



THE CENTRAL CHIMES

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ASH WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 18

6 PM SIMPLE CHURCH
SUPPER

7 PM SERVICE



Kingston Episcopal Parish
invites you to



Soup with Love

Five Wednesdays, beginning
Feb. 25 at Noon

370 Main Street, Mathews

Sponsored by the Kingston Parish Women

There will be a short service beginning at Noon led by Fr. Gary of Kingston Parish with homilies given by the following clergy:

- February 25: Bill Lawson, Pastor, New Point Friends Church
- March 4: Rev. Dede Parrish, Beulah UMC and St. Paul UMC
- March 11: Rev. Jeongin Kim, Emmanuel UMC and Grace-Providence UMC
- March 18: Ralph Satter, Pastor, Bethel UMC and St. Matthew UMC
- March 25: The Rev. Gary Barker, Kingston Parish Episcopal Church

York River District Prayer Workshops

Visit the [District's website](#) for more information.

Healing Prayer:

Mondays, February 9, 16, 23, March 2, 9, and 16 (7-9pm)

Susanna Wesley UMC, Ordinary

Centering Prayer

Saturday, March 7 (10am - 12pm)

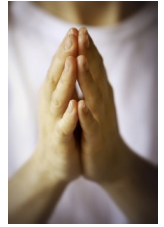
Wellspring UMC, Williamsburg

Bishop's Convocation on Prayer

Saturday, March 21 (9:30am-3pm); \$10

Trinity UMC, Richmond

Registration deadline: March 16



From the Pastor's Pen



In the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷ When they found him, they said

to him, "Everyone is searching for you." ³⁸ He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." ³⁹ And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons. ~ Mark 1:35-39

Ever since he was first appointed to serve the Virginia Annual Conference, Bishop Cho has continually challenged the pastors and congregations to build stronger prayer lives. Prayer is the foundation for any and all fruitful ministry, and it remains to be seen how greatly God would use Central UMC if

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everyone would take the prayer challenge to heart! With the season of Lent upon us, it is the perfect time to embrace the challenge and move toward becoming a *Prayer Covenant Congregation*:

Virginia Conference clergy and laity are invited to:

Engage "one hour daily" in spiritual disciplines (fasting, intercessory prayer, Lectio Divina (sacred or spiritual reading), centering prayer, breath prayer, contemplative prayer, Tongsung Kido prayer, a service of common prayer, morning, midday or evening prayers, etc.)

Congregations are invited to become a *Prayer Covenant Congregation* by:

Having at least one weekly prayer group that will include weekly prayers for the renewal and revival of their congregation, the Virginia Conference, and The United Methodist Church.

Offering at least one class on prayer annually.

Participating in Conference or District prayer equipping (training) events.

Moving toward at least 10% of the laity practicing a "one hour daily" spiritual discipline.

Indicating commitment to this covenant through approval by the Church Council.

The covenant, signed by the pastor and Church Council chairperson, indicates that, "After prayerful discernment, our congregation has decided to become a *Prayer Covenant Congregation* by having at least one weekly prayer group, offer at least one class on prayer annually, participate in Conference prayer equipping events and move toward at least 10% of our members practicing "one hour daily" spiritual disciplines.

I shared this covenant with those who attended January's Administrative Council

meeting. Some were ready to sign on right then, while others desired that I share this with the entire congregation first. I am glad to do so!

Let me share what already has been going on concerning prayer at Central these past several years:

Morning Prayer began in September 2010 and continues today. Three to six faithful souls gather each Monday at 8:00 a.m. and spend an hour or more sharing the needs of church, family, community, and world. You are welcome to join us!

Central has offered several prayer-related small group studies over the past several years, and I preached a sermon series on "The Lord's Prayer." At present, more than a dozen are part of a monthly study exploring contemplative prayer, which will continue through May 2015.

Several newsletter articles have dealt with the subject of prayer. (I first shared Bishop Cho's invitation to be a covenant prayer congregation in the October 2011 *Chimes* – over 3 years ago!)

