



PINES

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Pines Press August 2026 / 12751 Kimberley Lane 77024 / 713-467-2234 / www.pinespc.org

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Send articles for this newsletter
to cindy@pinespc.org

August Highlights...

- 2nd** Come listen to the new Sherwood Principal during Worship.
- 9th** Teacher Commissioning and Blessing of the Backpacks at 10:45.
- 16th** Our own Pines Pealers play in Worship.
- 23rd** 3rd Grade Bible Sunday and Space City Singers will be singing during Worship. After Worship, the Space City Singers will be holding an informal gathering in the Fellowship Hall for us to hear the songs from their recent competition.
- 30th** Kick Off Sunday and Hymn Sing at 9:15. Cindy's Retirement Party at noon after Worship, all in the Fellowship Hall and ALL are invited!



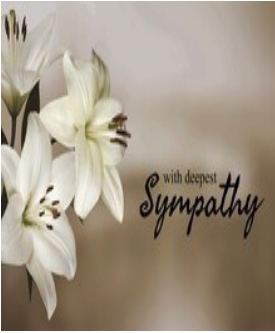
Pines Family News & Current Events



Wondering how to order flowers for the Sanctuary or Narthex?

Cost for Narthex flowers is \$50 and the Sanctuary is \$75. We offer the option to give to a benevolence or to order a live arrangement.

Please email: Melissa Gravett or Linda Aldred at to sign up.



Pines member Jean Breitenwischer passed away. Please keep her family in your prayers. Jean was 96 years old and had joined Pines in 2013. She had been living at the Buckingham and had not been able to attend church in quite some time. Jean was a bright and interesting woman. As her family said "she possessed a sharp, intelligent wit with an artist's eye of the world". A reception was held for her in July at Laurel Parke (formally the Buckingham). Cards may be sent to the church for forwarding.

Prayers for the family of Walter LaForge. Walter was a member of Pines and had been our pianist/organist and Music Director in the past. He was funny, sweet, kind, and totally dedicated to God, family and friends. He will be missed. A service will be held August 1 at 11am at Heights Church on W. 20th st at 11am.

Want to learn to play Mahjong, or are you already a seasoned player?

Suzy Wolfe has begun a Mahjong group in the café, the 2nd Thursday of each month near the receptionist desk at 7pm. If you would be interested, please call the church office to contact Suzy.



BINGO...

will start back up in September.

Please watch the Newsletter and This Week at Pines for dates to come.

Have a great summer!

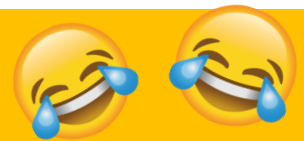
Corny jokes of the month...

Why was the math book sad? Because it had too many problems!

Why don't eggs tell jokes? They'd crack each other up!

What do you call a bear with no teeth? A gummy bear!

Where do you take someone that has been injured in a peekaboo accident? The ICU
Until next month...smile!



The church office is open Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM. On Fridays, the office staff work from home. If you need assistance on Fridays, call Cindy at 832-489-5989.

Do you get our weekly prayer list? If not, please call Cindy in the church office at 713-467-2234 x110 to get on the list. If you would prefer to send an email for prayer, you may send it to Bethel at prayer@pinespc.org. Cindy can also help you sign up to receive our monthly newsletter "The Pines Press" or our weekly publication "This Week at Pines". So give us a call, we would love to get you connected to what is happening at Pines!

Sanctuary flowers: Melissa Gravett or
Linda Aldred

Make a donation: Alexis Graham at alexis@pinespc.org or donate on our
website at pinespc.org

Add a name to the prayer list: Bethel Strawser at prayer@pinespc.org

Request a bulletin announcement: Laurie Conner at laurie@pinespc.org

Request a newsletter announcement: Cindy Houlihan at cindy@pinespc.org

Request an announcement for This Week at Pines: Dan Schafer at
communication@pinespc.org

Update contact info in our database: Cindy Houlihan at cindy@pinespc.org

Plan a wedding: Linda Aldred

Add something to our calendar: Cindy Houlihan at cindy@pinespc.org

Question about our kitchen: Ann Guerra

Question about our Preschool: Connie Pike at connie@pinespc.org

Anything else? Just give the office a call at 713-467-2234 x110

Contact Us

SAVE THE DATE, Sunday August 30th after Worship

After 27 years it is time to say goodbye to our Office Manager Cindy Houlihan. The Staff Committee is proposing a special way in which to honor Cindy. The theme is **Thanks for the Memories!!!**

