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United Methodist Church of Parsippany

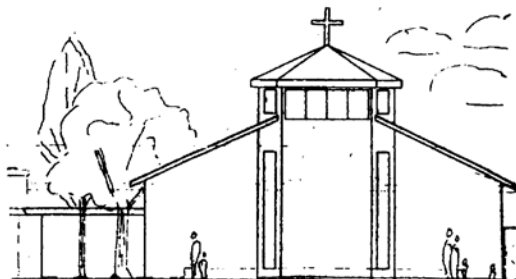
903 So. Beverwyck Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 887-4657

http://www.parsippanyumc.com E-Mail: jedwards14@juno.com

Sunday Worship Celebration: 10:30 a.m.

In a hostile, hurting world we reach out to share kindness and laughter. Our spirituality is based on Jesus and his love and compassion. We provide a community of support and healing where all are welcomed and valued regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, disability, gender, or economic status. In a world where people feel they can love only those who are like themselves, we seek to celebrate the uniqueness of every human being.

"Making Room in the Circle"



NOVEMBER 2012



The **Watoto Children's Choir from Uganda** have been scheduled for an appearance at our church on **Wednesday, November 7th at 7:30** p.m. Admission is free- A love offering will be taken to support their mission. Watoto Children's Choirs have traveled internationally since 1994 as advocates for the estimated 50 million children in Africa, orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS, war, poverty and disease. You can see videos of their wonderful music of praise on You Tube.

If you would like to help with the organization of the event, please speak to Bob Keller. The choir consists of 31 people; we are looking for homes to host 3-4 children and a chaperone on the night of the 7th. If you are interested in hosting, please speak to Amy Gripp or Bob Keller.

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COME ON OUT TO A SPAGHETTI DINNER WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY: The Youth will be hosting a dinner on **Saturday, November 17 at 6 p.m.** They will share what they experienced and learned last summer when they spent five days at the Heifer International Farm in Massachusetts.

Our Sunday School children recently collected \$80 in change under seats in their homes which will send four flocks of baby chicks to poor families in Tanzania through

Heifer International.



**A sermon preached on September 30, 2012 based upon Mark 9:38
– 50, entitled, “What it was that Set Jesus Off”**

At first hearing, this passage sort of attacks you. There are these really harsh things Jesus says – the stuff we’d file away in that folder labeled “*Things We Wish Jesus Hadn’t Said.*” That business about having a cement block tied around your neck and thrown into the ocean, or having your hand or foot cut off, or your eye plucked out – it all sounds like words we’d expect coming out of the mouth of a mafia hit man – not Jesus’ mouth. Even worse may be all the things Jesus says about being thrown into fires of hell for eternity, not to mention that whole *creepy “worm”* thing he mentions at the end.

As we’re trying to sort this stuff out, it’s important to keep in mind that Jesus was in the habit of using the rhetorical device known as the hyperbole – which simply means exaggerating a point in order to make a point. So the question becomes: what’s the point that Jesus is trying to drive home by employing all this distressing horror imagery? To try and figure this out, we need to back up and try and see what set him off so.

At the beginning of our passage we hear how the disciple John tells Jesus about an experience that he and some of the boys had recently. They were out and about, and they came across this guy who was all by himself trying to cast out demons by the authority of Jesus’ name. The disciples told the guy to stop it. Why? Because, John says, “*he wasn’t following us.*”

It’s interesting that they don’t say “*the guy wasn’t following you, Jesus*”; they say he wasn’t following “us.” Their group has become the thing, rather than Jesus. They’ve been hanging together for a good while – starting to feel pretty close knit. They’ve set themselves up as the gatekeepers of the group, and they don’t like the way this outsider is acting as if he’s an insider with the freedom to do all this stuff without first getting their approval. “*I mean who does he think he is? This guy hasn’t gone through all intensive training we’ve had with Jesus. He hasn’t been properly credentialed — he hasn’t paid his dues.*”

They expect Jesus to be proud of them for doing such a good job as gatekeepers – doing quality control for their product — but he’s not. It becomes just one more instance in which Jesus *rolls his eyes* and maybe starts *pulling out his hair*, because *they’re just not getting it!*

“*Don’t do that!!*” He yells. “*This guy’s taken to heart what I’ve been teaching! He’s trying to help people in my name! That makes him one of us! He’s not against us – he’s for us. What you said to that guy – it might just turn him off to this whole Gospel business!*”

Part of what gets Jesus so bent out of shape about this is that *it follows right on the heels of last week’s story* in which the disciples were competing with one another as to who has the most status in the group, leading Jesus to take a little child up in His arms, telling them that the heart of ministry is welcoming “little ones.”

