

# “The Congregator”

First Congregational United Church of Christ - 110 N. Third Street - River Falls, WI

Phone: 715-425-2052 - Website: [www.firstchurchr.org](http://www.firstchurchr.org)

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OCTOBER 1, 2009

## Pastor's Corner

From Missionary to Tour Guide

One of the people I most admire in life is our medical missionary Barbara de Souza, who runs a phenomenal medical clinic in the shantytowns of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Barb is a spitfire to put it lightly. She is a five-foot, seventy-something powerhouse who is not afraid to stand up to drug lords, corrupt politicians, or anyone else who gets in the way of her ministry of providing quality healthcare to 'her' people.

An ordained minister in our denomination, Barb hates being referred to as a missionary. "It sounds like I'm hitting people over the head with a Bible!" she once told me. For the record, she doesn't hit anyone with anything. Rather, she believes the love of Jesus is best demonstrated when we work to keep people healthy and empower the least in a society, which in Brazil means working to empower women.

Still, I don't want to give up on that word missionary. Even with all the abuse some missionaries have done, others have done some great ministry. I think of Mother Teresa's ministry to the poor in India; or the church in Japan that now educates a quarter of all Japanese college students even though they represent less than one percent of the population; or the countless hospitals, nursing homes and retirement communities faith communities have helped to found and fund.

One of the huge changes in our culture now is that we are all missionaries now. Today we understand that missions is less about transporting God from one place to another and more about recognizing the ways God is already there. In a way you could say that being a good missionary means having good eyesight. Or even better, teaching people to use their eyes to see things that have always been there but they just didn't realize it. Perhaps we ought to replace the word 'missionary' with 'tour guide' because we cannot show people something we haven't already seen ourselves. Where is God in your world? In what ways is the creative, life-giving God present in your world?

Pastor Chris

## Wednesday School Begins

Wednesday School begins this coming **Wednesday, October 7**. We still desperately need drivers willing to pick up kids at 3:30 pm on Wednesday afternoons. Please call the church office or talk to Stacy Myers if you can help.

## Fall Cruise

Join your friends or make new ones on the lovely fall cruise down the St. Croix River on **Tuesday, October 6**. See details inside.

## Wednesday Night Meals

Thanks to our women's group the Wednesday Night Family Meals are back. The meal will be served from 5:00 to 6:30 pm and the cost is \$4/person or \$15/family.

See the sign-up sheets for dates when help is still needed with clean-up and serving.

Also, please use the sign-up sheets to let us know you are coming for dinner.

*We believe...*

*~The Christian faith is a life-long learning process.*

*~Our church family aspires to be the living presence of Christ in the world.*

*~Our faith in Jesus is demonstrated through our lives, actions, and commitments.*

*~We are striving to become a congregation of life-long givers.*

*~Worship is the center of our life together.*

## MODERATOR NOTES Submitted by Jean Smith

I know I've mentioned this before, but if you have not been out to the UCC.org website you should go sometime. There is a lot of interesting information. I wanted to pass on some information that we all probably know but maybe you don't. Enjoy. Remember Church Council meets the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. and you are more than welcome to attend.

## THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST SYMBOL — What does it mean?

The symbol of the United Church of Christ comprises a crown, cross, and orb enclosed within a double oval bearing the name of the church and the prayer of Jesus—"that they may all be one" (John 17:21). It is based on an ancient Christian symbol.



**The crown** symbolizes the sovereignty of Christ—who expresses God's power through love.

**The cross** recalls the suffering of Christ—his arms outstretched on the wood of the cross for the salvation of humanity.

**The orb** represents the world. It is divided but at the same time whole and the cross of Jesus reaches into its depths. The division of the orb into three parts also reminds us of Jesus' call to be his "witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" (Act 1:8). Jesus wants us to bring God's love to every corner of the earth.

**The prayer** reflects our historic commitment to the restoration of unity among the separated churches of Jesus Christ, and our faith that the day will come when all humanity will be gathered by God into one family.

### TREASURER'S NOTES

Missy Luedtke

Financial Information for August and YTD:

	August	YTD
Income	\$ 21,105.29	\$ 220,505.27
Expenses	\$ 18,636.70	\$ 208,097.33
Net	\$ 2,468.59	\$ 12,407.94

A full accounting of all income and expenses is always posted outside the church office door on the bulletin board.

## Weekly Email Begins

Do we have your current email address? The "Weekly Word" is a weekly email sent out on Thursdays that highlights upcoming church activities. Use the sign-up sheet at church to receive the "Weekly Word."