There are many ways in which you can participate in this wonderful celebration and offering of love. Baskets will be set up in the Narthex to collect any hand written thank-you notes or cards. We will also have a link and/or QR code in the *This Week at Pines* and below in this newsletter, so you can upload any photograph over the last 27 years that you might like to share as we hope to create a slide show of fun pictures and memories. Finally, you may choose to make a love offering financial gift. Please send a check to Alexis Graham, Pines Financial Manager, with the wording "Cindy Houlihan retirement gift" written in the subject line. You can also drop a check with the wording in the offering plate. **ANY DOLLAR AMOUNT** would be greatly appreciated ~ The total amount will be used to purchase a VISA gift card for Cindy.

We plan to present the cards, notes and love offering gift to her at the retirement luncheon which will be held after the Service on Sunday August 30th. All are invited.

We are so grateful and blessed that God sent us such a wonderful person to assist us for the last 27 years.

Thank you in advance for helping us acknowledge her and all of her years of service to Pines, and for contributing to this milestone event in her life.

Please reach out if you have any questions.
We are so thankful for this generous Congregation.
Staff Committee
Linda Aldred, Moderator



Pastor's Page

Summer greetings in the name of our Lord,

It's hard to believe that August is upon us! This is often a month of endings and new beginnings with the traditional end of summer vacations and the beginning of a new school year. Both represent new chapters and new adventures that await our lives. The same is true for the Pines family this year. Sunday, August 30th will mark the end of the amazing 27 year career of Cindy Houlihan as our Office Manager. Following a celebration of Cindy's ministry among us on August 30th, Cindy will head into "retirement". Pines was a different church when Cindy arrived back in 1999. The search committee seeking a new office manager saw something special in Cindy. They saw an incredible work ethic, a multi tasker, a passion for people and they say the joy she had in her heart when she talked about her faith. Cindy's job was much different when she started than it is today. She has moved and adapted to the many changes, taking on more responsibility throughout the years and each time with grace and an overwhelming capability. Cindy has become the point of contact for everything and everyone at Pines. When you want to know when something is happening, or who's doing what, or where's someone been, Cindy has been your "Go to" person. We will not only miss her incredible institutional knowledge, but we'll also miss her loving personality that always had an open door and an empty chair waiting for you to come and sit a spell.

On a personal note, on the very first day I set foot into Pines, Cindy welcomed me with a smile, a hug, a "Howdy", and a heart and spirit that showed me love, grace, mercy and respect every day since. I will miss her, and I know we'll all miss her, so I hope you'll come to her celebration on Sunday, August 30th.

Just as this August is bringing us an ending, it's also bringing us a new beginning as we welcome our new Director of Faith Formation (DoFF), Cassandra Burke. After an almost year long search, God has brought us Cassandra. The search committee was impressed with Cassandra's passion and excitement for Jesus, her knowledge of scripture, her passion to serve and love God's people and creation, her gifts of teaching, organization, planning and communication. Cassandra will be moving here from southern Virginia with her husband, Michael, and their 5 amazing children of God (Nick 19, Benjamin 16, Michael 12, Cyrus 8 and Saga 2 ½). We will welcome them to our family of faith on Sunday, August 9th during worship then followed by a welcome party in the Fellowship Hall.

As Pines, Cassandra and her Family move into this new adventure together, Cassandra wanted to introduce herself to you with the following.

"Hello Pines! I am overjoyed to be joining you in the coming weeks as your new Director of Faith Formation. From the very beginning of this process, I have been continually struck by the warmth, kindness, and genuine spirit of the people at Pines. Every conversation confirmed that this is a church where relationships matter and where people truly care for one another. It has been such a joy getting to know the staff and congregation throughout this time, and each interaction has made me even more excited about becoming part of this church family.

What excites me most is the opportunity to build authentic relationships, develop engaging ministries that reach children and youth where they are, and help cultivate an environment where every child and family feels welcomed, valued, and encouraged in their walk with Christ. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside the congregation and look forward to seeing how God will work through our ministry together. See you soon!"

