

Geneva Presbyterian Church

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(301) 424-4346 Office
www.genevapotomac.org
Rev. Patrick McElwaine, Pastor

Dear Friends,

I give thanks to God for each of you and for the Holy Spirit's work in calling us together in this church family. What a joy it is already to serve in your midst, hearing your stories, walking together in faith, and serving our Lord Jesus with our many different gifts.



We are in a season of “new beginnings” here at Geneva Presbyterian Church, and that phrase is on my mind for three distinct reasons as I write this letter.

First, “New Beginnings” is the theme of our church stewardship campaign this year. Leading up to Pledge Sunday on November 24, I encourage you to consider how God has blessed your life and how you are being called to be a blessing in return this coming year. How will you share your time, talents, and treasure in and through Geneva Presbyterian Church? With each one of us working together to share from what God has provided, we will continue doing mighty and life changing work in Christ's name. Allyson and I are praying for God's guidance as we determine our financial pledge and we invite you to do the same.

Second, Advent is right around the corner and it will mark the beginning of a new liturgical year! During the Advent season of expectation, we will prepare our hearts for God's “new beginning” in the manger. God's incarnation on earth in the person and life of Jesus Christ changed everything. Humans met God face to face and experienced grace in a new way. This Advent and Christmas I hope you will encounter God in new ways and I hope you will invite friends and family to join you on the journey.

Finally, there is a “new beginning” on our Fellowship calendar this year. On December 14 at 3:00pm, Allyson and I are inviting the church family to our home for the first annual Christmas Open House! Read on in this issue of The Radiant for full details about the open house and Geneva’s many exciting upcoming Fellowship opportunities.

My siblings in Christ, may the Lord bless you and keep you, this day and always.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Patrick

Update from Our Music Director!



Dear Geneva Community,

Fall is finally here to stay and summer has departed until next year. As the seasons change, so has our music program. I’m very excited to welcome back Jack French to the choir. Jack joins us from the University of Maryland Opera Studio, a rather distinct honor. The opera program only accepts a handful of students each year. Jack will be finishing his masters there. Derrick will be joining us again in November and will be with us through the New Year.

We just finished performing selections from *Songs for a New World* by Jason Robert Brown. Several families saw our event on Facebook and decided to attend! One family was from Falls Church and another lives just down the street. Both are interested in coming back for more music. I also want to thank those who helped put the concert together: Amber Wood, Katie Bogdan, Derrick Truby, Rhonda Ricci, Rolf & Elaine Winch, Sherri Sankey, Sheena Galliani, Katie Harris, Patrick McElwaine, and Veronica Deriquito. Thank you to all who continue to support the music program in advertising, refreshments, ushering, marketing, and attending. Your support inspires me to continue with them.

Our next concert will be November 22, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. Our handbells will be putting on their own concert. They will be playing selections such as Cohen’s “Hallelujah”, “Fly Me to the Moon”, variations on “Ode to Joy”, a jazzy rendition of “We Gather Together”, and MORE! Mark your calendars and invite your family, friends and neighbors! It’s going to be a great concert. They have been working extremely diligently and their hard work is paying off.

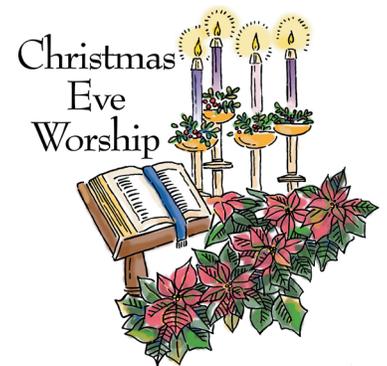
We will uphold our tradition of the “Christ the King” service where we visit the seasons of the Christian Faith in one service on November 24. This year there are 4 Advent services that will be filled with luscious, beautiful music. For Christmas Eve we will have a small handbell ensemble and a cantor to lead our Lessons and Carols service.

I’m very happy to bring in another year with Geneva and look forward to next year!

Seasons Greetings,
Ben

Christmas Eve Service

The Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols Service will be at 5:30 PM.