## Mean Dad's Club

I recently read a great book called No: Why Kids of All Ages Need to Hear It & Ways Parents Can Say It. Written by noted author and speaker David Walsh, I have found it to be a helpful and truthful guide to being a better dad. It is full of life examples and practical strategies to help dads grow in their role as fathers. In order to help myself grow in my role as a dad, I am proposing a 'Mean Dads Club'. My vision is that this will be a short-term, small group of dad's whose only purpose will be to grow in our role as fathers. To be a member of the Mean Dad's Club we will commit to three things:

- Meet for five Thursday nights in October (Oct 1, 8, 15, 22, 29) centered around Walsh's book
- Participate in one dad's only servant event (to be determined by the mean dads)
- Participate in one father and kid fun event (again, to be determined by the mean dads)

Please see Pastor Chris for more info on the 'Mean Dads Club.' Copies of the book are available for \$15 in the church office. Use the sign-up sheet to register your interest.

## Rummage Giveaway

Women's Fellowship is holding a "Free Rummage Sale" on **Saturday, October 3 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.**

This is one way we all can give back to the community by providing nice clean clothing, linens, shoes, and small household items for those that may be in need.

## Fall Cruise

This will be no mystery trip. . . . . it's time to sign up for viewing the fall colors from the *Afton \* Hudson Cruise Lines* with lunch on the water. We are scheduled for **Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup>**; leaving the church at 11:15AM; cruising from 12:00-2:00PM and back at church by 3:00PM. The menu will consist of roasted pork loin buffet, garlic mashed potatoes, fresh vegetables, assorted pasta salads and carrot cake. The fee is \$26.00 per person, which will be collected at the church before we leave. We are aiming for a minimum of 25 people, so please let us know on the sign-up sheet if you are interested and feel free to bring a friend.



## Wednesday School

Wednesday School begins on **October 7**. All children in Kindergarten through Grade 5 are welcome to attend.

It is necessary for us to have a completed permission and registration form for every participant by **Tuesday, October 6** so information can be delivered to the elementary schools prior to the first session.

Forms are available in the church office, on the sign-up table, and online.



## Bibles for Sixth Graders

Bibles will be presented to sixth grade students on **October 11, 2009**, during the 10:30 worship service. It is our hope that these Bibles will be used well.

## Wednesday School Worker Needed

Wednesday School begins on October 7. Adult leaders are Christina Krueger, Stacy Myers, and Lezlie Peskar.

We need one more adult to be present on Wednesday afternoons. Please consider volunteering. The need is critical.



## Bonfires

Deb and Jeff Hoffman have again graciously opened their home (and yard!) for a youth bonfire.

The Pre-Confirmation Bonfire for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders is from **6 to 7:30 pm on Wednesday, September 30**.

And the Confirmation Bonfire for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders is from **6 to 7:30 pm on Wednesday, October 7**.

Confirmands (8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders) will be packing boxes for our college students. Please bring an item for the college packs. Suggested items are ramen noodles, stamps, candy, small and fun dorm items.

## Fall Clean-Up

**Tuesday, October 20, 4:00 pm**

Bring your gloves, rakes, blowers, pruning shears, etc. to help clean up the grounds at the church and parsonage.

## Attention All Turkey Lovers!

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am**. The Turkey Lunch/Brunch sign-up sheets will be showing up soon. Watch the bulletin and Congregator for more details.

## Sunday School Curriculum at First Congregational

Curriculum is important in any educational program. "Curriculum" refers narrowly to lesson plans, and broadly to the experiences, resources, and guidance intended to facilitate growth and maturity. First Congregational has the responsibility to provide the most complete possible instruction in the Christian faith to all members, young and old and in between. One way we do this is to focus on the curriculum of the Sunday School program.

The Christian Education committee has established a plan for a three-year curriculum rotation. We are now in the second year of this three-year curriculum rotation. The intent is to ensure that our Sunday School curriculum is both deliberate and flexible. There are specific ideas and concepts we want to be sure our children learn, such as biblical literacy and the history of the church. We also want to be sure that the Sunday School is able to address issues that arise within the congregation's life, such as a response to homelessness. By creating our own curriculum, we are able to tailor the curriculum to the congregation's goals. Each of the three years has a specific focus.

**Year 1—The Timeline Year:** The curriculum focuses on a (nearly) chronological movement through the biblical story supported by the pictorial timeline. Students are encouraged, in age-appropriate ways, to learn and interpret these stories.

**Year 2—Old Testament and Liturgical Year:** The curriculum focuses on additional Old Testament texts that support or are not included in Year 1. For example, the Timeline year covers the destruction of the temple and exile in Babylon. Year 2 covers the building and rebuilding of Solomon's temple. Year 2 also considers sacraments, prayer, and worship practices.