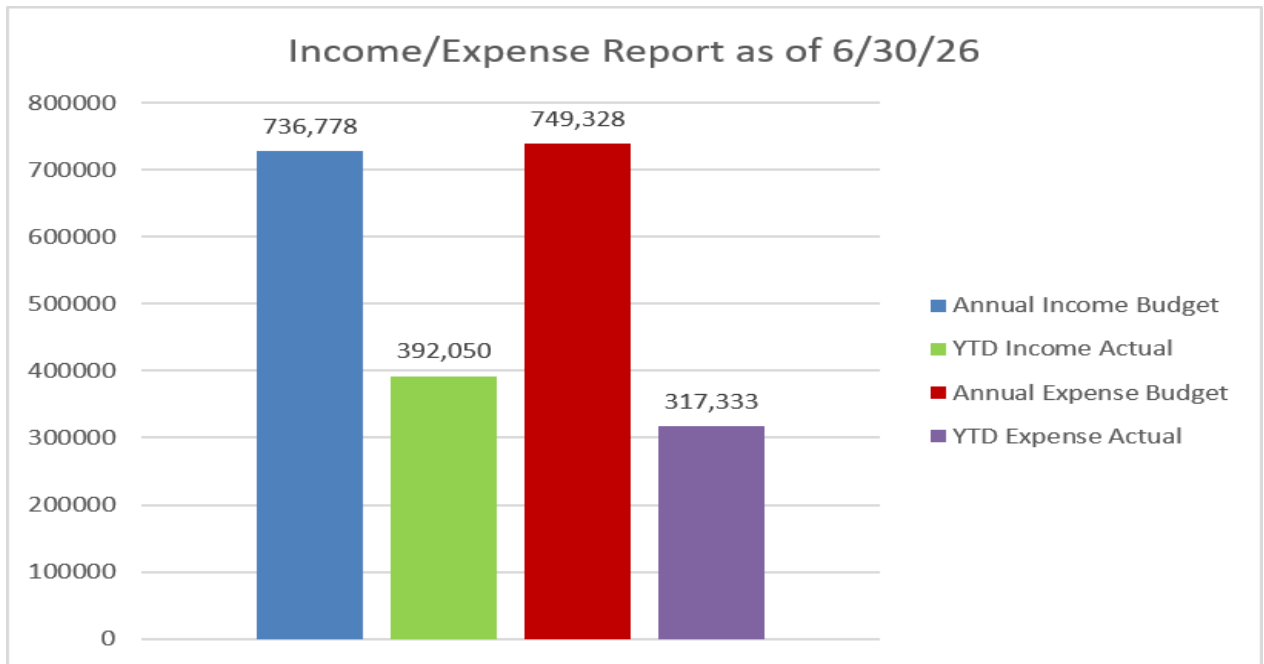
New chapters and transitions can be difficult times for everyone, so let's remember Cindy as she transitions into this new life with her husband Patrik, Cassandra and her family as they transition into a new life and ministry here in Houston with us, and let's remember this family of faith as we transition into something new. May God bless us, comfort us and direct us in these new adventures.

With great excitement,



Andy

Stewardship



STEWARDSHIP NOTES:

1. As of June 30 we are half way through the year and all income categories are above budget. Pledge income is \$300,526 (53% of budget), non-pledge income is \$69,591 (56% of budget) and Interest income is \$9,033 (56% of budget).
2. Expenses are under budget as of June 30 at \$317,333 (42% of budget). Christian Education, Missions, Staff, Stewardship and Worship committees are all under budget. Property committee is right on budget.
3. Net Income as of June 30 is a very healthy \$74,717.

Session

Session took their regular July summer break.

They will meet again in August and minutes will be included in the September issue.

Enjoy your summer,
Your Pines Session Members

PLEASE help us conserve energy...by remembering to turn off lights and AC when you leave the building. **If you turn it on, please turn it off!** Thank you for caring for **YOUR** church!
The Property Committee



Christ caring for people through people

**STEPHEN
MINISTRY**

CONNECTIONS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

I wrote this newsletter article in May because of two events which had touched my heart and reminded me of how the Holy Spirit brings together people in unexpected ways. The first occurrence happened as I was walking by the Prayer Room and saw three people sitting and talking. I said a quick “hello” as I walked by but, before I went too far, I realized those three people had something in common as each has spent much of their life residing in countries other than the US. Two of them were born outside the US and the third spent a great deal of time working abroad. And yet the Holy Spirit brought them together from disparate parts of the world to form new friendships at a church in Houston, TX. As I continued my walk, I quietly thanked God for this miracle.

