

THE AP STLE

Then and Now

In May of 2006, our family was packing and saying goodbye to our friends in Arkansas. We would soon be moving to our new home in Kansas and would begin a new ministry with the people of St. Thomas. In some ways, it seems like just yesterday; in other ways, it seems that we have always been here.

Over the last four years, we have worked and toiled together in this part of the Lord's vineyard—planting, sowing, and reaping the rewards of the work God has given us to do.

There have been many baptisms, weddings, funerals and burials. We have laughed, celebrated, cried, and even been frustrated with each other.

New people have come and blessed our community; old friends have moved on to new places. Each week we gather in our church community. Then we resume our various lives encouraged by each other and God, reaching out to make a difference where we can.

St. Thomas is a gifted congregation filled with possibility and desire to live out the mission God is giving us. A few months ago, the vestry asked that we start discerning a long-range plan to guide us in strategy for the next few years. Since then, a group of dedicated people have been gathering and praying about where God is leading us in the future.

This process will not be quick. Over the last few weeks information was gathered through a survey. The committee will take that info and work with it to help determine the next few steps we will take at St. Thomas.

What do we need to do with our buildings? What staffing is required for the next steps? What new ministries are being called forth? Of what do we need to let go? I ask that you pray for this group and your church.

These last few months have been a season of goodbyes for many of our long time and beloved members. It has been an honor to serve as a priest during these moments. In the same months, many new members have come for baptisms and weddings. At the same time, we are graduating a number of our youth who are full of optimism and hope for the future.

In Ecclesiastes, it says, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." It is my firm belief that the church is at its best when it is fully engaged in all the cycles of our lives.

Where will St. Thomas be in 40 years? Who will be its members? If we are good stewards in this time and continue to fulfill the calling that God has given us, St. Thomas will be a thriving community then as it is now..

I'm glad we came four years ago. I love being your priest and leading this community in ministry. This community is a blessing to so many, and our call is to continue to grow and till the vineyard God has entrusted to us.

Blessings,

GR L

Footnotes

Beth L. Elswick, Director of Music Ministries



More Than Enough

Throughout my life I have always had more than enough. As a child, I had more than enough clothing, more than enough food, and more than enough space to call my own. When I got married, I received more than enough in the way of gifts. My children seem to be having more than enough opportunities, as well.

Still, I find myself asking you for MORE THAN ENOUGH.

My choir and praise band members give oodles of time, and they do not ask me for a thing—well, maybe they wish that I would cool it with my sense of humor. Seriously, they ask for little, and they give a lot.

Still, I find myself asking for MORE THAN ENOUGH.

Yes, I need more than enough. If I just have “enough” singers, then no one can ever take a week off.

It is soon going to be the season of vacations and time away from the homestead. I need more than enough singers so that the praise band members and choir members can go on vacations with their families, and we can still have fun making music. We need to make a “joyful noise” which requires “more than just enough” sound.

During the summer, if you can come to the service 45 minutes before the 8:45 praise service or one hour before the 10:45 service, we will run through the anthems and hymns and make music for worship.

Please consider helping with the music during the summer months so that our faithful singers can take a little break from time to time.

Thanks,
Beth

Small Groups News

Katie Knoll Lenon, Director of Small Groups Ministry

New Training

We are excited to be training four new people—*Leila Potts, Kathy Townley, Donna Kopp and Jenne Weil*—in our Group Leader training courses this Spring and Summer. Every Tuesday, we meet and cover all sorts of topics regarding what one might expect in a St. Thomas Small Group. Please pray for us and our teachers as we finish up this course.

Not in a Small Group yet?

We have plenty of opportunities for you to join one here at St. Thomas. Any one of our small groups is a great place for you to get to know more people at St. Thomas, a great place for you to deepen your relationship with Christ and with others, as well as a great place for you to invite your unchurched friends for a relaxed atmosphere.

Come one and come all to a Small Group!

Interested in becoming a Small Group leader, but never have a Tuesday night free?

We are considering providing another training course this Fall. Several people are already interested in taking it; if offered, the training would be held on a Sunday afternoon.

Contact **Katie Knoll Lenon** at kklenon@stthomasop.org and visit our website, stthomasop.org (Small Group page), for further details.

Hello Lobster Lovers!