**Year 3—New Testament and Historical Year:** The curriculum focuses on additional New Testament texts beyond those in Year 1. For example, students will search for patterns in healing stories and interpret a wide range of parables. They will also learn about UCC history, the Apostles' Creed, and stained glass windows, among many other themes.

This curriculum establishes a pattern of education for the children of the Sunday School. The pattern will keep us on track as we work to provide a complete education. The pattern also provides the structure to which we can add new ideas and concerns important to the community.

One final note: the finest curriculum is not worth very much apart from the work of teachers who make it come alive. The congregation needs to recognize, support and value the great work of Sunday School teachers.

Stacy Johnson Myers  
Christian Education Coordinator

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## Adult Forum

**October 4: *The Worship and Education Connection*, Stacy Johnson Myers**—Worship and education should by nature be held tightly together. On World Communion Sunday the forum will explore the nature of worship and education and their relationship.

**October 11: *African-American Settlers in Pierce County*, Tim Ericson**—Pierce County was home to one of Wisconsin's earliest and largest African-American communities. The first Black settlers arrived in 1855—the same year First Congregational was founded. By 1900 they had all but disappeared. Where did they come from and why? How well did they fit into the dominant Caucasian community? Why did they leave and where did they go? The adult forum will peak into this little-known chapter of Wisconsin history and consider interracial relationships during the 19th century.

**October 18, 25: *Issues in the Book of Acts*, Barbara Peterson**—The book of Acts provides us with a record of life in the early Christian church. The Adult Forum will consider specific issues that emerge from this document and relate them to our lives as Christians today.

**November 1: *Finding God Without Losing Your Mind*, Bill Quist**—Is it possible to be a Christian without committing intellectual suicide? Can an intelligent person believe in a personal God? In the words of Canadian writer Tom Harpur, can you find God without losing your mind? The Adult Forum will discuss these questions in conjunction with some historical and modern ideas.

## Dead Sea Scrolls Trip

A traveling exhibit of the famed Dead Sea Scrolls is coming to the Science Museum of Minnesota this spring. The church has reserved 30 spots for **Tuesday, April 13, 2010**. We will leave the church at 10am, have a bite to eat, enter the exhibit at noon. Our time at the museum should end around 2pm and we will return to the church around 3pm.

The cost is \$20 and includes admission to the museum, exhibit and an audio guide. We must have payment when you sign up for the trip. We will take the church van and need others to drive. Please see Pastor Chris for more info.



## Feed My Starving Children

Thanks to our over 50 volunteers who helped pack meals this past week. Together we packed over 200,000 meals!



## Volunteers Needed for ARC



The Assistance and Resource Center of River Falls (ARC) is seeking additional phone volunteers. If you are willing to work a 2 hour shift, 10 am–Noon, one to two days a month, Monday – Friday, this is a great opportunity to help the River Falls community. Training will be provided on basic call intake procedures.

The Mission of ARC is to provide short term financial assistance to members of the community to meet their basic needs and to provide access to additional resources.

Please contact Joan Mayen @ 715-760-1755 or [joan.mayen@uwrf.edu](mailto:joan.mayen@uwrf.edu)

## Volunteers Needed

Interfaith Volunteers are needed to transport individuals from River Falls to Hudson for adult day services, to physical therapy or dialysis treatments, and for companionship in the home. Give one hour a month to help some remain at home by contacting Nancy at 715-381-4360 or emailing [nancysa@co.saint-croix.wi.us](mailto:nancysa@co.saint-croix.wi.us). Orientation is provided.

## German Youth Choir Concert

The Youth Choir of Münster, Germany will be giving a concert at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Ellsworth, on **Monday, October 12 at 7:00 pm**. There will also be an opportunity to meet members of the choir while they are here. The choir will be staying overnight in homes Monday night, October 12, before they continue their trip in Menomonie / Eau Claire. If you would like more information, or if you would be interested in hosting a few of the choir members in your home on Monday night, please contact St. Paul's UCC, 273-3118.

## Our Church's Wider Mission - Neighbors in Need

We will collect our annual Neighbors in Need offering on **October 4**. This offering supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. The UCC is strongly committed to ministries of peacemaking and violence reduction. These funds are used for programs addressing injustice on local and national levels. Two-thirds of this money is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries for justice initiatives and service projects, and one-third of it supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries including 20 UCC churches on Indian reservations.