The second joy-filled event occurred on May 10 when we had the pleasure of welcoming nine new members to Pines ranging in age from 11 to 93. As I have begun to get to know them, I have discovered that each has a unique life story, including a unique faith journey. Some have been actively involved with a church family for decades while others are re-discovering the joy of being a part of a church family. Once again, the Holy Spirit chose to lead these wonderfully unique people to Pines and I will always remember the joy which filled our church building as we officially welcomed these people into the Pines family.

I believe that all of you who are reading this have had occurrences in your life of being connected unexpectedly with people having vastly different backgrounds who become a blessing in your life. I believe that such occurrences are due to the work of the Holy Spirit. These experiences led me to think of what Ann Guerra and I try to do when we receive a request from someone to work with a Stephen Minister. We speak with the individual requesting help to better understand the challenges they are facing and then we pray and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in matching that person with a Stephen Minister who is best equipped to work with that individual.

My objective in sharing this is to convey that the “matching process” is one in which we strive to be guided by the Holy Spirit and not a random process of blindly selecting someone. We cannot claim to be “perfect” but we do commit to striving to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

If you would like to have a **confidential** discussion about the possibility of working with a Stephen Minister, please feel free to reach out to Ann Guerra or Phil Wetz or contact the church office. Until then, I pray that all of us will experience the joy of becoming connected in unexpected ways with others who will bless our lives.

Phil Wetz

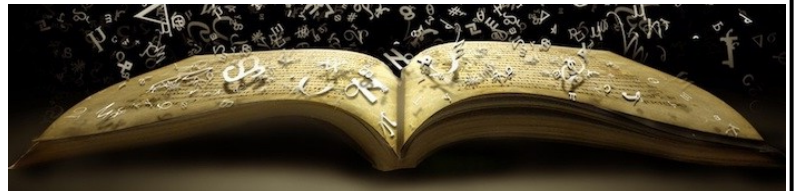
Brown Bag Book Club

Mark your calendars for our next book club meeting: Wednesday, September 16th (12:00 Noon) when Beth Patterson will lead us in a discussion of the book, The Remains of the Day, by the Nobel Prize winning British author, Kazuo Ishiguro. This novel is set in England and is a reminder to cherish the evening of life, rather than to dwell on past regrets.

We hope you will join us.

Happy Reading!

Shirley Bollich



If you haven't already, be sure to list Pines on your
Randalls or Kroger cards.

There is no cost to you and they donate a percentage of the sale to the church.
What an easy way to give back to Pines!

OPPORTUNITIES TO BE THE HANDS AND FEET OF CHRIST
PINES IS AT WORK IN OUR COMMUNITY – JOIN US!



Would you like to truly make a difference in the life of a child? Several meaningful volunteer opportunities are available with our missions partner, Sherwood Elementary, for the upcoming school year:

Reading Buddy: Meet 1-on-1 with your elementary-age reading buddy for 30 minutes a week for full school year to help build their confidence and reading skills. Learn more here: <https://www.springbranchisd.com/o/sbisd/page/reading-buddies>

Mentors: Meet weekly with your elementary student mentee for 30-45 minutes, helping and inspiring them to reach their full potential. Learn more here: <https://www.springbranchisd.com/o/sbisd/page/springboard-program-grades-3-12>

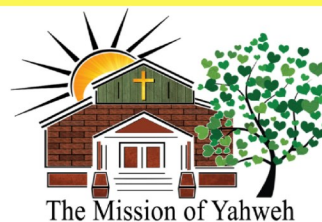
Interested?? Training (1 hr. per school year) and resources are provided by SBISD. Sign-ups are available online and trainings begin in late August.

Mentor sign up: <https://forms.gle/yaXaGLT5F4EmQ5jz9>

Reading buddy sign up: <https://forms.gle/ZkExKCEZ8mX8AsTb7>

If you have any questions, contact Beth Patterson or Margaret Schafer.

BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE



Your gifts will help provide back-to-school clothes, shoes and school supplies!

🌀 JULY/AUGUST AGAPE 🌀

Donations can be placed in the offering plate, made online at pinespc.org/giving or on Zelle, or brought to the church office.

PINESPC.ORG

Include "Back to School" with your donation.