Geneva Day School Update

Geneva Day School has begun another year of “encouraging a lifelong love of learning!” It began just after Labor Day, with most students quickly transitioning into new classes and the new school year. Teachers have been busy getting acquainted with their students, assessing strengths and needs, and already preparing portfolios for November Parent-Teacher conferences.

Recently, Geneva placed three Montgomery College practicum or student teachers in classes to have first-hand experience working in traditional and developmentally appropriate classes. The school passed an annual School Health Inspection and a 3-year Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Textbook Grant Audit for Nonpublic Schools; MSDE said that we were a “model school!”

Classes are taking annual fall field trips to farms or an orchard, picking apples or pumpkins, and learning about the life cycles of fruit plants and trees. The aromas

of cooking applesauce and baking pies has inspired baking not only in school, but at home, as well!

Our friends from Learning Without Tears scheduled a November photo shoot with some Pre-Kindergarten students using new learning materials to include in future catalogues. The school is excited to be featured in a third photography shoot!

You will note some enhancements to the playground. The upper playground has a new configuration of the sandbox area. There is also a new piece of equipment, which one child has called a “flying saucer,” plus a new lending library. Children are all enjoying these new items, especially the library! We are proud of how they are learning to return books to the library house.

Speaking of the outdoor library, there is a new inside one for children, staff, and parents located in the Therapy Room. As you have questions about child development or what activities are appropriate, feel free to check out a book or two. There is a card check-out box to indicate what books you are borrowing. Just print that you are from the church and your full name. Happy reading!

Thank you for voting for Geneva recently in the “Best of” campaign for the *Bethesda Magazine*. We are eager to learn how we did in the January-December issue, to be published on December 26.

Our fabulous Geneva Parents’ Association (GPA) held a wonderful Family Fall Festival on October 12. The weather was lovely, activities were appropriate for little people, and youngsters, both former and new, young and old, enjoyed themselves.

There is news from two current staff members. Zohreh Memarzadeh will be running the Marine Marathon for a second time in October, and Virginie de Velp is expecting a third child next April. We are excited for both of these colleagues!

The Geneva website (www.genevadayschool.org) is a great history of the many activities and events that are occurring in your school. Feel free to visit it, but also consider visiting the school when it is in session to see what great play, learning, and fun look like these days. We’d love to show you around. Feel free to continue referring friends and family to Geneva, where we are happy to provide private tours, as well.

Special greetings from your Day School Friends for a wonderful fall, plus Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons.

Warm regards,

Suzanne Funk

Suzanne Funk
Director

Holiday Open House at the Manse

Let's eat, drink, and be merry. Patrick, Allyson, Malachi, and Bridget McElwaine cordially invite you and your guests to join them for the first annual Geneva Presbyterian Church Christmas Open House. Casual attire. Children welcome.



Date: Saturday, December 14th

Time: 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Please RSVP to the church office by December 10 via email (vcd.genevapotomac@gmail.com) or phone call (301)-424-4346.

(Alternate snow date for the open house will be Sunday, December 22.)

Thank You from Mission

Thank you to donors to the October 6 Peace and Global Witness Offering. The total gathered was \$211. \$158 of this will go to the PCUSA Peace and Global Witness Offering, and \$53 will go to the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship.

And, the previously missing Mission Statement of the Mission Committee is coming together!

In its missions, Geneva Presbyterian Church:

- focuses on relationship
- nods to Mother Teresa (Help one person at a time; begin with the person closest to you.)
- comes back around to children and education regularly, stewarding the Geneva Day School as

we do.

- loves families
- participates in the mission ministries of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and National Capital Presbytery.
- tries to capitalize on the passions (and time and talent and treasure) of its members

Comments from Our Treasurer

Regarding Geneva's overall financial health, we are doing well and on track through

September 30. While slightly behind on our projected offering year-to-date, expenses have also been below budget, and we have slightly more income than what we've spent so far. Although this could change - for example if we have one or more heavy snow falls before Christmas, or if we hire a youth pastor / Director of Christian Education – it looks like we may be on track for a balanced budget.