Some recent users of these funds are:

- Erase the Hate campaign in Toledo, Ohio promoting a community free from racism.
- Institute for Peace Studies in Billings, Montana promoting alternatives to violence in schools and communities across Montana.
- New York City's Poverty Initiative, a program led by the poor to eradicate poverty.
- Urban Mission Experience in St. Louis, teaching young people about poverty, hunger, and oppression in their city.

Check out the website [ucc.org/justice](http://ucc.org/justice) to see the wide array of peace and justice programs the Neighbors in Need offering supports. Please contribute using the special N.I.N. offering envelopes in the pews or send a check to the church indicating "NIN" in the memo line.

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### "Our Neighbor's Place" Update

The River Falls homeless shelter committee continues to make progress towards their goal of providing emergency shelter, transitional housing, and day center services to those in need here in our community. The latest update on the project can be found on the bulletin board outside our church office. Check it out! You will find information on the various volunteer opportunities available to you; everything from providing transportation to supervising children to picking out a new set of clothing!

Also remember there is still homemade jam available for sale in the fellowship hall with proceeds going to Our Neighbor's Place. Lastly, right now, Servant of the Shepherd Lutheran Church continues to provide emergency shelter in their members homes while the more permanent site is being established. They welcome donations of: - **Grocery items** (Please deliver to Servant of the Shepherd - Elm Street door) - **Sunday BBQ supplies**, frozen meals, canned meat, coffee, laundry detergent, soap, gas cards, paper towels, toilet paper, diapers (all sizes but 5-6 in particular) - **Private Homes** - individuals willing to offer temporary housing

Mission Education Committee

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### MISSION MILITARY APPEAL WRAPS UP

Thanks to all who have contributed to our Military Appeal for Rev. Deris Rice from Spata, WI. **Our appeal will end on October 11<sup>th</sup>** and so you still have time to bring in your donations of items (see list below) or money (we will purchase items to include).

Rev Deris Rice is the pastor for the UCC congregation in Sparta, WI... recently deployed as a Chaplain to Iraq. It is his congregation which our own Rev Del Permann is caring for in his absence. Northwest Wisconsin Association UCC rallied churches this past summer to support Rev Deris Rice by gathering toiletry items to send for the men and women under his care. Please consider supporting us in this appeal. In the words of Rev Rice, *"Thank you for helping us to offer some sense of normalcy in a demanding and chaotic environment. I pray that the Creator of the universe will bless our church and other faith communities as we minister to a generation of warriors who are transformed and broken by their time in combat."*

*We have placed a collection box in the church lobby for your offerings: (personal or travel sized): bars of soap, deodorant, toothpaste, dental floss, toothbrushes, shaving cream, feminine hygiene products, shampoo, lotion, conditioner, shower shoes, hardy candy, beef jerky, and protein bars.*

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**BABY HELP!** The Tille Quintuplets born June 17 have recently come home to River Falls. Many generous neighbors, friends and strangers from our community have stepped forward to help in the challenge of raising 5 babies but they still need **MORE** volunteers. 3 volunteers per 3 hour shift; 8 shifts a day; 7 days a week... it adds up to a grand total of 168 volunteers required per week!

The volunteer coordinator for the Tille quints is the very experienced Brenda Derks, mother of River Falls' first set of quints who are now six years old! All volunteers are required to attend a training session and complete a confidential registration form. For more information and upcoming trainings, please go to [www.tillefamily.com](http://www.tillefamily.com) or contact Brenda at [quints.help@gmail.com](mailto:quints.help@gmail.com)

## New to Church? Come to the Inquirer's Class

If you would like to know more about the life and ministry of our church, please register to attend the fall Inquirer's Class on **Sunday, November 8**. At this 90-minute gathering you will meet church leaders, other newcomers and more about the church's life and ministry. Lunch and childcare are included. Please use the sign-up sheet to register your attendance or contact Lu Lueck in the church office.



After completing this class, those who wish to join the church will be received into membership on Sunday, November 15 at the 10:30 am worship service.

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## Wednesday Night Meals

Women's Fellowship will be providing Wednesday Night Meals **beginning October 14 through November 18**. Please consider participating by cooking, cleaning or serving. Sign up on the back table.

## Yoga Classes

Yoga is held on **Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 am**. They meet in the Sunday School area. Please bring a yoga mat and a large bath towel. Any questions, call Jan Hansen at 425-5211.