Mission@PINES+

Seeking Volunteers for Meals on Wheels

Right now, more than 1,700 homebound seniors across Greater Houston and Galveston County are counting on Interfaith Ministries for their next **Meals on Wheels** delivery. This delivery isn't just a hot meal. We also include a breakfast bag of shelf-stable items — and due to a recent increase in demand, they seek help from faith communities to keep up! Whether you're a faith community, a youth group, or mission committee, hands are needed now. Volunteer slots are open weekday afternoons and 3rd Saturdays at our Midtown location — an easy, hands-on way to make an immediate difference.



At IM Houston, we bring people of diverse faith traditions together for dialogue, service, and shared compassion. Our Meals on Wheels breakfast bag program is one of the clearest ways we live that out.

Sign up today: [Group Volunteer Interest Form](#) or contact Katy Sabayrac, Volunteer Services Manager, at ksabayrac@imgh.org.

Every bag packed is a promise kept — that Houston's seniors won't start their day hungry or forgotten. Together, we can demonstrate our shared commitment to compassion and service by ensuring Houston's seniors begin each day with a nourishing breakfast and the reminder that their community cares.

OPPORTUNITIES TO BE THE HANDS AND FEET OF CHRIST PINES IS AT WORK IN OUR COMMUNITY – JOIN US!

Mission Partner	Activity	Date	Location	Contact (for phone numbers contact Church Office)
Potpourri Ladies	Volunteer Every Monday at MAM	Ongoing	MAM	Margaret Schafer
The Restoration Team	Assist with storm recovery efforts and other community assistance	Ongoing	TBD	www.therestorationteam.org
Taco and A Prayer	Make tacos/share prayers with neighbors	1 st Fridays- (anytime between 6:30-7:30am)	Pines	Margaret Schafer
Sherwood Elementary	Deliver Monthly Food Bags (requires lifting 20-30 lb. bags)	Fall/Spring	Pines to Sherwood	Cindy Coles
Sherwood Elementary	Reading Buddies (½ hr. once per week)	2026-27 school year	Sherwood	Dave Coles
Sherwood Elementary	Bulletin Board Team (seasonal)	Jan 2027	Sherwood	Cindy Coles
Sherwood Elementary	Sherwood Christmas (assistance with organizing event)	November 2026	Pines	Beth Patterson
Montrose Street Reach	Shop for and deliver food to street ministry	Every other mo., Thursday evening	Pines to Montrose location	Kathy Ropshaw
Church Office	Answer phones; office help	1 day/week	Pines	Cindy Houlihan: cindy@pinespc.org
Youth Hand on Hand Apartment Outreach	Assist with preparing food and other activities	Monthly	Pines/ nearby apt. complex	Ron Langston

Calling all Taco Makers and Prayer Warriors!

We are off for the summer break, but will return in September. Come join our Taco and a Prayer Team and see first-hand what a fun, rewarding, and precious ministry this is. [Join us for our next TAAP on September 4th!](#) For more information contact Margaret Schafer or the church office.

Love to knit or crochet? Join Pines Needles and craft for a cause!

We are a welcoming needlework group dedicated to bringing warmth, comfort, and hope to neighbors in need. We create handmade hats, scarves, shawls, and blankets for cancer patients through **CanCare**, as well as residents at **The Mission of Yahweh** and **Star of Hope**. Our 2025 impact: 250+ warm hats, 40+ comfy blankets/ shawls, and 175+ cozy scarves donated!! We'd love for you to join our group! If you'd like to help but don't do needlework, donations of yarn are appreciated – a list of needs is in the Prayer Room. Contact Valerie for more information or call the church office.

June Agape Offering for CanCare

Beth Patterson and I delivered stitched and donated items to Beatrice Arbuckle and CanCare on July 23.

Ladies belonging to Pines Needles crocheted and knitted 26 lapghan lap blankets, 158 hats, 18 scarves, 9 scarf/hat sets and 2 shawls. Additional hats, lap blankets and a shawl were donated.

We totally filled up the back of Beth's car! CanCare will distribute these items to cancer patients at area hospitals undergoing chemotherapy and radiation, helping to keep them warm. Beatrice Arbuckle was very appreciative and thankful for all of the items we were able to donate to CanCare.

I am very thankful to work with everyone who is part of Pines Needles.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the June Agape Offering for CanCare.

