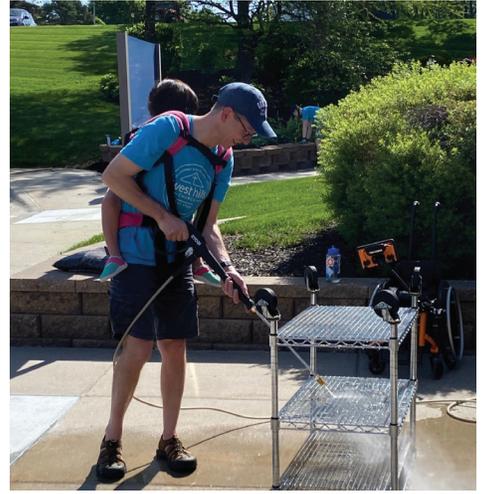
**He is the first hero a little child will ever know.
His influence lasts much longer than his life.
He is an *earthly* portrayal of the *Heavenly Father*.**

On Father's Day, our nation will pause to celebrate our fathers. But it might be difficult for you to celebrate because your father is no longer around. Or maybe your relationship with your father is broken, or not what you hoped it would be.

Even if you can't celebrate with your earthly father on Father's Day, you can still celebrate with your Heavenly Father.

THE ALL CHURCH WORK DAY WAS AWESOME . . .

Thank you friends for your servant heart and in helping to maintain the building and grounds God has entrusted to us. We couldn't do it without you (and we wouldn't want too)!



CELEBRATING OUR LOCAL MISSION PARTNERS

On Sunday, May 15 we welcomed our local mission partners to West Hills. They were present to share how God is moving in their ministry. We also got to hear their prayer requests so we can be in prayer for specific needs they have. Thank you to Joey McKernan, Executive Director at ABIDE, for provided the sermon message to us that day. We were blessed!

To be in prayer for our local mission partners, they are:

ABIDE

Heartland Hope Mission

InterVarsity

North Omaha Good News Bears

The Friendship Center - Arabic Christian Fellowship

Young Life



Heartland Hope Mission



ABIDE



North Omaha Good News Bears

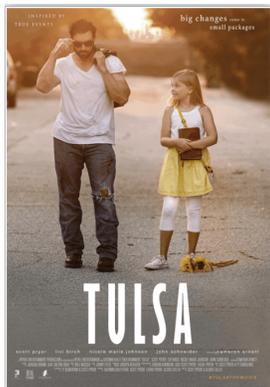


Young Life



InterVarsity

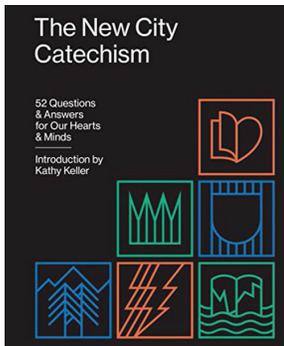
MOVIE SUGGESTION



The 2-hour movie “Tulsa” reviewed by Dove.org, is based on a true story and follows Tommy Colston, (Scott Pryor), a Marine veteran with his own battles to face. Upon realizing he has a 9-year-old daughter, Tulsa (Livi Birch), Tommy unwillingly allows her into his home, where her devout faith in Christ begins to change both their lives. But when an accident turns Tulsa and Tommy’s lives around, Tommy must learn to overcome his battles with addiction and loss to become the father his daughter always wanted.

Released on January 15, 2021 “Tulsa” can be rented or purchased on Prime Video for \$2.99 or on Apple TV for \$4.99.

BOOK SUGGESTION



The book, “The New City Catechism: 52 Questions and Answers for our Hearts and Minds” was published by The Gospel Coalition and Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City.

According to Timothy Keller, founder of Redeemer Presbyterian Church, “At present, the practice of catechism, particularly among adults, has been almost completely lost. If we reengage this biblical practice in our churches, we will find again God’s Word dwelling in us richly (Col. 3:16). Because the practice of catechism takes truth deep into our hearts, so we find ourselves thinking in biblical categories as soon as we can reason”.

In addition, each question’s answer gives visual learners a special picture to interpret and understand, along with icons of significant biblical themes. Also, highlighted sections within the answers give younger readers an age-appropriate version of the answer.

According to book reviewer Joseph Rossell, “The entire catechism can be memorized in one year by memorizing one question and answer per week, along with the accompanying picture.”

BIBLE QUIZ compiled by Gloria Zinn

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE BIBLE?