Pastor Patrick asked if I would be willing to share a "Stewardship Minute" during worship, and I agreed to share my story about why our family gives financially to support God's ministry through Geneva. Each of us has our own story and reasons for contribution. Mine is quite simply that I grew up in this church. We moved to Potomac the year after Geneva was formed and became members shortly thereafter (before that we lived in Bethesda and attended Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church). I was 13 years old.

I came back to Geneva after college, became a member and joined the Choir in 1980. Music and singing are a very important part of our life, and Elaine and I are members of 3 different choirs. It's a big part of what we now do, and I have Geneva (and fellow Geneva tenor Charlie Judkins) to thank.

In addition, I brought Elaine to Geneva when we started dating in 1988. We got married here, and our 3 children were all baptized and confirmed here. Victoria is in California and Rebecca lives in Florida, but Gretchen still comes to our services. In other words, Geneva is my home.

We love this church, and our Geneva family. And I contribute my time, talents and treasure to Geneva so that Geneva can offer the same opportunities I've been blessed with, to other future members of our community. It's that simple.

I want to close by pointing out that there are many ways for us to contribute. It's not just about giving money, although that is certainly an important part of

stewardship. As a small congregation with an aging population, it's equally important that we step up to do what we can, volunteering our time.

This doesn't have to be difficult or particularly time-consuming. For example, last month our music director Ben put together a really great concert, Friday and Saturday evening. The singers were extraordinary, and we had a wine and cheese reception after the concert. It was fun, and an opportunity for us to invite friends and neighbors to our church.

Friday, we had an audience of 7 – which included 3 Geneva members. Saturday the audience doubled to 15, again with 3 Geneva members. Consider what this might look like to a visitor, especially as we are beginning our efforts to grow our congregation. Then come to the various events Geneva puts together and have some fun!

There are many ways we can contribute to our stewardship campaign this upcoming year. What does Geneva mean to you? Give it some prayerful thought, and decide how you will contribute your time, talents and treasure.

- Rolf

Update from Our Clerk of Session

I wonder if it is too early to consider New Year Resolutions for 2020?. . .The end-of-the-year is so often a time of busyness, joy, festivity, family and faith. For your Clerk of Session, the end-of-the-year has a few clerical matters that need attention. However, these annual rhythms and annual activities in some ways parallel monthly rhythms and monthly activities for the Clerk.

Specifically, if you follow the weekly “Joys and Concerns” and recurring Geneva announcements during Sunday services with an attention that borders on obsessional, you will probably note that I generally make an announcement every fourth Sunday of the month (and if you note this, then perhaps you should consider professional help or intervention for your obsessional attention to such things!). My announcement generally is to report that the Session will meet on the following day (the fourth Monday of the month). I usually solicit folks to send any issues, concerns or business regarding the operation of the church to me so that we can add discussion of such matters to the Session agenda. Similarly, I try to encourage anyone interested in the general operation of Geneva to come to the monthly Session meetings.

I make the assumption that everyone knows what Session is and what Session does. Perhaps that is an unwarranted assumption. If you have made it this far into the Radiant and my meager contribution to this edition, perhaps you have an

interest in the Session. In general the Session refers to the assemblage of Elders (there are now seven of us and we need a quorum of at least four in order to conduct a Session meeting) led by a moderator (the installed pastor or ordained representative from the National Capital Presbytery). Pastor Patrick moderated his first Session meeting this past September. The business of Session is principally broken into Committee Reports (the standing committees of the Session include Executive/Treasurer, Worship, Communication/Outreach, Christian Education, Mission, Fellowship, and the Diaconate) and New or Ongoing Business. The many facets of Geneva and its operation come up for monthly review, discussion and decisions during the approximately two hour of these scintillating meetings.

Had you attended the September meeting (the most recent one as of this writing for the Radiant) you would have been enraptured and enthralled by discussions of such matters as:

- Preparations for the completion of a financial process review by outside reviewer.
- Update on the Manse renovations.
- The status of the budget (income vs. expenses) as we approach the end of the third quarter.
- The plans for the launching the autumn Stewardship campaign entitled “New Beginnings”.
- Strategies for the possible implementation of On-line giving.
- Debates of the merits of returning to the use of Cabin John for the Church Picnic,
- A discussion and eventual rejection of a request for use of Geneva facilities for a wedding (nuptials for folks not in any way associated with GPC).
- Considerations of the designation of a portion of World Communion Sunday’s offering to other charitable enterprises.
- Decisions regarding the adjustment and expansion of child care services during worship and special events.
- Considerations for the creation of a Pre-school Parent Group at GPC.
- Planning for the dedication of the sound booth to Owen Allen and Dick Sanderson.