Valerie Harelson



A message from the Isaiah Team

Greetings, the Isaiah Project team has begun the next phase of the process, which involves reaching out to the community beyond Pines' walls for input about what's important to our west Houston area, what its needs are and, ultimately, how Pines might serve it better.

We hope to have that work complete in the next couple of months, and we'll keep everyone apprised of next steps this fall.

Blessings,
The Isaiah Project team

Mark Babineck, Terrie Cardwell, Andy Gans, Linda Johnson, Mike Lade, Beth Patterson, Dan Schafer, and Phil Wetz



The church office is looking for volunteers to answer phones: Wednesdays and Thursdays.

We have a couple of volunteers currently, but we **need** more and we also want to create a list of substitutes. No experience necessary. We will train you. Bring a book or something to work on while sitting at the front desk. Hours are 9 to 2. If you can help, please give Cindy a call at 713-467-2234 x110.

Have a few hours to volunteer? There are plenty of things that are needed in the church office like: making copies, keeping the office supply room organized, our keys for the building need help, and a variety of other things. If you have a few extra hours any Monday through Thursday 9am to 4pm, please contact Cindy in the church office.

Have you ever thought of volunteering to teach Sunday School? There is always a need to teach, substitute, or give the regular teachers a break in the summer. If interested, talk to Shirley Bollich.

Do you bake? Get on Shirley's list to bake cookies for various events; memorials services, luncheons, the homebound, or perhaps just someone who needs a lift. **Ever thought of ushering at church on Sunday morning?** It is easy to learn and Chris Wolfe will be glad to walk you through how. Just find him at church on Sunday morning.

Do you have any computer skills? Cindy has a very basic project that simply requires one to save each file as a PDF. If you think you can help with this, please call the church office and let Cindy know you have an interest. This volunteer project comes with free training, coffee, and brownies!



Summer is HOT!
So is the Pines Summer Speaker Series!

New Topics Every Week



Scan for Schedule

Fellowship Hall



Coffee - 9:15am
Speaker - 9:30am
 Beginning June 7

Invite Your Friends for a COOL Sunday Morning!

Children and Youth
Senior High Room



Nursery Available

Pines Summer Sunday School Speaker Series
August 2026

Pines Summer Speaker Series is back this year, and **you're invited!** We have a varied line-up of speakers and presentations to provide a different Sunday school experience, combining adult Sunday school classes and inviting the congregation and the community to attend. Each Sunday morning, we will gather at 9:15 in the Fellowship Hall for light refreshments and coffee before the presentation at 9:30. **Join us!**

Pines Summer Speaker Schedule

August 2-23	Kyle Brinkman	Astronomy in the Bible
August 30	Pines Mission Trip Team	Report & Celebrate the Memphis Mission Trip



The Cast of Jonah and the Whale

Special thanks to Pastor Andy for all the help and support; to Steve Ballard for the whale; to Kristen Wolfe for choreography; to the Chancel Choir and Dave and Cindy Coles, for being cheerful “extras”; to Dan Schafer for all the technical and audio support; to the Missions Committee; to our amazing parents; and most especially to Shirley Bollich, Allie Guerra, Valerie Harelson, and Patsy Jackson for being the best camp counselors a cast could have!!

Join Us for a Fellowship Outing to The Brookwood Community!

Experience a day of inspiration, shopping, and fellowship at The Brookwood Community, a Pines missions partner, on Thursday, October 8. We will tour their beautiful campus near Brookshire, which provides a meaningful living and working community for adults with disabilities, including the adult children of two Pines families. We will enjoy a delicious lunch together at the Brookwood Café, shop their unique gift store and tour the living and working spaces. RSVP to Linda Johnson so that we can arrange carpooling from Pines. We plan to leave Pines at 10:45 am and leave Brookwood to return to Pines by 3:30 pm.

Want to share a favorite recipe? I am looking for some new appetizer recipes or quick and easy crock pot meals. Send Cindy an email and she will publish it in the next newsletter.

**Please mark your calendars with the
NEWSLETTER DUE DATE: August 21 (for the September 2026 issue)**

Please remember to bring your door card to enter the building for meetings. For safety reasons, the doors will be locked unless approved specific times are requested/approved.



Another successful Vacation Bible Camp! Thanks to all who volunteered and participated. We could not have done it without YOU! Join us next year for more fun and fellowship!!