Children – the “little ones” – represent *the most vulnerable* people. Last week we talked about how — especially in Mark’s Gospel – *being a follower of Jesus* means embracing vulnerability in the sense of a) going out of our way to welcome, be with, care for the most vulnerable people in society, and b) making ourselves vulnerable as well.

When you’re talking about vulnerability, the distinction between *being an insider* and *an outsider* is really, really crucial. As a rule, “insiders” tend to feel invulnerable, and “outsiders” tend to feel vulnerable. This solitary guy going out there on his own is the epitome of what it means to be an outsider. He’s taking a risk – making himself vulnerable for the sake of the Gospel. He is one of Jesus’ “little ones.”

All that hyperbolic horror talk is Jesus’ way of saying “*Pay attention here!!!! This is REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT !!!!! It is absolutely CRUCIAL how you treat the little ones!*”

This is right at the heart of the Gospel. It's not something on the fringes that you can take or leave as you choose. Jesus, the son of God, began his life in this world among the most vulnerable people. His parents were poor, homeless refugees. You don't get much more outside than that. And he ended his life outside the city on the cross, *the emblem of suffering and shame*, like a total loser.

In between he spent his ministry *hanging out with the outsiders*. The insiders – the Pharisees, scribes and priests — rejected him.

When people are vulnerable, the way we treat them intensifies in meaning both for good or for bad. Jesus mentions the act of giving someone a cup of water. It is the context of this act that determines its significance. For instance, imagine going into a restaurant and sitting down. Your waiter comes to your table, smiles and gives you a glass of water. In this context, it's a fairly insignificant act. You're the customer with money to pay, and in this situation the waiter is simply doing what you would expect.

Now imagine living somewhere clean water isn't easily assessable (*like it was in Jesus' day and still is in a lot of places in this world*) and you're out on the streets and it's hot and you're thirsty – really thirsty – and somebody comes out of their house and does precisely the same act that the waiter did – this person hands you a glass of water. In this context the very same act becomes a terribly significant act. Why? Because you were so vulnerable.

Or conjure up another scenario that is probably a lot easier for most of us to imagine:

you're in some sort of gathering of people that you're obliged to be at – some kind of meeting you're waiting for to begin. And there's a whole bunch of people there but you're all alone, and everybody else seems to be in the company of at least one other person, and they all seem to be comfortably chatting. But you're all alone and feeling awkward – out of place – like you don't belong. You feel anxious and self-conscious. You notice that you're feeling hot and sweaty, and your throat is dry. Suddenly someone comes walking up to you and that person's smiling and has warm eyes and offering you a cold cup of water, saying something like, "*Here, you look like you could use this.*" The same simple act that the waiter did, but because in this setting you are feeling very vulnerable, the simple act and the kindness it represents is very powerful, delivering you from feeling all alone and a total loser, to feeling accepted and connected.



On the other hand, imagine how you might feel in that same situation standing there so alone and feeling so insecure, and you notice a group of people looking over in your direction, and one of them seems to be pointing at you, whispering something, and then you see them all laugh. On the surface, it's nothing really, but because you are feeling so vulnerable, it cuts into you, and you think to yourself, "*I'll never coming back here again!*"

Insensitivity to people when they are vulnerable — that's precisely what Jesus is so up at arms about. He's talking *especially* about insensitivity done by people who are supposed to be His followers – because our insensitivity to vulnerable people has the power of turning people off from Christ, from the Church.

I heard a man in his sixties once tell a story at a retreat I was attending of how when he was a young man in his early twenties, a friend once invited him to a Bible Study. This was totally new territory for him, but he went, and was sincerely interested in learning about the Bible and Christianity. The leader was referencing a variety of Bible passages and having different people read them aloud. He asked the man new to the group to read a passage from the book of Job, but he'd never heard of the book and as he read, he came across this word spelled J O B, and naturally, he pronounced the word the way he'd always pronounced it before: "job" and as he did the room full of "Christians" broke out in laughter

because he'd messed up the pronunciation. He said he turned crimson, silently enduring the rest of the evening pretending as best he could that nothing was wrong, but as he left the meeting that night he vowed he would never again have anything to do with "Christians." He said it took him another 30 years before he was willing to give a Christian a chance to share the love of Jesus with him.

In his autobiography, Mahatma Gandhi tells how in his student days in South Africa he became deeply interested in the Bible, especially the Sermon on the Mount. He became convinced that Christianity was the answer to the caste system that had plagued India for centuries, and he seriously considered becoming a Christian. One day he went to a church to attend Mass and get instructions. He was stopped at the entrance and gently told that if he desired to attend Mass he was welcome to do so in a church reserved for blacks. He left and never returned.