We had so much fun last year with our lobster neighbors that we are going to do it all over again! Live lobsters will be flown in from Maine for purchase as an IHN fundraiser with all profits going to IHN.

All details are on the order form that is available on the IHN table in the narthex. Please tell your friends, neighbors and co-workers about our fundraiser and give them a copy of the order form.

Orders are due by Thursday, June 10. Payment and lobsters will be ready on the afternoon of **June 19, 2010** at St. Thomas.

Please place your orders in the IHN house on the IHN table or in the Outreach mailbox in our mail room. Any questions? Contact **Donna Fye** at djfy@yahoo.com.

Thank you for your continued support of IHN.

Six years of making a difference

“The poor you will always have with you..” Matthew 26:11

Those words from Jesus are filled with truth, and in today’s world, it means we will always have those living on the edge which, in Johnson County, will lead to those who are homeless.

Six years ago St.Thomas helped create Johnson County *Interfaith Hospitality Network* to address the needs of homeless families. IHN is one of only two shelters serving homeless families in Johnson County.

IHN was established based on a unique service model that is incredibly efficient and cost-effective. Overnight shelter is provided in existing community spaces (such as churches).

Trained volunteers provide the “hospitality” part by making meals and by offering their time in a “ministry of presence” by being with guest families in the evenings and overnight. Many supporters help by donating supplies and food needed.

Our Network includes a permanent daytime facility where families receive social services. In addition, they have access to phones and computers for job or apartment searches, showers, laundry—many of the things they need to continue to function while putting their lives back together so they can move back into independent housing.

The Network consists of ten Host churches and twenty-four support congregations. With *Or Hadash Reconstructionist* congregation and the recent addition of the *Midland Islamic Council*, we are truly an interfaith network. We do not evangelize nor do we demand a faith commitment from our guest families. We are examples of God’s love through our actions.

St.Thomas has a core group of trained volunteers. But like most other founding congregations, during the past six years several St.Thomas people have moved, had health problems, died or experienced changes in their personal life.

We constantly need to add new volunteers to help us continue to do the work of this ministry. The commitment starts with attending one of the training sessions which are scheduled approximately every other month and will be advertised in our weekly Tower Talk. Volunteer opportunities are flexible. Host week schedules usually include some weeknights or weekend evenings. Often a person only volunteers for a two-hour shift.

The poor will always be with us. Please give prayerful thought to joining the IHN HOST ministry at St.Thomas and help us make a difference in the lives of those in our community.

If you have questions contact **Dola McNown** at 541-9226 or **Suzanne Hicks** at 768-0940.

— Dola McNown

IHN Statistics

From June 8, 2004 to March 30, 2010

Served 270 individuals
including 163 children

Provided 19,525 bednights
and 58,575 meals

Together,
we
make
a
difference.

4th Annual IHN Golf Tournament

Mark this date and location on your calendar

SEPTEMBER 11, 2010

FALCON RIDGE GOLF COURSE

Join us for a fun morning of golf, games, lunch and prizes!!!

The Annual Golf Tournament is the largest fundraiser for IHN, and has generated over \$60,000 in 3 years.

This year’s goal is \$35,000, and we need everyone’s help.

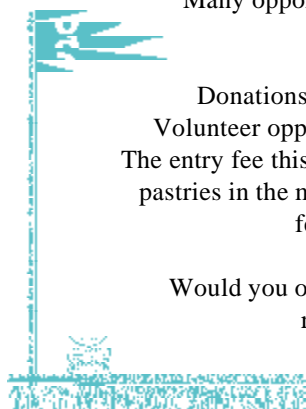
Many opportunities for Sponsorships are available, ranging from \$350 for a Hole Sponsor all the way up to \$5,000 for a Platinum Sponsor.

Donations of Silent Auction and golfer prizes are always needed.

Volunteer opportunities abound and there are openings for 144 players! The entry fee this year is \$100 per golfer or \$400 per foursome, and includes pastries in the morning, free range balls on the practice range, cart & green fees, lunch, prizes and a guaranteed good time!

Would you or your company like to participate in this charitable event, receive recognition throughout the community, and benefit an organization that makes a difference in the lives of those most in need in Johnson County?

For more information or to sign up, please contact **Lucky** or **Suzanne Hicks** at 768-0940 or luckyfh@aol.com.