Your pastor and several people in the congregation already practice "spiritual disciplines," which include daily prayer, Scripture reading and study. I will focus on these and other spiritual disciplines in my sermons during Lent. An hour a day may seem like a long time, but once you begin, you may decide you need even more!

As you can see, Central Church is already well on its way to complying with the bishop's Prayer Covenant. Please let me know if you are willing to invest in your own spiritual formation and be part of fulfilling the covenant (don't worry, your name will not be put on some list!). I look forward to hearing from you!

On the journey together, *Suzanne*

Hospitality Ministry

Thanks to the many contributions of our volunteers, we have enjoyed a great start to the New Year!

Louise Witherspoon has generously agreed to send all cards throughout the year, which includes our birthday recipients, visitors, get well and sympathy cards.

Our Greeters and Ushers for January were Ken and Karen Palmer (8:30) with Steve Leap assisting to serve Communion and Betty Stewart and Ken Marshall (11:00) with Judy Moughon assisting with Communion.

Refreshments following the 8:30 service were provided by Dale Smith and James Martin, Dave and Grace Mortimer, Sandi and Glenn Morgan, John and Sherry Hodges, Martha and Joe Arnold and Susan and Tim Hill.

Our Greeters and Ushers for February are Phyllis and Bobby Hudgins (8:30) and Frances and Jack Ward (11:00). Refreshments following the 8:30 service during February will be provided by Elizabeth and Durward Anderson, Gerald and Frosty Taylor, Eric Stewart, David Hudgins, Phyllis and Bobby Hudgins, Ruth Ritter, Michael and Ed Cannon, and Louise Witherspoon.

We still have several months during the year that we need ushers and greeters for both the 8:30 and 11:00 services. If you have not already signed up, please consider taking a month. If you enjoy the refreshments following the 8:30 service and you have not signed up yet, please find a partner and select a Sunday.

Thank you to the UM Men who welcomed us all to their breakfast prior to Communion training led by Pastor Suzanne and a brief hospitality committee gathering.

We remain grateful for everyone's generosity and continuing support in serving our church family.

Emily Leap and Jean Sutton, Hospitality

Central United Methodist Women

In February, Central United Methodist Women will make Valentine visits to our friends and church family members who are unable to attend services. There are about 13 individuals in all. If you would like to help with this



visitation ministry, please contact Nancy Jagger, (725-5193 or 2jags@wildblue.net) or Judy Moughon, (725-5050 or judymoughon73@gmail.com). We would love to have you join us for these visits.

In March, we will have a welcome coffee and a visit from a Hands Across Mathews representative discussing the scope and the needs of the organization. More information will be coming on this event. Contact Dee Bane, 384-8098 or deebane2@gmail.com.

If you like to read; if you like to know about new Christian-themed books; or if you have a book you would like to share with others, CUMW is having a book review meeting on Monday, April 13. Members will share information on books they have read. We invite others join us for this event. Please contact Pat Gwaltney, (725-0210 or pgwaltney2@gmail.com) if you are interested in attending.

Dee Bane, CUMW

Needed: Helpers with Communion



We need helpers to clear away and replace Communion Items; especially after the 11:00 service. Also, we need someone willing to buy bread and place it on the Communion table in preparation for the 8:30 service.

Please call Miriam Cromwell, 725-3473, if you would like to join in this very important part of our church life.

The Lenten Season? What Is It?

Through the years I have heard of and participated in Lenten activities, but I wasn't quite sure what the season was all about. I decided not to let another year pass without understanding its meaning.

Like a lot of people do, I googled it. *The Upper Room* website provided the following article, authored by Rev. Penny Ford. I found it to be a clear explanation of "What is Lent?". Rev. Ford defines it as: *Lent is a great time to "repent" -- to return to God and re-focus our lives to be more in line with Jesus. It's a 40 day trial run in changing your lifestyle and letting God change your heart.*

I found the article to be quite helpful in my understanding and I hope it will be helpful to you, too.

Curious

Lent 101

Lent is a season of the Christian Year where Christians focus on simple living, prayer, and fasting in order to grow closer to God.

When is Lent?