And such a bullet-pointed list of discussion topics did not even include mention of an engaging monthly devotion (in Sept. led by Carl Perthel) and the Moderator’s report in which Pastor Patrick shares a summary of some of his activities and engagements in his role as our clergyman and Minister.

So, for a New Year's Resolution for 2020, perhaps you can resolve to come to a Session meeting (they are pretty much every month on the fourth Monday –except December). . .OR. . .you can resolve to more fully ignore my monthly announcement during Joys and Concerns on the fourth Sunday of the month. Either way—Happy end of 2019!



Fellowship Events

November and December will be busy at Geneva. Please make note of our activities and plan to join us. Bring your friends, neighbors and family!

- November 10 2nd Sunday Potluck Lunch
- November 22 Bell Choir Concert at 7:30 PM
- November 24 Pledge Sunday / Christ the King Sunday
- November 24 Look for the start of the Giving Tree (collection to benefit The Presbyterian Giving Catalog)
- November 30 Hanging of the Greens at 10:30 AM
- December 1 Advent Craft Event after worship
- December 8 Potluck Breakfast at 9:30 AM
- December 14 Open House at the Manse 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
- December 15 Singalong and Chili Cookoff
- December 24 Christmas Eve Service at 5:30 PM

Don't Forget!

Don't forget to turn your clocks back as Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, November 3rd at 2 o'clock AM.



Baked Pineapple Recipe from our Homecoming Picnic

Allyson McElwaine's Uncle, Mike Sydoriak, shared with us the recipe for his wonderful contribution to the Homecoming Sunday Barbecue and Potluck. Even though he has generously shared his recipe, it does not let him off the hook for preparing it for any future fellowship event. It was clear that he gave it his own special touch! Thank you, Mike.



Baked Pineapple

Two 20-oz. cans of Pineapple Chunks
One 20-oz can of Crushed Pineapple
8-oz Shredded Cheddar Cheese
Six TBS Pineapple Juice
One cup of Sugar
Six TBS Flour

One cup Crushed Ritz Crackers
One stick Melted Butter

Drain pineapple but reserve the 6 TBS of juice. Combine the sugar and flour so that the flour will have no lumps. Stir in the pineapple juice. Next add the pineapple and cheese. Spoon into a baking dish.

Mix the Ritz cracker crumbs with the melted butter. I usually add extra crumbs. Sprinkle on top of the pineapple.

Bake at 350 degrees for 35-40 minutes.

Want to Pray More?

Ceaseless 

Do you want more joy in prayer?

Ceaseless can help.

[Learn more >](#)

Try the Ceaseless Prayer app! It gives you a little scripture and 3 random names from your contacts to pray for each day. Fun, easy, meaningful -- why not give it a shot? Go to your phone's App store or Google Play Store and search for the Ceaseless Prayer app!

Geneva's Trunk or Treat and crafts!

Geneva's first Trunk or Treat was a great success!

Thank you to everyone who donated candy, helped with crafts, & decorated trunks!

We made a big impact and shared Jesus's love with the community.



Inclement Weather Policy

The Inclement weather policy for Geneva is as follows:

If Montgomery County Public Schools are closed, the church office is closed. If Montgomery County Public Schools close early, the office will close early. If Montgomery County Public Schools open late, the office will open at the regular time of 10:00 AM.