The year ends, but Summer Sunday School begins!

Ann Clements, Director of Children's Ministries



So, we've ended another awesome church school year! Many, many thanks to all the wonderful students and parents who helped make our program a successful, fun, and blessed place to be each week. Heaps of gratitude to our loving and dedicated teachers: **Molly Rapp, Peggy Salts, Deb McArthur, Laura Wiltanger, Donna Kopp, Ellen Peters, Barbara McCall, and Rachel Ward.** For all your hard work and time given to the classroom, we'd like to reward you with a nice, relaxing summer vacation

WAIT! This doesn't mean we're taking the summer off. In fact, another round of **Summer Fun Sunday School** will start on **June 6th** during the **9:45** education hour. Besides playground time and snacks, we have some exciting things planned:

June 6, 13, 20 — "What Makes My Church Special?"

This segment takes a deeper look at the St. Thomas of yesterday and today. Join us for a church scavenger hunt, storytelling, videos, and crafts as we explore our building, our people, and our many ministries. We'll have lots of visitors who have been part of the St. Thomas experience from the early years. We may even get to hear from a former Sunday School student or two who are still around to share their stories.

July 11, 18, 25 (no class on July 4) — "Good Shepherd and World Communion"

This segment focuses on the Eucharist by linking the image of the Good Shepherd and communion of nature and people, with God and each other.

This unit will be full of hands-on activities, from storytelling to art to working in our very own sacred space, complete with altar, sacristy cupboard, tabernacle, and other hands-on, kid-friendly items. We will explore the many parts of a Holy Eucharist service and learn about liturgical gestures and discover the places in the sacred space the children will see by taking part in the liturgy.

Parents and grownup friends are always welcome to join. If you would like to help or have any questions, please call me at **481-6749**.



Don't miss
Summer Sunday School!



In Genesis I, we fall in love with God's creation by saying, with God, "This is so good!" God loves all creation as one interconnected body and loves us as creatures who belong to that body. Kids in our congregation can lead the way as stewards of the earth. This summer they'll participate in **ReNew: The Green VBS**.

Good soil seldom just happens. It is the result of a gardener's hard work. God plants the Seed of Love in us through parables and the ultimate gardener, Jesus. At VBS this summer, we're going to dream big! This is a dream in which all creation harmoniously lives together in God's love. We will call out together, "This is so good!"

To that harmonious end, this is a call to all St. Thomas parishioners.

Children: *Are you ready to Grow in Faith, Have Fun and Change the World?*

Parents and grandparents and seasoned St. Thomas members (including young adults): *Are you ready to practice being green through faith and fun?*

Find out how you can get involved by following VBS news in Tower Talk and calling **Laura Wiltanger** (302-1424) or **Tracy Ferren** (851-8350).

We have plenty of spaces for children ages 3-5th grade to play, learn and sing to **ReNew** our congregation and community. We have plenty of opportunities for volunteers to help us plant the Seed of God's love: leading, cooking and creating (building, artwork, and tapestry).

Here are the details:

Registration begins Pentecost weekend.

Visit our market on Sunday, May 23th.

VBS runs Sunday, July 11th through Thursday, July 15th.

We'll begin each evening at 6:00 with dinner.

Groups and families will gather at 8:00 pm.

In peace, harmony and love,

Tracy Ferren and Laura Wiltanger

Kindly fill out the VBS registration and emergency contact form found inserted in this newsletter.

Please place in **Laura Wiltanger's box located in the mail room before July 1st. Thank you.**



Youth Group News

Katie Knoll Lenon, Director of Youth Ministries and Small Groups

Reaching Out to the Community 3rd-5th grade

This summer we are expanding our ROTC program to include our younger youth in grades 3rd through 5th grade. This will be our third year doing our ROTC program, and we are looking forward to this year being just as much of a success as it has been in the past.

ROTC, a day camp, takes place from June 7th to June 11th. It starts at 7:30 am and continues 5:30 pm. Each day, we bring a sack lunch and St. Thomas provides drinks for everyone.

The morning is spent at a worksite providing service for our community. In the past, some of these worksites have included Harvesters and Christian Foundation for Children and Aging. We have also decorated book marks and lunch sacks for the elderly in our community.