## From Broken Down Bikes to Rebuilt

**Bikes** - Whether young or old, remember the thrill of bicycling for fun? This is something Tim Bylander, a member of our congregation, is trying to continue for everyone who is in need of a bike and cannot afford a new one. Tim has taken over for Cecil Bjork the task of rebuilding bicycles to give away to kids and adults in our community. He is in need of used bikes or parts to repair or put together "new bikes". With the anticipation of Christmas and knowing how the economy has affected many families, he would like to rebuild as many bikes as possible. To do this, Tim is asking for your help; if you have used or parts of old bikes you would like to donate, please contact Tim at (715) 425-7437. Thank you in advance for your help.

## Church Family Trip to Holden Village July 11-18, 2010

Please see the flyer on the back table for more information.

There will be an informational meeting on **Sunday, October 4 at 11:30 am** in the Fellowship Hall.

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## Journey House Campus Ministry News

Each month at Journey House there is a multitude of different events where we reach out to the student body and the River Falls community to provide a safe and fun environment for people to exchange ideas and continue on their journey of faith. Our events range from a weekly "create and connect" where students can come to Journey House to learn how to make either food or a fun craft all the while meeting new people, to our weekly worships and bible studies. These events are designed to make people feel comfortable in expressing their own ideas and building off of each other's ideas to improve one another.

Our create and connects this month, which take place every Wednesday night at 6:30, include making delicious caramel apples and sundaes to celebrate the start of fall, a little Italy night where students learn how to make various Italian dishes, a tie dye shirt night to celebrate the UN day of peace, and book binding.

In addition to our weekly events, we also do monthly service projects and community bonding events. As always we thank you for your continued support and wish you a great month of October.

Student, Jason Larson

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**STAFF**



Chris Myers - Pastor  
 Lu Lueck - Parish Coordinator  
 Missy Luedtke - Office Assistant  
 Stacy Johnson - CE Coordinator  
 Scott Perau - Music Coordinator  
 Organists - Marsha Pearson,  
 Barb Wall  
 Tim Bylander - Building Supervisor  
 Dave Mountain - Custodian  
 Jean Smith - Moderator

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**PASTOR'S HOME PHONE NUMBER**

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**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

October 1, 2009

2009 OCTOBER 2009						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Yoga 8:30 am Women's Fellowship 9:30 am Kettle Bells 4:30 pm Mean Dad's Club 7:00 pm	2	3 Free Rummage Sale 9:00 am-1:00 pm
4 <b>Communion Sunday</b> <b>All Worship Sunday</b> 9:00 am Worship Service 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast 11:30 am Holden Village Information Meeting	5 Building Committee Meeting 6:30 pm	6 Yoga 9:00 am Fall Cruise 11:15 am-3:00 pm	7 3:30 pm Wednesday School 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:00 pm Confirmation 2 and 3 Bonfire at Hoffman's—College Packs 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	8 Yoga 9:00 am Kettle Bells 4:30 pm Mean Dad's Club 7:00 pm	9	10 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
11 8:00 am Chancel Choir 9:00 am Worship Service 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	12	13 Yoga 9:00 am 2nd Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's AAUW Meeting 6:30-9:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall	14 3:30 pm Wednesday School 5:00 pm Wed Eve Supper 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Pre-Confirmation (6th & 7th Grades) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	15 Yoga 9:00 am Kettle Bells 4:30 pm Mean Dad's Club 7:00 pm	16 Kuchevar Rehearsal at Kinnickinnic Church 5:00 pm	17 Kuchevar Wedding at Kinnickinnic Church 4:00 pm
18 8:00 am Jubilee Ringers 9:00 am Worship Service 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast	19	20 Yoga 9:00 am Fall Clean-Up 4:00 pm 3rd Tuesday Soup 'n Sandwich 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's Boards and Committees Meetings 6:30 pm Church Council Meeting 7:30 pm	21 3:30 pm Wednesday School 5:00 pm Wed Eve Supper 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Confirmation Year 2 (8th Grade) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 7:30 pm Confirmation Year 3 (9th Grade)	22 No Yoga Kettle Bells 4:30 pm Mean Dad's Club 7:00 pm	23	24
25 8:00 am Chancel Choir 9:00 am Worship Service 9:00 am Adult Forum 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Sunday School 11:00 am WEVR Broadcast 11:30 am Youth-Corn Maze NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	26 Journey House Meeting 7:00 pm	27 No Yoga 4th Tuesday Banquet 5:00 pm at St. Bridget's	28 3:30 pm Wednesday School 5:00 pm Wed Eve Supper 6:00 pm Jubilee Ringers 6:30 pm Pre-Confirmation (6th & 7th Grades) 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	29 Yoga 9:00 am Kettle Bells 4:30 pm Mean Dad's Club 7:00 pm	30	31 Halloween