



New Era Lutheran Church

April 2021 Newsletter

Pastor Kirsten Lee
405-248-0586

New Era Lutheran Church
3455 New Era Road
Muscataine, IA 52761
Sunday School: 9:30 am
Worship Services: 10:30 am

Contacts:

Joan Dietrich, Office Admin
Office: 563-263-5356
Office Hours: Tues & Wed – 10 am-2 pm
Thurs – 10 am - Noon
Email: neweralutheran@gmail.com

Organist: Mary Maxson
Choir Director: Lavonne Schrum

Building Rental –
Gloria Batteau

Church, Fellowship Hall, Gym
Home: 563-263-2969
Email: gfbatteau@gmail.com

Bulletin & Newsletter– Joan Dietrich

Cell: 563-299-4710
Email: neweralutheran@gmail.com
Bulletin - Items due by Thursday night
Each week
Newsletter Items due by the 20th of the
Month

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or [https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/NewEraLutheranChurch)
[NewEraLutheranChurch](https://www.facebook.com/NewEraLutheranChurch)

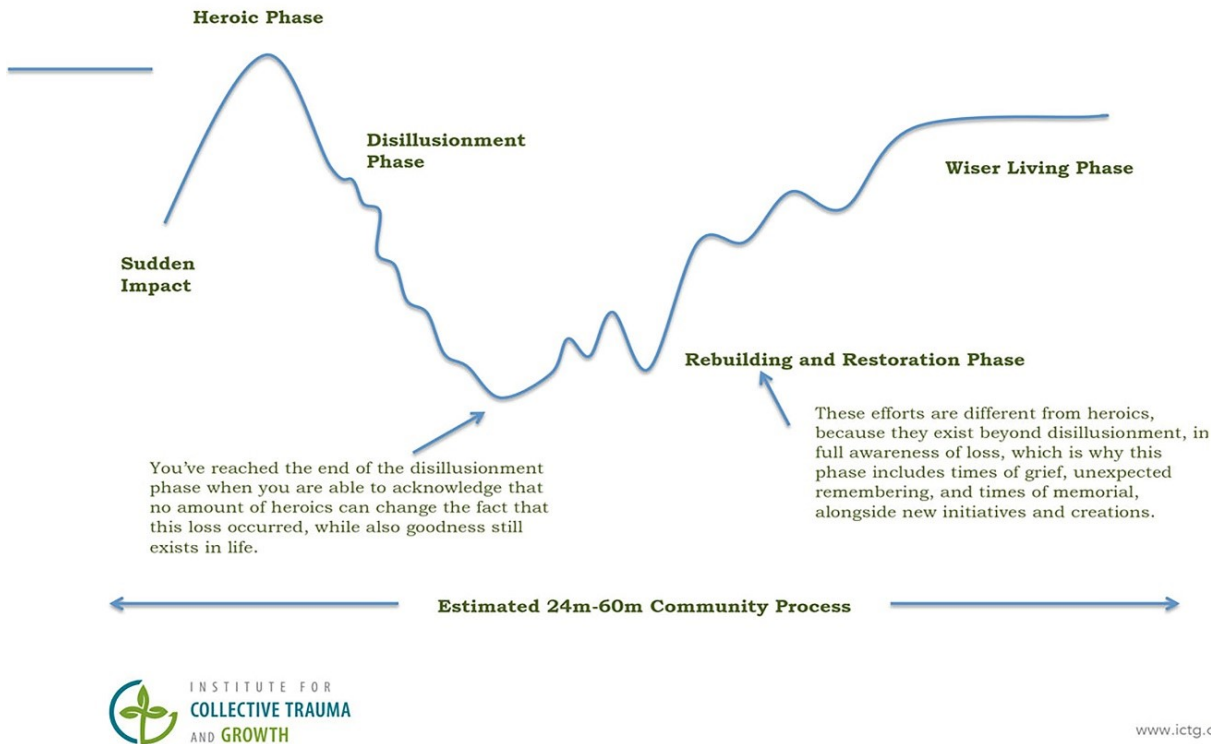
Dear holy one,

Here we are, nearly, in the month of April. We have now lived through an entire year of a pandemic, something none of us have ever done before. We rejoice and breathe a sigh of relief as vaccines are now available, as we once again worship in person, and as we enjoy more freedom in our communities. At the same time, we have barely begun to process our grief- both as a community and individually. We also continue to lament that the vaccines are not yet accessible to all who need one, that infections continue, and that we continue with limitations in our worshipping together.