It's the forty days before Easter. Lent excludes Sundays because every Sunday is like a little Easter. Basically, it's about one-tenth of a year (like a tithe of time). Mardi Gras is the day before Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday. This year it's from February 18 - April 5 (Easter) 2015.

Mardi Gras? What does that have to do with JESUS??

Mardi Gras means "Fat Tuesday." It refers to the day before Lent starts. Since Lent always starts on a Wednesday, the day before is always a Tuesday. And it's called "Fat" or "Great" because it's associated with great food and parties.

In earlier times, people used Lent as a time of fasting and repentance. Since they didn't want to be tempted by sweets, meat and other distractions in the house, they cleaned out their cabinets. They used up all the sugar and yeast in sweet breads before the Lent season started, and fixed meals with all the

meat available. It was a great feast! Through the years Mardi Gras has evolved (in some places) into a pretty wild party with little to do with preparing for the Lenten season of repentance and simplicity. Oh well. But Christians still know its origin, and hang onto the true Spirit of the season.

So the real beginning of Lent is Ash Wednesday?

Yes. Ash Wednesday, the day after Mardi Gras, usually begins with a service where we recognize our mortality, repent of our sins, and return to our loving God. We recognize life as a precious gift from God, and re-turn our lives towards Jesus Christ. We may make resolutions and commit to change our lives over the next forty days so that we might be more like Christ. In an Ash Wednesday service, usually a minister or priest marks the sign of the cross on a person's forehead with ashes.

Why ashes?

In Jewish and Christian history, ashes are a sign of mortality and repentance. Mortality, because when we die, our bodies eventually decompose and we become dust/dirt/ash/whatever. Repentance, because long ago, when people felt remorse for something they did, they would put ashes on their head and wear "sackcloth" (scratchy clothing) to remind them that sin is pretty uncomfortable and leads to a sort of death of the spirit. This was their way of confessing their sins and asking for forgiveness.

Where do the ashes come from?

On what we now call Palm Sunday, Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem while people waved palms and cheered him on. Less than a week later, Jesus was killed. The palms that were waved in joy became ashes of sorrow. We get ashes for Ash Wednesday by saving the palms from Palm Sunday, burning them, and mixing them with a little water (like tears) or oil. It's symbolic.

What do Christians do with ashes?

At an Ash Wednesday service, folks are invited to come forward to receive the ashes. The minister will make a small cross on your forehead by smudging the ashes. While the ashes remind us of our mortality and sin, the cross reminds us of Jesus' resurrection (life

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after death) and forgiveness. It's a powerful, non-verbal way that we can experience God's forgiveness and renewal as we return to Jesus.

So what is LENT?

At Jesus' baptism the sky split open, the Spirit of God, which looked like a dove, descended and landed on Jesus, and a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, My Beloved, with whom I am pleased." Afterward, as told in Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus was sent into the wilderness by the Spirit. Where he fasted and prayed for 40 days. During his time there he was tempted by Satan and found clarity and strength to resist temptation. Afterwards, he was ready to begin his ministry.

(Speculation)

Maybe Jesus needed some time with God to sort through the major changes happening in his life. Maybe needed to get away from family, friends and the familiar routine in order to see God (and himself) more clearly. Perhaps he wanted some intentional time with God as he searched for direction and answers like you. Like Jesus, we may need to take some serious time to pray and listen for God.

Why "DO" Lent? How do I start?

Are you searching for something more? Tired of running in circles, but not really living life with direction, purpose or passion? It's pretty easy to get caught up in the drama of classes, relationships, family, and work. Our lives are filled with distractions that take us away from living a life with Christ. We try to fill the emptiness inside us with mindless TV, meaningless chatter, stimulants, alcohol, too many activities or other irrelevant stuff. We run away from life and from God.

Lent is a great time to "repent" -- to return to God and re-focus our lives to be more in line with Jesus. It's a 40 day trial run in changing your lifestyle and letting God change your heart. You might try one of these practices for Lent:

FASTING: Some people have been known to go without food for days. But that's not the only way to fast. You can fast by cutting out

some of the things in your life that distract you from God. Some Christians use the whole 40 days to fast from candy, TV, soft drinks, cigarettes or meat as a way to purify their bodies and lives. You might skip one meal a day and use that time to pray instead. Or you can give up some *activity* like worry or reality TV to spend time outside enjoying God's creation. What do you need to let go of or "fast" from in order to focus on God? What clutters your calendar and life? How can you simplify your life in terms of what you eat, wear or do?