1. **What king did the prophet Elijah confront?**
A) Jeroboam B) Omri C) Ahab D) Asa
2. **What happened to the ship’s crew when they threw Jonah overboard?** A) they all drowned B) the sea calmed down C) the ship smashed into rocks D) nothing
3. **Who said: “the time of my departure is at hand”?** A) Jesus B) Peter C) Jeremiah D) Paul
4. **What two men in the Bible never died?**
A) Elijah and Methuselah B) Enoch and Elijah C) Elisha and Enoch D) Elijah and Elisha
5. **During the flood what did the dove bring back to the ark so Noah knew the water was receding?** A) fig leaf B) fig twig C) pomegranate leaf D) olive leaf
6. **What is the longest book in the Bible?**
A) Psalms B) Genesis C) Jeremiah D) Isaiah
7. **Who was the only female Judge mentioned in the Bible?** A) Judith B) Hannah C) Deborah D) Sapphira
8. **What religion did Jesus practice?**
A) Christianity B) Judaism C) Islam D) none
9. **Which one of these quotes is not found in the Bible:** A) “God helps those who help themselves” B) “This too shall pass” C) “Cleanliness is next to godliness” D) all of them
10. **Where in the book of Psalms can you find this verse “The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want”?** A) Psalm 119 B) Psalm 42 C) Psalm 23 D) Psalm 32
11. **Who demanded John the Baptist’s head on a platter?** A) Delilah B) Salome C) Jezebel D) Herodias
12. **Who is known as the father of Judaism?**
A) Jesus B) Abraham C) Melchizedek D) Isaac

(answers on the back page)

SUMMER EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



Check out these fun intergenerational events going on this summer in the life of our church!



Wednesday, June 22 - West Hills Fear Factor (6:30-8:30 p.m.)

Meet inside the west entrance of WHC for an evening of gross, scary, FUN challenges! Bring a brave friend!

Sunday, June 26 - Picnic on the Playground (11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)

Grab lunch and a lawn chair or picnic blanket for games and gab with the group after church.

July 8-10 - ABIDE Impact Mission Weekend

Be part of a short-term mission team to the ABIDE campus! This service-learning weekend will give you a chance to explore ways to be on the mission of expanding God's kingdom right here in this city. This is an all-ages mission weekend, so you can come with your family or friends, or make new friends and get to know your faith family.

Friday, July 15 - Let's Play! Game Night (6:30-8:30 p.m.)

Board games. Card games. Active games. Bring a friend and a favorite game to the lower level welcome center for some Friday night fun!

Sunday, July 17 - Picnic on the Playground (11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)

Just like in June: Grab lunch and a lawn chair or picnic blanket for games and gab with the group after church.

Wednesday, July 27 - Escape Room (5:15-8:00 p.m.)

We'll meet in the west parking lot of WHC at 5:15 p.m. and head to the House of Conundrum where we'll put our heads together to solve a puzzle. We'll finish with ice cream and meet back at WHC at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, July 31 - Water Balloon Extravaganza (after worship)

Come for worship, stay for water balloon fun! Casual clothes and safe footwear, please!

Friday, August 5 - Back to School Fun Night

Get ready to say goodbye to summer and hello to the new school year with music and outdoor games. Picnic and play (or cheer on) Aquaball, Gagaball, Nine Square, Cornhole, Giant Jenga, parachute play, and more!

Sunday, August 7 - Tuesday, August 9 Waterfalls, Worship, and the Word

Explore, laugh, eat, paddle, rest, and prepare your heart for the new school year with some time in the beautiful Niobrara River valley.

Sunday, August 28 - Picnic on the Playground

Third time! Grab lunch and a lawn chair or picnic blanket for games and gab with the group after church.

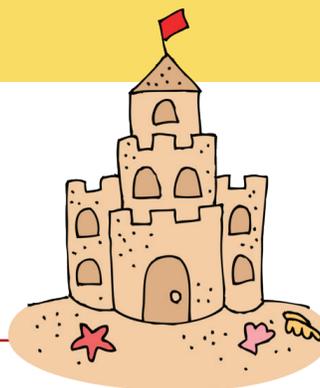
Friday, September 2 - Firepit with Friends

S'mores, games, and conversation around the firepit, music and sweets!

Check our website, whcomaha.org, for more information on each of these or scan the QR code here:



We look forward to spending this summer in fellowship with you learning, growing, and having fun in the sweet name of Jesus!



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



JUNE

1-Beth Anderson
Kim Sedivy
Ryan Turner
2-Debbie Chadwick
4-Rhona Yetts
5-Everly Hanna
7-Michael Wohlgemuth
9-Rosemary Frandeen
10-Warren Powell Jr.
11-Andy Jansen

Rene Padilla
12-Kathy Leach
15-Linda Springsted
Keith Boyd
19-Roger Harned
Kara DeHaven
26-Mark Jacobsen
28-Stan Owens
Rob Laughlin
29-Deb Johnson
Jane Power

Terry Topolski
Josh Sauer

JULY

2-Linda Schuchmann
Noreen Johnson
Nancy Anderson
3-Alisha Sauer
Alison Kopperud
Caitlin O'Hare
4-Jon Hoeven

7-Greg Schuchmann
Tim Weller
8-Ginger Travaille
Jennifer Wohlgemuth
9-Mike Overby
Alex Jansen

The complete list of July birthdays will be in the July newsletter.