We hold the joy and hope along with the lament and sorrow.

The graphic that is shown here was shared with me at a conference for pastors in this synod as we discussed how the pandemic was continuing to impact our congregations and ourselves.

Phases of Collective Trauma Response



As was explained to me, we began the pandemic with a sudden impact. We had no warning as the pandemic began. And in the immediate days and weeks following, we were in the Heroic Phase. Hearts were placed on windows, we supported medical personnel with acts of public support, and our congregation's face book page reached hundreds of people across the country as more people than ever before experienced worship in their homes. We were uncertain and anxious, but there was a sense of collective care throughout our country and world.

As the pandemic continued, we've experienced the collective care lose momentum. We've become fatigued & lonely, and our hope has been diminished at times. Right now, we are somewhere

between the disillusionment phase and the rebuilding/restoration phase. While we rejoice at what has been accomplished, we continue to live in pandemic times. As indicated by the ups and downs of the graphic, we hold the joy and hope along with the lament and sorrow.

I often hear in and out of church the hope of returning back to normal. The end of the graphic is named the wiser living phase. It is my prayer that we as a world, nation, and congregation gain needed wisdom through this pandemic. Wisdom that teaches us how to better love and serve one another. Wisdom that helps us see new ways God is calling us to be the church as the body of Christ.

As you receive this newsletter, we will be either beginning or in the middle of Holy Week. Perhaps more than any other time in our church year, this is the week we experience the hope along with the disappointment. We begin as Christ rides triumphantly into Jerusalem as he is praised as a king who will save the world. Within days, he is mocked as a king and led to his betrayal and death on the cross. We end the week grieving the death of God in Christ. Because of God's deep grace and love, suffering and death always lead to life as we most powerfully witness on Easter. On Easter and every day, we live in the promise that God's power and love is stronger than death. We can be honest about our suffering because God does not escape suffering and gives us hope and strength as we endure. The same God who led the Israelites through their wilderness, leads us through the sorrow and joy into a wiser way of living and loving.

As the Holy Spirit guides and strengthens us to rebuild and restore our communities, our congregations, and ourselves, we can receive hope that God's strength and love can bear the weight of this messy, holy work. We can receive hope that the collective care for you continues. You are loved and remembered by God and by your congregation. If I can ever help with listening, prayer, or finding someone whom you might need, please ask. We give thanks that as we suffer together, we love and celebrate together. Amen.
+Pastor Kirsten

Holy Week, 2021

Maundy Thursday & Good Friday

Maundy Thursday is April 1st and Good Friday is April 2nd. We will offer in-person worship services both evenings at 6:30 pm.

Both worship services will take place at Gloria Dei this year. Maundy Thursday is when we remember Christ's last supper with his disciples and Good Friday is when we remember Christ's betrayal and death on the cross. We invite you to attend these important worship services. Online services will be provided as well.

Easter Services, April 4th

Gloria Dei will offer an in-person sunrise service at 6:30 am and then a second service at 9:00 am. This may be the year to try a sunrise service!

New Era will offer an in-person service at 10:30 am.

At both churches, masks continued to be worn and we are still spacing out seating. We do this to make worship as safe as possible for all people attending. There will be less seating this year in the sanctuary, but there will be seating available outside the sanctuary. If you want to attend in person worship, but don't wish to be around a lot of people, you may consider attending the sunrise service at Gloria Dei! What a beautiful way to begin our Easter day.

Let's read a book together!

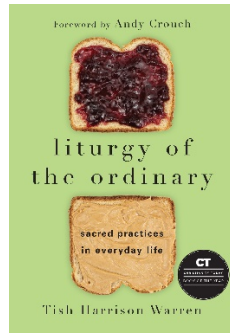
Join us as we read *Liturgy of the Ordinary* by Tish Harrison Warren and discuss how our Sunday morning worship practices impact our daily life. Here is a summary of the book from the author's website:

"In the overlooked moments and routines of our day, we can become aware of God's presence in surprising ways. How do we embrace the sacred in the ordinary and the ordinary in the sacred?"