SERVICE: Some Christians take something on for Christ. You can collect food for the needy, volunteer once a week to tutor children, or work for reform and justice in your community. You can commit to help a different stranger, co-worker or friend everyday of Lent. Serving others is one way we serve God.

PRAYER: Christians also use Lent as a time of intentional prayer. You can pray while you walk, create music or art as a prayer to God, or savor a time of quiet listening. All can be ways of becoming more in tune with God.

Christians from many different traditions celebrate Lent. How will you use the time to grow closer to God?

Top Ten List: THINGS YOU CAN TRY FOR THE LENTEN SEASON

10. Try an electronic fast. Give up TV, Guitar Hero, texting, e-mail and all things electronic for one day every week (or everyday of Lent!). Use the time to read & pray.

9. Start a prayer rhythm. Say a prayer every time you brush your teeth, hear an ambulance, or check your e-mail. Before you text someone, pray for them.

8. Read one chapter in the Bible each day. (Matthew's Gospel is a good book to start with. Psalms, too.)

7. Forgive someone (you think) doesn't deserve it (maybe even yourself).

6. Give up soft drinks, fast food, tea or coffee. Give the money you save to help folks in Haiti or others in crisis.

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5. Create a daily quiet time. Spend 30 minutes a day in silence and prayer.

4. Cultivate a life of gratitude. Write someone a thank-you letter each week and be aware of how many people have helped you along the way.

3. Be kind to someone each day.

2. Pray for others you see as you walk to and from classes or drive to and from work.

1. Volunteer one hour or more each week with a local shelter, tutoring program, nursing home or prison ministry. www.upperroom.org

Rev. Penny Ford is the pastor of a small UMC church in Carrollton, Alabama. She loves playing trains and going for walks with her 3-year-old son, Jamieson.

Mission & Evangelism

Two weeks ago on Sunday evening the Mission & Evangelism Team (M&E) sponsored the fourth edition of *Songs, Soups, Salads and Sweets* (SSSS). Many positive comments were made that evening as to the mix of the singers and musicians. Complements rendered on the varieties of soups, salads and sweets. This was the best SSSS to date. I passed on the positive comments and complements to all of the performers and all those who provided the meal. A love offering was received in the amount of \$406. The only problem of the evening was due to my mistake of picking a date that conflicted with the NFL's semi-final games. The 2016 SSSS will be held on the Sunday between the NFL's semi-final and final games.

The M&E Team voted to reinstate the use of stickers on food items for Hands Across Mathews (HAM) given through the church. The stickers will be printed as follows; A GIFT OF LOVE FROM CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. This will go into effect February 1. This provides the church with data needed for reports to the District. It will also provide M&E information to determine the effectiveness of this program.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, February 18 at 10:00 am in the fellowship hall.

Joe Cromwell, Chairman

Love Your Neighbor.

February is Heart Havens Month

About Heart Havens  **Heart Havens**

Heart Havens began in 1993 as the result of a parent of a child with intellectual disabilities asking her pastor: "Where will my child live when I am gone?" In response to this question, and through subsequent discussions with parents and service providers across the state, the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church established Heart Havens to provide residential services for adults with intellectual disabilities. While Heart Havens was born as a ministry of the church, it has been a separate, non-denominational 501 (c) (3) nonprofit since 2003.