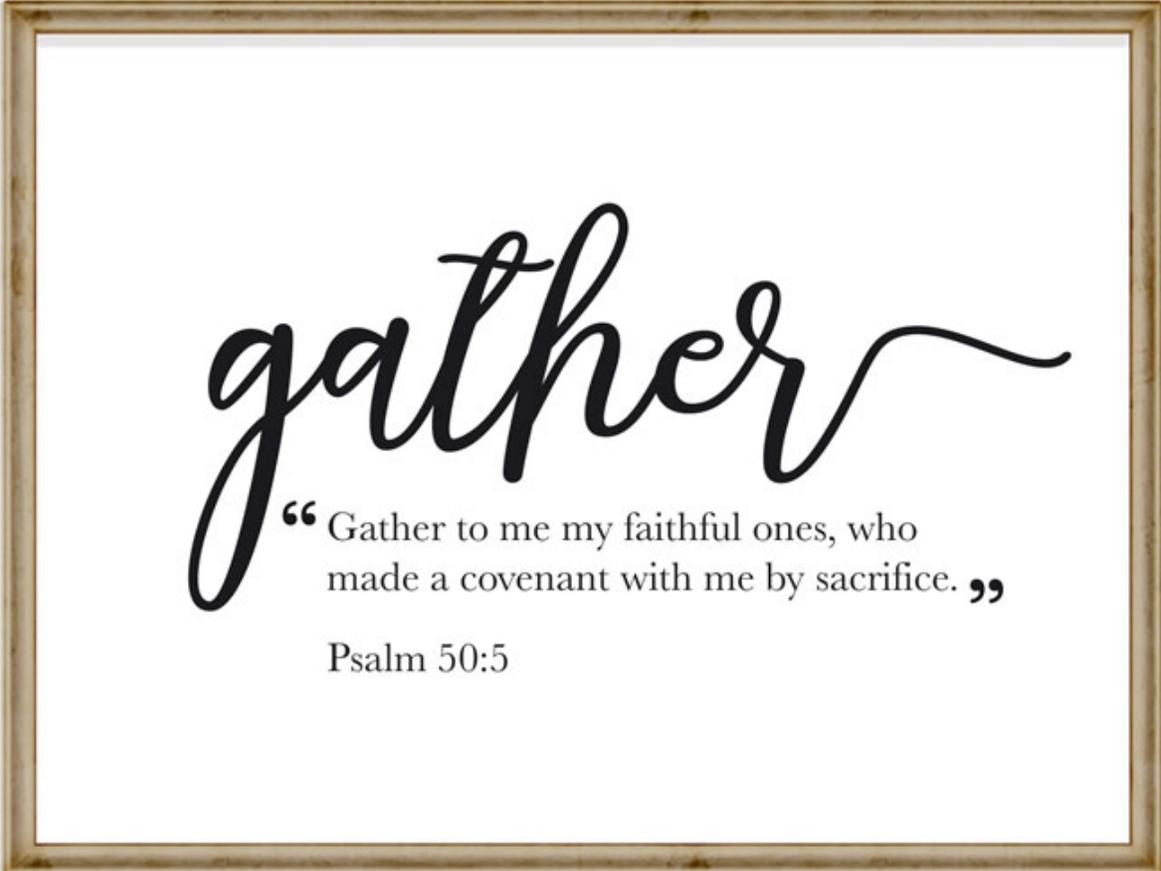


Sundays: If inclement weather is predicted for Sunday, a decision will be made by Pastor Patrick and the Elders on the Saturday immediately before the Sunday service in question.

For example, if a snow / ice storm is forecast for Sunday, December 8, the decision would be made on Saturday, December 7 and an all-church email will be sent out. Phone calls will be made to those who do not have email.

Please use your own judgment about coming to worship if the weather is "iffy". We don't want anyone to get in an accident coming to church, or fall on the ice / snow in the parking lot. If in doubt, err on the side of caution and stay home!





gather

“Gather to me my faithful ones, who
made a covenant with me by sacrifice.”