Every afternoon we have an activity planned like horseback riding, swimming, or taking a field trip like visiting the Moon Marble factory in Bonner Springs. We will come back to St. Thomas at the end of our day and be ready for pick up at 5:30 pm. Transportation to and from activities is provided by volunteer parents and adults.

The cost for this week is \$50 per youth. Registration packets will be available online shortly, or you can pick them up from the youth room in the basement.

Summer Movie Sundays!

Since it is never a good idea to go the entire summer without seeing each other, we will go to the movies and spend time together watching the silver screen and talking about the films. Right now, it is hard to say what films we will see and at what exact time, but you can mark the following dates on the calendar and plan to see a movie in the early afternoon.

June 6th, 20th, July 11th, 25th, August 1st, and 15th

St. Thomas Youth Camping Trip

We have decided to end our summer vacation by going into the wilderness and checking out God's creation. It will be a fun-filled weekend that will teach us about survival. There will be no running water, flushing toilets, heated or air conditioned shelters. We will learn and work together to cook our own food, gather our own wood for heat and cooking. We will also have fun playing games like "Sardines" and "Capture the Flag." This camping trip will take place the weekend of **August 6th-8th**.

This event will be for our incoming 6th graders up through our graduated Seniors. Further details will be forthcoming.

Reaching Out to the Community for older youth

The time has come again for us to experience a great week giving back to the community. This year we have a week packed full of great opportunities for us to do as well as experience. This camp is for our youth who are entering 6th grade up through those who just finished 8th grade. It will take place **June 27th through July 2nd**, from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm.

In the morning, we will go to a worksite and give back to the community in various ways like at working at Harvesters, serving lunch to the homeless, helping out at an animal shelter, and/or preparing supplies for backpacks for children who cannot afford them.

In the afternoon, we will have fun activities lined up like riding in bumper boats; the week will wind up with a trip to Worlds of Fun.

The cost is \$100 per youth and registrations should be available online, in the downstairs youth room, or by contacting Katie who will email one to you directly. Email her at kklenon@stthomasop.org.

Missionpalooza

Another diocesan program offered this summer is called *Missionpalooza*. This is a great opportunity for our older youth who are attending or about to attend high school.

From **July 13th through 18th**, local youth attend an overnight camp that is hosted by St. Paul's in Kansas City, Missouri. Similar to ROTC, this program gives back to the community.

Each attendee gets to pick the place where he/she would like to work. Then for three days, each person will go to work at that site in teams with youth who have similar gifts and interests in serving that particular outreach.

At night, participants come back to St. Paul's and do a fun activity like going to the pool, watching a movie, or visiting the Plaza for an enjoyable evening. This program is for students entering 8th through 12th grade and for graduates, of course. The cost is \$160 per youth; scholarships are available. For registration packets, please visit this website: <http://www.episcopal-ks.org/youth/index.html>.

Youth Group Meetings will resume on August 22nd from 7-8:30 pm.

Pastoral Care Ministries notebook

Members learn how to minister to those in grief

The Reverend Marshall Scott, Chaplain at St. Luke's South Hospital, was an excellent seminar leader at a recent Pastoral Care Ministries' Grief Issues seminar.

Father Scott spoke about the needs of grieving individuals, the stages of grief, the tasks of the grieving, and where and how to find grief support. Another important topic of the seminar enlightened us about various reasons why we grieve; perhaps we grieve for someone who has passed away or for someone who has been diagnosed with a debilitating disease.

When he talked about the stages of grief, he explained that when we grieve, we will grieve in our own way; we cannot grieve alone. Going through the grieving process is not a quick process. One of the most important things we may have learned at the seminar: *Listen to whomever is grieving so they know they have been heard. We, who are the listener, must listen all the way through to the end of their sentence—don't interrupt. Let the one who is grieving—talk.*

Father Scott told us to direct those who are grieving to come and talk to Father Gar or come to St. Luke's Hospital and meet with him (Marshall Scott). He gave grief support resources to all who attended the seminar. There are some very good books about grief as well as also an Internet website: <http://www.griefsupportnetwork.org> which offers local support groups for various causes of grief.

The seminar was open to all to attend. Many members from our Pastoral Care Ministries attended as well as others from our parish. Thanks to Father Scott's outstanding seminar, we all left with a much better understanding of grief issues.