Framed around one ordinary day, this book explores daily life through the lens of liturgy, small practices, and habits that form us. Each chapter looks at something—making the bed, brushing her teeth, losing her keys—that the author does every day. Drawing from the diversity of her life as a campus minister, Anglican priest, friend, wife, and mother, Tish Harrison Warren opens up a practical theology of the everyday.

Each activity is related to a spiritual practice as well as an aspect of our Sunday worship. Come and discover the holiness of your every day. "

We will meet Thursdays at 6 pm beginning April 22nd @ Gloria Dei. This will take the place of our bible study time together. We are taking names for anyone would like to order a copy of the book. The price will be somewhere between \$5-\$9.



Special dates

- Maundy Thursday, April 1, 2021
- Good Friday, April 2, 2021
- Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021
- Administrative Professionals Day, April 21, 2021



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

1-Linda Schneider
1-Gavin Markham
3-Jerry Lichtenwald
3-Justin Wulf
4-Bev Hull
8-Lynn Bendt
11-Sara Batteau
17-Grady Wulf
19-Eric Leacox
23-Dan Petersen
30-Mike Hermann

Anniversaries

20-Chuck & Candace Harland

May the good Lord continue to shower you with happiness, good fortune, prosperity and good health all the days of your life.

Happy Birthday and Anniversary!



Bill Halling, Myra Davis, Shirley Burr, Steve Batteau, Jay Schackle, Doris Brandt, John & Susan Hartung, Catherine Dittmer, Scott Miller, Family & loved ones of Tammi Willis, Dick McCleary, Butch Batteau, Bonnie Steffen, Travis Schenkle, Leroy, Shannon, Dennis, Jerry, Jim, and all others who are in need of prayer support.

Sincere condolences to the family of Tammi Willis who passed away Monday, Mar 8, 2021.

Deepest sympathy to the family of Dick McCleary who passed away on Saturday, Feb 27, 2021.

Offering & Giving

Envelopes and Booklets

2021 Giving envelopes and the booklets "The Word in Season," "Christ in Our Home," and "Lutheran Journal" are available in the entryway of the Fellowship Hall. Please continue to mail in offering to the church or bring it by the church. We are ensuring the mail is regularly collected. The church address is:

New Era Lutheran Church
3455 New Era Road
Muscatine IA 52761



Lois Thornburg's son has moved Lois to Texas. If anyone would like to send her a card or note, she is in a care facility. The address is:

Lois Thornburg
Grandview of Westover Hills
6824 Lakeside Parkway
San Antonio, TX 78245



A grand entrance

Decades ago, as English actress Gertrude Lawrence waited behind the curtain for a play to begin, the queen upstaged her by arriving at the royal box to much applause. "What an entrance," Lawrence remarked, to which her friend, playwright Noel Coward, replied, "What a part!"



Jesus certainly made a grand entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, entering to adoring shouts of "Hosanna!" But worldly glory and fame weren't his intent. Instead, our Lord knew that his Father had prepared a sacrificial role for him. Jesus handled the adulation with dignity and poise. The humble yet courageous Son of God knew that danger, despair and death awaited — but that he must endure it all to fulfill prophecy for humanity's sake.

The pageantry of Palm Sunday is a stark contrast to the role of Suffering Servant

that Jesus faced a few short days later. Yet each event during Holy Week represents victory — for Jesus as well as for his beloved children.

Palm Sunday is a glorious day, so let us wave palms and shout, "Hosanna in the highest heaven!" The Savior has come. What an entrance! What a part!

Believing in

Sometimes we get caught up in thinking we need to understand God in order to have faith. But faith is more about trust than knowledge; it's more about believing in someone than believing information. A child, for instance, doesn't have to know the precise roads to Grandma's house; he only needs to believe *in* his parents and their ability and desire to get him there safely. Similarly, we need not understand all the intricacies of how God works; we can take a cue from the disciples and let belief *in* the risen Christ transform and empower us.