Psalm 50:5

Geneva Presbyterian Church

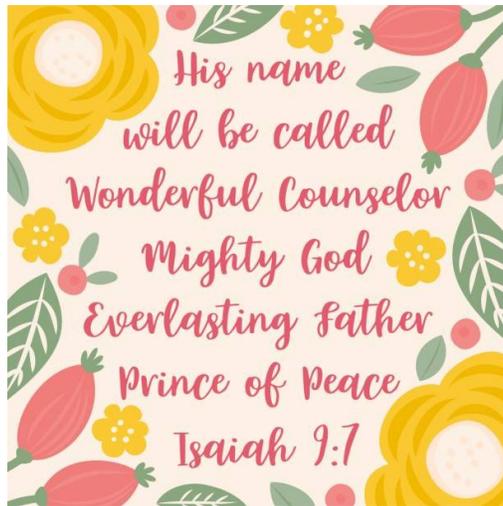
November 2019

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|---|------------------|---|--|
| <p>27</p> <p>10:30am Worship 11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice 2:00pm Iglesia 7:00pm AA</p> | <p>28</p> <p>7:00pm Session Meeting</p> | <p>29</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>30</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>31</p> | <p>1</p> | <p>2</p> <p>7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries 7:00pm Iglesia</p> |
| <p>3</p> <p>10:30am Worship 10:30am Worship (Communion) 11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice 2:00pm Iglesia 7:00pm AA</p> | <p>4</p> | <p>5</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>6</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>7</p> | <p>8</p> | <p>9</p> <p>7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries 7:00pm Iglesia</p> |
| <p>10</p> <p>10:30am Worship 11:45am Second Sunday Potluck 11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice 2:00pm Iglesia 7:00pm AA</p> | <p>11</p> | <p>12</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>13</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>14</p> | <p>15</p> | <p>16</p> <p>7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries 7:00pm Iglesia</p> |
| <p>17</p> <p>10:30am Worship 11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice 2:00pm Iglesia 7:00pm AA</p> | <p>18</p> <p>7:00pm Executive Committee</p> | <p>19</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>20</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>21</p> | <p>22</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir CONCERT!</p> | <p>23</p> <p>7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries 7:00pm Iglesia</p> |
| <p>24</p> <p>10:30am Christ The King Sunday/Pledge Sunday 11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice 2:00pm Iglesia 7:00pm AA</p> | <p>25</p> <p>7:00pm Session Meeting</p> | <p>26</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>27</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>28</p> | <p>29</p> | <p>30</p> <p>10:30am Hanging of the Greens 7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries 7:00pm Iglesia</p> |

Geneva Presbyterian Church

December 2019

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|--|------------------|---|--|
| <p>1</p> <p>10:30am Worship (Communion)</p> <p>11:45am Advent Craft Event</p> <p>11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice</p> <p>2:00pm Iglesia</p> <p>7:00pm AA</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>3</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>4</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>6</p> | <p>7</p> <p>7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> |
| <p>8</p> <p>9:30am Breakfast Potluck</p> <p>10:30am Worship</p> <p>11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice</p> <p>2:00pm Iglesia</p> <p>7:00pm AA</p> | <p>9</p> | <p>10</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>11</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>12</p> | <p>13</p> <p>8:00pm-1:00am Iglesia De Dios</p> | <p>14</p> <p>...8:00pm-1:00am Iglesia De Dios</p> <p>3:00pm Open House at The Manse</p> <p>7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> |
| <p>15</p> <p>Carols Singalong and Chili Cookoff!</p> <p>10:30am Worship</p> <p>11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice</p> <p>2:00pm Iglesia</p> <p>7:00pm AA</p> | <p>16</p> <p>7:00pm Executive Committee</p> | <p>17</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>18</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>19</p> | <p>20</p> | <p>21</p> <p>7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> |
| <p>22</p> <p>10:30am Worship</p> <p>11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice</p> <p>2:00pm Iglesia</p> <p>7:00pm AA</p> | <p>23</p> <p>7:00pm Session Meeting</p> | <p>24</p> <p>5:30pm Christmas Eve Service</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>25</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>26</p> | <p>27</p> | <p>28</p> <p>7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> |
| <p>29</p> <p>10:30am Worship</p> <p>11:45am Geneva Sanctuary Choir Practice</p> <p>2:00pm Iglesia</p> <p>7:00pm AA</p> | <p>30</p> | <p>31</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> | <p>1</p> <p>7:30pm Handbell Choir Practice</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>3</p> | <p>4</p> <p>7:00pm My Faithful Pastor Ministries</p> <p>7:00pm Iglesia</p> |



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