—Susan Strom, Pastoral Care Ministries chair

More Pastoral Care events to come

Pastoral Care Ministries (PCM) had its first seminar and it was a huge success!

Our next seminar and our October retreat will once again be open to anyone.

Be looking for notices about these events. The next weekend Pastoral Care Ministries will have refreshments after the church services is September 25-26, 2010.

Please come and enjoy our home-baked cookies. We are looking forward to seeing you all.

Peace,
Susan Strom

Rick Bush organizes pick-up of groceries for Pantry at St. Paul's with "Stamp Out Hunger"

Rick Bush and Donna Fye of St. Thomas, Don Seifert, Paul Reed, Ron Giancarlo of St. Aidans's, Vicar Ron Reed, Deacon Gail Reynolds, and her husband Mike met at the Rosedale (KCK) branch Post Office to pick up the groceries collected in the annual "Stamp Out Hunger" drive organized by the Letter Carriers Association.

St. Paul's was the agency designated to receive the donations collected at the Rosedale station by 13 routes. There was an estimated 7000+ pounds of food!

From left to right in the photo are Donna Fye, St. Paul's Vicar Ron Reed, Ron Giancarlo, Don Seifert, and Paul Reed (rear) of St. Aidan's, and Rick Bush of St. Thomas.

Thanks St. Thomas, for all you do for the Pantry at St. Paul's!!! —Gail Reynolds, Deacon



Photo/Gail Reynolds

“Thom’s Green Thumbs” pleased with successful plant sale

Wind and rain weren’t a threat this year since STA’s gardening group, *Thom’s Green Thumbs*, decided to hold its annual plant sale in the Assembly Room. This decision was met with loud approval from plant sale patrons.

Using two new growers from Kansas was a smart move. The result? A larger variety of healthy, organically-grown perennials, annuals, native plants, herbs, vegetables, roses, and hanging baskets was offered.

Chair **Marge Dellinger** and her steering committee were pleased with the profit they made which filled their coffers for this growing season and assured them of having enough funds for new garden projects.

Marge, Jan, Rosemary, Janet and Bill would like to thank *Ron Abbott, Gary Summers, Frank Lange, Craig Christie, Sharon Moorhead* and *Linda Manuel* for their support and willingness to pick up and deliver plants, set up the sale, clean up afterwards, and put up signs. You name it, they did it with a smile.

Special thanks to parishioner *Larry Knackstedt* for supplying all the beer flats needed for the sale. Applause to the Evangelism committee for supplying refreshments, and to *Rachael Chambers* for her creative gardening book marks which were given to all who made purchases.

Thom’s Green Thumbers prepare for sale



As the Assembly Room was being readied for the weekend sale, the hard-working committee, from left, Marge Dellinger (chair), Rosemary Abbott, Ron Abbott, Janet Christie, Jan Summers, Bill Kidder and Gary Summers, assembled for a snapshot before completing their preparations.

Photo/Judy Dutra.



Patrons of the plant sale found an abundance of lush plants to enhance their personal gardens. In this photo, Jerry Snider ponders a selection of herbs and vegetables.

Photos/Judy Dutra and Rosemary Abbott



Memorial Brick program is on-going!

As the earth reawakens, it is time for a reminder that our Columbariums’ Memorial Brick program is ongoing. Loved ones can be honored, remembered and/or thanked by having a brick engraved and placed in our *Apostle’s Garden*.

The cost is a mere \$40. The sentiment will last a lifetime. Forms are available on the table in the entryway to the church.



Those youth that have been there do not need reminding that Summer Camp is almost here! They have been counting down the days since last summer.

This wonderful week of awesomeness takes place at Camp Wood, a YMCA camp, set in the scenic Flint Hills of Kansas.

The grandeur of the Flint Hills is astounding. But camp is not just about the view. There are all sorts of fun things to do and new experiences to discover. For instance, there is a lake for swimming with a giant water slide, a climbing tower with a giant swing; there are canoes and horses, hiking trails, and many sports to play.

The other wonderful thing about camp is that the program, both entertaining and enriching, jam packs 8 weeks of Sunday School into one week.

So clear your calendar and make Camp a priority this summer!