Yesterday at the memorial service for Ruth Freerks both Jennifer and Maidie shared how much it meant to them when they first came to church here, Ruth showed them kindness.

If we've been coming here for a long time and enjoy the good feeling of belonging, it's possible to lose touch with what it feels like to come here for the first time – to have the courage to go outside your comfort zone – to be the vulnerable outsider – and how significant it is to be greeted warmly.

I have this ongoing friendly argument with a couple of people in our church regarding the fact that I insist that I am, by nature, a very shy person. How can that be? folks wonder, since I am up in front of you all every week, seeming so at ease.

The answer to this riddle is found in the difference between being an insider and being an outsider. Here in this church I am the ultimate "insider." I know you all, feel loved by you. I am given a significant role in the life of this community, which by definition puts me at the center of the activity. It is a wonderful thing to be so loved – to feel such belonging.

Take me out of this community and the role I fill here and put me in another group of people where I do not know others well and have no reason to feel assured that I "belong" and am accepted and typically I feel very self-conscious. I lose the capacity I feel here to express myself with spontaneity and humor.

There have been times in my life in which my innate shyness has caused me a fair amount of pain. Years ago, though, I realized that there is a way in which what I call my shyness has been a gift in my ministry, and that is because it has made me more aware than many people of how painful it can feel to be the outsider – to feel so uncertain and self-conscious in a group of people.

If it weren't for being a shy person I probably wouldn't have made it a habit so long ago of starting worship with that thing I say every week, "Newcomers are Jesus in disguise come to bless us."

One thing we need to keep in mind is that we human beings routinely put a great deal of effort into hiding just how vulnerable we really feel inside, so it often isn't easy to tell who "the little ones" are at any given moment. So being a welcoming presence to everyone – that's what it means to be what Jesus calls the "salt of the earth."

There's this little story that you may have heard that first appeared in one of the original Chicken Soup for the Soul books with the title, "The Simple Gesture." It's been embellished over the years, but the original story stands by itself, and is apparently based on an actual experience. I'd like to finish with it this morning.

Mark was walking home from school one day when he noticed the boy ahead of him had tripped and dropped all of the books he was carrying along with two sweaters, a baseball bat, a glove, and a small tape recorder. Mark knelt down and helped the boy pick up the scattered articles. Since they were going the same way, he helped to carry the burden.

As they walked Mark discovered the boy's name was Bill, that he loved video games, baseball, and history, that he was having a lot of trouble with his other subjects and that he

had just broken up with his girlfriend. They arrived at Bill's home first and Mark was invited in for a Coke and to watch some TV. The afternoon passed pleasantly with a few laughs and some shared small talk, then Mark went home.

They continued to see each other around school, had lunch together once or twice. They ended up at the same High School where they had brief contacts over the years. Finally the long awaited senior year came, and three weeks before graduation, Bill asked Mark if they could talk. Bill reminded him of the day years ago when they had first met.

"Did you ever wonder why I was carrying so many things from school that day?" asked Bill. "You see, I cleaned out my locker because I didn't want to leave a mess for anyone else. I had stored away some of my mother's pills and I was going home to commit suicide. But after we spent some time together I realized that if I had, I would have missed that time and so many others that might follow. So you see, Mark, when you picked up my books for me that day, you did a lot more. You saved my life."

In the kindness of Jesus,
Pastor Jeff

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Looking back...It was wonderful having Rev. Lianne Finston back in our church and we heard great things about Elijah's Promise, in New Brunswick.

Next...join us and bring a friend....



United Methodist
Women

Wed, November 14th – 7:00 p.m.
**Program: Budget/Pledge/Program Planning/
Nominations**
Refreshments will be served

Nov. 2 – World Community Day
Nov. 4 – Daylight Savings Time Ends
Nov. 6 – Election Day

Nov. 7 – Watoto Children's Choir
Nov. 11 – Veteran's Day
Nov. 22 - Thanksgiving

Get well wishes to those of you who are ill, and
HAPPY BIRTHDAY to those of you celebrating this month with Carolyn Pasqua, Pastor Jeff and Carol Haeussler.

God Bless,
Doris Bradley

Prov. 17:17 "A friend loves at all times."

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Update on future dinners: There was a great turnout at our meeting and a lot of enthusiasm about putting our new kitchen to greater use by holding Spaghetti dinners on the second Saturday night of every month beginning in January. The dinners will be opportunities for church family fellowship, outreach to the community and fundraising for our church and mission projects. A schedule of volunteers will be set six months in advance.