Our residential program promotes opportunities for personal growth by encouraging individual choice, advocacy, and involvement with the community. In addition to meeting the health and safety needs of our clients, our staff members support individuals as they develop and execute plans to address their own desires and achieve their self-directed goals. This use of person-centered planning at Heart Havens promotes dignity and respect by allowing individuals to control their everyday decisions. www.hearthavens.org

A Prayer for Heart Havens

Gracious God, creator of all humanity, thank you for forming us in your perfect image. We praise you for sending your son Jesus Christ as the embodiment of your love for us. We hear your call to live in ministry with our brothers and sisters with intellectual disabilities. Grant us open hearts and open minds as we share our gifts, love, and witness with our neighbors who reside in Heart Havens' homes. Bless those who staff the homes and all who give of their heart and their time to empower their neighbors with intellectual disabilities. This we pray in the name of the One who came to teach us how to truly love our neighbors, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Young Jin Cho, Resident Bishop
Virginia Conference, UMC

Paul Townsend Memorial Class

In December the Paul Townsend Class and friends enjoyed a Christmas outing together at the Sandpiper Reef restaurant. We had good attendance and the food was delicious.

Our hearts mourn the loss of our dear classmate, Coleman Wheeler, who passed away Thursday, December 11, 2015. Our sympathy and love goes out to his entire family. We will truly miss his presence in our SS classroom and also the many delicious dishes that he prepared and shared with our class and church dinners.

The Sunday before Christmas, during SS hour, our class worked together and assembled gift baskets. We completed and delivered 30 "Joy Baskets" for shut-ins and nursing home patients. Thanks to all those who helped make the holidays a little brighter for those folks.



Photos provided by Phyllis Hudgins

On January 8, we had 16 present at our first regular monthly meeting of the new year. We all enjoyed 5 different soups as well as cornbread, rolls, beverage and dessert. Following the class meeting, we filled jars of soup and took them to our local shut-ins.

During the business meeting it was voted to donate \$200 to the new youth "FINS" (**F**ridays **I**n **T**he **S**pirit) group to help defray the cost of hosting the January gathering at Central. It was so heartwarming to see Central come alive with the happy sounds of the 57 young people and 18 volunteer helpers. What a blessing! Congratulations to Katherine Small and team for all their efforts to make this such a well attended, enjoyable and well planned event.

Our next class meeting will be Thursday, February 12. Our men will treat all the ladies to a surprise Valentine's dinner.

Happy New Year Everyone!

Phyllis Hudgins, Class President

BIRTHDAYS

Peggy Kava	1	Elizabeth Anderson	16
Susan Hill	3	Paul Kava	17
Bob Tabor	8	Bill Loving	23
Sherry Hodges	9	Mary Wade Smith	25
Ruth Ann Hutson	12	Melanie Zerbe	25
Kenneth Marshall	13	Frosty Taylor	29

ANNIVERSARIES

Jean & Donnie Hall	14
Richard & Carey Hogge	24

Our Deepest Sympathy and Prayers go to the Families of :

Minnie Dixon Taylor	Charles Wroten	Charles Ober
John Ashberry	Donna Calan	Ted Williams
Ellen Southworth	Alice Lewis	Jimmy Callis
Coleman Wheeler	Rick Poppell	Lavinia Forrest
Paul Carroll	Stan Mays	Dean Close
Sara Turner	Jack Rowe	John Curry

FINS at Central!



On Friday, January 16, Central UMC was the proud host of a fun-filled "FINS" youth event for 56 young people. FINS (**F**ridays **i**n the **S**pirit) is the brainchild of several youth coordinators from different churches across Mathews. Held on the third Friday of each month during the school year, FINS rotates between sponsoring churches: Macedonia, Beulah/St. Paul, Emmanuel/Grace-Providence, Mathews Chapel and Central.

Central provided dinner to a happy crowd of boisterous youth ranging in age from 3 to 15. We had a lot of fun learning about the season of Epiphany! The kids enjoyed a great puppet skit. The group made crafts, played games, devoured delicious "King Cakes", and decorated Epiphany Star cookies. The event ended with the story of the Italian Epiphany Legend



"Old Befana". Many thanks to all the generous volunteers who made the event possible!

FINS is open to the community, and the next event will be held at Macedonia Baptist Church on Friday, February 20, 6:30 – 9:00 pm (if you have questions, contact mathewsfins@gmail.com). Please invite the K-grade 12 aged children in your life -- and please invite their friends, too!!