In the words of Madeleine L'Engle (*The Rock That Is Higher*): "The disciples did not bother to try to understand the resurrection body. They doubted, and then they believed. They believed something so wonderful that it changed this broken, fragmented, beaten-down little group of men and women in a moment from depression to enthusiasm, from despair to new life, vibrant and unafraid."



"The very first Easter taught us this: that life never ends and love never dies."—Kate McGahan

* * *

"Easter is very important to me. It's a second chance."—Reba McEntire

* * *

"The earth laughs in flowers."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson



Cultivating kindness



Kind hearts are the gardens.
Kind thoughts are the roots.
Kind words are the flowers.
Kind deeds are the fruits.

Take care of your garden
and keep out the weeds.
Fill it with sunshine,
kind words and kind deeds.
—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

It's about us

Matuor Dot Alier is a social worker in North Dakota. A long, difficult journey — and the memory of his grandfather's words — brought him from a childhood in Africa to his life today.

Alier fled with his brother and thousands of other youths when Sudanese soldiers attacked South Sudan. The children walked hundreds of miles with little food or water to a refugee camp in Ethiopia. In 2006, Alier

and his brother arrived in Philadelphia, where they were sponsored and supported by a Lutheran church. Upon moving to Fargo some years later, Alier helped start a church where people who had survived war, displacement and other traumas could find healing, joy and love.

"My grandfather used to say, 'I cannot be whole unless everyone is whole,'" Alier shares. "I use this saying a lot to help me stay in a close relationship with others. It means that we need each other's support to survive and thrive. I don't want to be the only one doing well if others aren't doing well. It's not just about me — it's about us."

—adapted from *Living Lutheran*

Tying together the Testaments

In most non-English-speaking nations, the holy day of Easter is known by a word derived from the Hebrew word for Passover: *Pesach*. In Greek, it's *Pasch*; in Latin, *Pascha*; in Spanish, *Pascua*; and in French, *Paques*.

Each spring, Jewish people observe the Passover festival to commemorate how God delivered them from slavery in Egypt. The Christian observance of the Lord's Supper (the Eucharist, Holy Communion or the Lord's Table) originated with Jesus sharing the Passover Seder meal with his disciples the night Judas betrayed him. Jesus connected the exodus story with his own mission: becoming a "Paschal Lamb" to save his people from the slavery of sin and its consequences.

An Easter prayer

From the grave's depths, Lord Jesus Christ, you emerged, breaking the hold of sin, death and hell, that those who trust in you might share in your righteousness, life and beloved community with God the Father and all God's children. We bow in awe before your majesty, giving thanks for your grace extended so bountifully to us. By the power of your Spirit who lives within us, may we share the astonishing news of your resurrection with others, that they also may know your saving grace. Amen.

Encourage wonder

For a new perspective on Bible accounts you've heard over and over, play "I Wonder" with children and adults alike. Similar to "I Spy," it encourages a deeper dive into familiar passages. Simply explore ideas that aren't detailed in the Bible, starting with the phrase "I wonder." For example:

- I wonder if any Roman soldier was standing in the back *not* mocking Jesus (Matthew 27:27-31). If so, what was he thinking as others threw about insults?
- I wonder how long it took Joseph of Arimathea to cut his own tomb out of the rock (Matthew 27:57-60). What did he think about as he worked?
- The day after Jesus' ascension, I wonder which disciple spoke first at breakfast — and what he said.

Scholars may have chimed in on some of these ponderings, but there's likely no right

answer. Playing “I Wonder” can help you slow down to really pay attention and experience more of a Bible passage — especially one you seem to know by rote. Add meaning to this year’s Easter celebration by letting your wonder wander during Holy Week. Then continue the practice whenever you’re eager to gain new insights on the “old, old story ... of Jesus and his love.”—Janna Firestone

A fitting tribute

When Christ entered into Jerusalem, the people spread garments in the way. When he enters into our hearts, we pull off our own righteousness, and not only lay it under Christ’s feet but even trample upon it ourselves.—Augustus Toplady (1740–1778)

Holy hilarity!