The cost is \$340

and scholarships are available.

Check the dates below and get a registration packet from **Katie Knoll** at church or the Diocesan youth website: <http://www.episcopal-ks.org/youth/index.html>.

Senior High Camp (Grades 10th-12th)
June 6th-12th

Junior High Camp (Grades 7th-9th)
June 13th-19th

Intermediate Camp (Grades 4th-6th)
June 20th-26th

Parish Notes

Deaths

The St. Thomas family extends heartfelt sympathy to:

John Culver on the death of his father,
Don Culver,
a member of St. Thomas;

Hank Stephens and **Lyn Ganzer**
on the death of their wife/mother,
Evelyn Stephens,
a member of St. Thomas;

Rosemary Stewart and
Anne Thompson
on the death of their husband/father,
Jack Stewart,
a member of St. Thomas;

Betty McAleer
on the death of her dear friend,
Jay Sigman,
a member of St. Thomas;

Marie Glover
on the death of her son,
John Morgan;

Ellen Peters
on the death of her mother,
Mary Ellen Dunn Daly;

Denis Peters
on the death of his brother;

Kathy Warner
on the death of her father,
Gordon Beryl;

Tim, Debbie and Matt Lang
on the passing of their
beloved son/brother,
Kevin Lang,
a member of St. Thomas;

Earl Jacobs
on the passing of his mother,
Dorothy Ravare.

*May their souls and the souls
of all the departed
rest in peace.*

Births

Danielle Bernadette and
Andrew Jonathan Roever
were born on April 16, 2010. Their
parents are *Therese & John Roever*.

Ezra DeVere Baze
was born on March 18, 2010. His parents
are *Zach Baze & Miranda Kennedy*.

Baptisms

We welcomed into the household of God
the following:

Sadie Marie Walstrom
daughter of *Julie & Jeffrey Walstrom*;

Hannah Nicolle Janeway
daughter of
Jason Janeway & Kahla Owens;

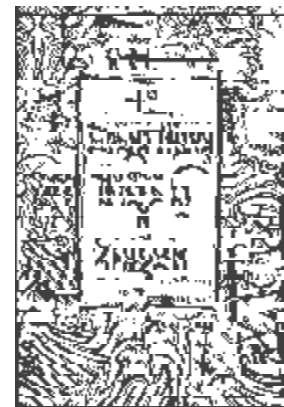
Hailey Elizabeth Owens
daughter of *Kahla Owens*.

Marriages

Congratulations to the following couples:

Ami Baguyos and **Richard Tevis**
who were united in marriage
on April 17, 2010;

Rebecca Russell and **Adam Rothermich**
who were united in marriage
on April 24, 1010.





Holy Communion Services

Saturdays

5:30 Holy Communion

Sundays

- 8:45 Holy Communion
with Praise music & Band
- 9:45 Sunday School/Adult
Forum
- 10:45 Holy Communion
with traditional music



“Gal’s Gardening Gathering”

Saturday, June 5, 2010
1:00 – 3:00 pm
The Apostle’s Garden**

Join us for a “gab-fest” and goodies in the garden. Come as you are...casual attire.
Sorry guys...gals only!

Sign-up: bulletin board in hallway
Call *Linda Manuel* (438-7407) or
Sharon Moorhead (851-1899)
if you have questions.

**Inclement weather: narthex



The Apostle

St. Thomas the Apostle Church
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Overland Park, KS 66213
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• fax: 913-451-1966 •

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***Next Apostle deadline:
Sunday, July 18, 2010***

Calendar

JUNE

- 5: “Gal’s Garden Gathering” — see left column for details
- 6: Summer Sunday School begins at 9:45 am
- 6–12: Camp Wood experience – Senior High
- 7–11: ROTC for younger youth: 3rd through 5th grades
- 13–19: Camp Wood experience –Junior High
- 19: *IHN Lobster Fundraiser*
- 20–26: Camp Wood experience – Intermediate Grades
- 27–July 2: ROTC for older kids

JULY

- 4: Celebrate the Fourth at St.Thomas
- 12–15: Evening VBS begins at 6 pm.
- 13–18: MISSIONPALOOZA for high school youth
- 18: Apostle Deadline for Fall issue

AUGUST

- 6–8: Summer Camping Trip for youth