Katherine Small





The Youth of Central will be donating their 2015 offering to *Imagine No Malaria*.

What is Imagine No Malaria?

Imagine No Malaria is an extraordinary effort of the United Methodist Church to end preventable death from malaria in Africa.

Why malaria?

Malaria is a preventable, treatable disease that breeds poverty and burdens health care. In fact, over 650,000 people die every year from malaria. If we can end deaths from malaria and, in the process, help African nations bolster their health care systems, we can save the lives of those 650,000 people and improve the lives of all those impacted by malaria deaths

Why the United Methodist Church?

It is said that in Africa, at the end of the road is a cross. In fact, 60% of all health care in Africa is provided through faith-based organizations like the UMC. As the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the UN Foundation began looking for partners who could help deliver malaria prevention, treatment and education in Africa, they found that the Methodist Church was already equipped to do so, with over 300 hospitals, health clinics and outposts working on the continent.

Is this related to Nothing But Nets?

Yes. Nothing But Nets is a successful program raising more than \$7 million to provide bed nets to families in Africa. In 2008, building on that success, Imagine No Malaria was created to provide a more comprehensive approach, including funding for prevention, education, treatment and communication. You may think of Imagine No Malaria as "Nets Plus".

I've heard a lot of news lately about nonprofits being irresponsible with the money donated to them. How is Imagine No Malaria different?

UMCOR (the United Methodist Committee on Relief) does the majority of the work for Imagine No Malaria, and because of a generous grant from the UN Foundation for administrative costs, all donations go directly to our work in Africa. UMCOR is a well-known and well-respected deliverer of relief and development throughout the world and is committed to a sustainable practice of ending deaths from malaria. What that basically means is that they are working with the people of Africa in this endeavor. In a more practical sense, as much as possible, they purchase the nets in Africa, they train community health workers (who are typically already working in their communities as birth attendants, etc.) to handle education and distribution and they establish in-country health boards who plan and implement strategies against malaria, writing grants for funding received, providing oversight and reporting successes. In fact, one of the reasons we're focusing on malaria is because at a meeting of the bishops of Africa and some of our denominational leaders, we asked what they needed most and they said "stop malaria." [Imagine No Malaria](#)

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I'VE REALLY ENJOYED OUR TIME TOGETHER TODAY ... WANNA MAKE THIS A REGULAR WEEKLY THING?





08-31-2012

WINTER

February 2015



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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 Prayer Time 8:00 am 	3 FINS "Recap" Meeting 7:00 pm	4 Central Village Homemakers 9:00 am - 1:00 pm	5 Youth Choir Practice 6:30 pm Adult Choir Practice 7:15 pm	6 Brownies 2:45 - 4:15 pm	7 District Leadership Training Chestnut Memorial UMC, Newport News 9:30 - 11:30 am
8	9 Prayer Time 8:00 am UM Women 7:00 pm	10 <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">All meeting times & dates are subject to change. If in doubt, contact the committee chair.</div>	11 Finance 7:00 pm	12 P. Townsend Class Dinner & Meeting 6:00 pm Youth Choir Practice 6:30 pm Adult Choir Practice 7:15 pm	13 Brownies 2:45 - 4:15 pm	14 Valentine's Day Exploring Contemplative Prayer at the parsonage 9:00 am 
15	16 President's Day Prayer Time 8:00 am Creation Care 9:00 am SPRC 7:00 pm 	17	18 Ash Wednesday Mission & Evangelism 10:00 am Simple Church Supper 6:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 pm 	19 Youth Choir Practice 6:30 pm Adult Choir Practice 7:15 pm	20 Brownies 2:45 - 4:15 pm FINS @ Macedonia Baptist 6:30 - 9:00 pm	21 UM Men Breakfast 8:00 am
22 1st Sunday in Lent	23 Prayer Time 8:00 am Queen's Creek Assoc. 7:00 pm	24	25 Soup With Love Noon Administrative Council 7:00 pm	26 Youth Choir Practice 6:30 pm Adult Choir Practice 7:15 pm	27 Brownies 2:45 - 4:15 pm	28 Private Bridal Shower Noon - 5 pm