More churches lately have been resurrecting (pardon the pun!) the early-church tradition of celebrating the second Sunday of Easter as Holy Humor Sunday, affirming the season’s joy. Need some jokes for April 11? Try these:

Easter is the only time when it’s perfectly safe to put all your eggs in one basket.

Knock knock. *Who’s there?* Hatch. *Hatch who?* God bless you!

What should you do after eating so many Easter treats? *Eggs-ercise!*

Why shouldn’t you tell an Easter egg a joke? *It might crack up!*

An irate subscriber called the newspaper, demanding to know where her Sunday edition was. “Ma’am,” said the employee, “today is Saturday. The Sunday paper isn’t delivered until Sunday.” After a brief pause, the caller spoke with a ray of recognition: “So *that’s* why no one was in church today.”



Bible Quiz

We know the name of only one of the two disciples to whom the risen Jesus appeared on the road to Emmaus. Who was he?

- A. John
- B. Paul of Tarsus
- C. Joseph of Arimathea
- D. Cleopas

Answer: D (See Luke 24:18.)

Be a caremonger

At the start of the coronavirus pandemic, a mutual-aid movement dubbed as “caremongering” quickly spread throughout Canada. Within 72 hours, 35 Facebook groups were launched so people could request and offer assistance. This altruistic effort is essentially the opposite of fearmongering. “We wanted to switch that around and get people to connect on a positive level,” says Mita Hans, who helped set up the first group. The movement, she adds, “spread the opposite of panic in people, brought out community and camaraderie, and allowed us to tackle the needs of those who are at-risk all the time — now more than ever.”

One disabled man in Halifax who received aid through a caremongering group said it felt "like a hug." That's intentional, says participant Valentina Harper. "I think it is really showing people there is still hope for humanity." When the pandemic is history, may we all continue to be caremongers in our communities.

Anticipating life's waves

Joni Eareckson Tada, who was paralyzed after a diving accident, described swimming in the ocean as a child. Because the waves looked so high, her first inclination was to swim away from them. That, however, just left her tossed about and sometimes held underwater. "The best thing," she discovered, "was to swim fast *toward* [the waves] and dive *under* them before they had a chance to break on top of you."

That's true with life's "waves of crisis or difficulty" too, says Tada. "The best way to beat those waves of trials and tough challenges is to *face* them. Head-on. Almost anticipating them. Sometimes I find myself literally diving into the middle of a problem before it has a chance to crash on top of me." When problems are about to break on top of you, what helps you face them and stand your ground?


—adapted from *The Wired Word*



Christian symbol

LILY—The lily that blooms around Easter is a symbol of Christ's resurrection because it

rises from a seemingly lifeless bulb decaying in the ground. It is also used as a symbol of Christ himself. The lily, a symbol of purity, is often used to represent the Virgin Mary.



SUNRISE SURPRISE

The hidden surprise in these sweet rolls hints at the reason behind Easter's joy.

What you need:

- ½ cup chopped pecans
- 10 uncooked frozen rolls, thawed
- 10 large marshmallows
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ cup melted butter
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- Adult help

What you do:

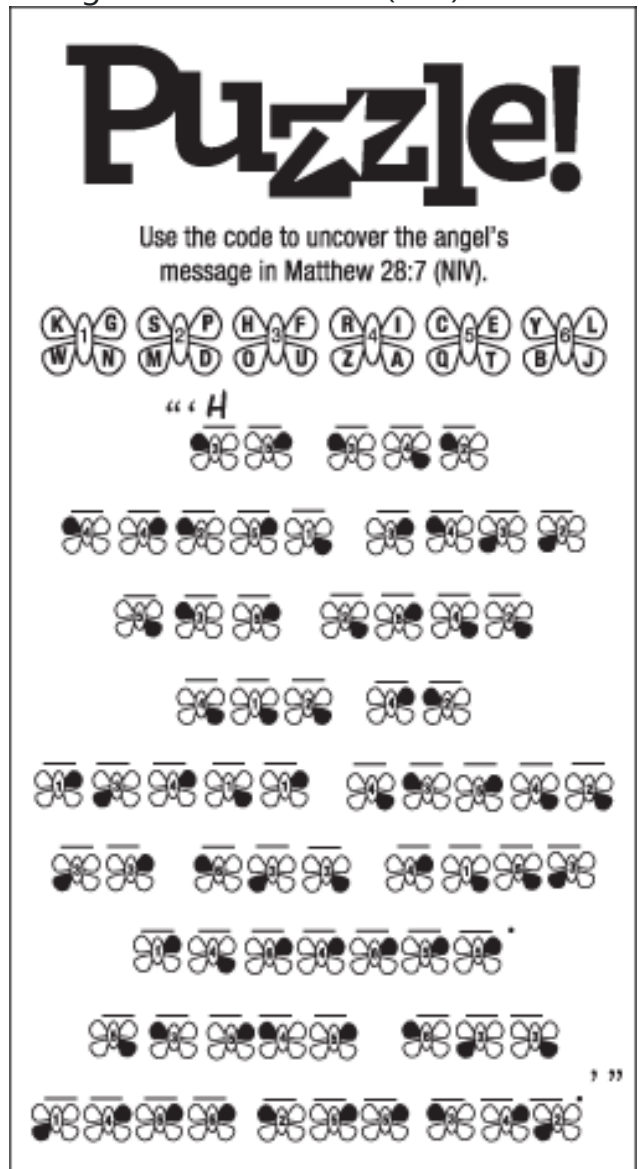
1. Grease a round baking dish. Sprinkle pecans on the bottom.
2. Flatten each roll. Place a marshmallow in the center, wrap dough around it and pinch edges together.
3. Combine sugar and cinnamon. Dip each roll into melted butter and coat with cinnamon-sugar. Place in pan, seam side down.
4. Sprinkle brown sugar and remaining butter over rolls. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise 30 minutes.
5. Bake at 350 degrees until golden brown, about 30 minutes. Cool in pan.
6. As you bite into a roll, you'll see the marshmallow has melted, leaving an empty center — just like Jesus' empty tomb!



Answer: "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!" Luke 24:5-6, NIV

Puzzle!

Use the code to uncover the angel's message in Matthew 28:7 (NIV).




Answer: "He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him."




Holy Week

NATURE WALK

a cross MARK 15:21	a leafy branch MARK 11:8	something broken MARK 14:3	the sound of a bird MARK 14:72
water JOHN 13:5	a heart JOHN 13:34	a table LUKE 22:14	twelve of something MARK 14:17
Something Sharp or thorny MARK 15:17	something purple JOHN 19:5	Something hiding JOHN 20:19	a stone MARK 15:46
Something empty MARK 16:6	something springing to life LUKE 24:5	a sweet or spiced scent JOHN 19:40	each letter of Alleluia! HE IS RISEN INDEED!



During Holy Week we tell the story of Jesus' last week, from the triumphal entry to the Last Supper, cross, and empty tomb. Take a walk and use all your senses to find the things listed above. Take a photo or check it off, then look up the verse.



April 2021



March '21							May '21						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6							1
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
28	29	30	31				23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1  6:30 pm - Maundy Thursday Service at Gloria Dei	2 GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE 6:30 pm @ Gloria Dei	3
4  6:30 am @ Gloria Dei 10:30 am - Easter Service @ New Era Luth. Church	5 <div>Pastor Kirsten Lee - vacation April 5-6, 2021</div>	6	7 10 am-1 pm - Pastor Kirsten @ New Era	8	9 Petersen Wedding (Pending)	10
11 9:30 am - Sunday School for all ages 10:30 am - Worship Service	12	13  9 am - Sewing group meets at church. Bring sack lunch. Everyone welcome 6 pm - Council Mtg 	14 10 am - Care & Concern meets @ Fellowship Hall 2 pm-6 pm - Pastor Kirsten @ New Era	15	16	17
18 9:30 am - Sunday School for all ages 10:30 am - Worship Service	19 9 am-12 pm - Pastor Kirsten @ New Era	20	21  Administrative Professionals Day	22  Bible Study 6 pm @ Gloria Dei	23	24
25 9:30 am - Sunday School for all ages 10:30 am - Worship Service	26 9 am-12 pm - Pastor Kirsten @ New Era	27	28	29 Bible Study 6 pm @ Gloria Dei	30	1