Dear friends at Parsippany UMC,

Some of you may remember me from the year I spent worshipping with you before I left to come here to the Kingdom of Swaziland where I am serving with the Peace Corp. I am currently working on a gender empowerment project known as Project GLOW (Girls Leading Our World). This will be the second year of GLOW's existence in Swaziland and its premier activity will be a five day leadership camp for teenage girls scheduled for the April school vacation. Through a Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP) partial funds are available to support the camp, however it is the role of those of us who will design and lead the camp to obtain matching funds from friends and family back home. Camp GLOW's purpose is to provide a safe and supportive environment for girls where they can receive information and training in the areas of leadership, female health issues, self-discovery and career planning. The camp will nurture exploration of personalities, individual talents and will fortify the resolve of young women to break out of stereotypes and behaviors that hinder their success and happiness. Girls that attend Camp GLOW will be expected to return to their schools and communities and initiate GLOW Clubs and to share the information and skills that they have acquired.

Because the U.S. dollar goes a long way over here no donation is too small. Your contribution will go directly to Camp GLOW and will most likely be applied to providing meals for the campers and for providing transportation to and from the camp location. To contribute please go to <https://donate.peacecorps.gov/>. The project number is: 645-096. On behalf of all of the GLOW girls, campers and volunteers, I thank you in advance for anything that you can do to help us empower females and improve the lives of all who live in this small, but incredibly special, nation of Swaziland.

Sincerely,

Kelly Tooley and The GLOW Team
<http://ktooley.blogspot.com>



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A day time men's discussion group with Pastor Jeff is meeting on **Fridays at 1 p.m.** at the church. We listen to short audio tapes and discuss what we hear during the 90 minute sessions. Any men available in the day time are invited to join us.

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Something New: Our church calendar is now available on the church's website. If you are planning an event and need to book the church or a particular room, please check the calendar on the website, then call Gail Booth or Wes Sitgreaves to confirm availability and reserve your time. (Fred Coleman will also have a hard copy of the calendar here at the church that you can also check for date availability.

“Living in the Light” sessions with Pastor Jeff continue informally throughout the summer on Wednesdays beginning promptly at 11 a.m. and ending precisely at 12 noon. Join us for spiritual conversation and guided meditation and prayer.

Anyone who is interested in serving from time to time as a **liturgist** in the Sunday worship service is invited to speak to Pastor Jeff.

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The **UMW** is selling **Food Gift Cards to benefit the General Budget** for ShopRite as an *ongoing Fund Raiser*. The church will receive 5% of all purchases (you buy \$100 of gift cards, the church gets \$5). Gift Cards are available in \$5, \$10, \$20, \$25, \$50 and \$100 denominations. Please see Betty Polen at the beginning of Coffee Hour if you would like to purchase ShopRite Gift Cards. Checks should be made payable to The United Methodist Women.

Thank you, The UMW

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A **small gathering of men** from our church meet together every Tuesday at 7:15 a.m. at the Empire Diner with Pastor Jeff for breakfast, conversation, and a concluding prayer. All men are welcome.

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FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS – If you want to remember or honor a special occasion in your life by putting flowers on the altar, please get in touch with Connie Keller. Flower arrangements are currently being purchased at Shop Rite for varying costs depending on what you want. You are certainly welcome at any time to place flowers on the altar. If you want an announcement in the bulletin, please call Connie

Keller or send her an email with the dedication. Contact information: Connie’s cell: 973-568-5404; home: 973-887-4384; email: connie@mhmlender.com

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Anyone aware of a **Prayer Concern** is invited to contact Grace Agre at 539-3855 who will put the **Prayer Chain** into action. If Grace cannot be reached, please contact Pastor Jeff. If you would like to add your name to the people who receive the prayer chain, please speak to Betty Polen



Parsippany Food Pantry - Wes Sitgreaves has called to our attention the ongoing need of the Emergency Food Pantry in Parsippany in these difficult economic times. There are more and more families turning to the food pantry for help. You can bring your donations of non-perishable food items to the church any Sunday. Wes Stigreaves takes the food over as the bin gets filled up. Supermarket gift cards are also welcome - buy them from Betty Polen and raise money for the church at the same time!!! This is a very easy

way to give back to the less-fortunate in our own township.

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Consider becoming a part of one or more of our Musical Groups here at church:

Bell Choir – rehearses Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested in joining us, please speak to Barb Bradley or Aimee Letsch - or just show up on Thursday and see what happens!

Choir – rehearses Thursdays at 7:45 p.m. We always have an "open robe" for anyone who loves to sing. We sing in 4-part harmony, so if you've sung in your high school chorus or any other equivalent, you have a great start! Speak to any choir member or Barb Bradley if you're interested.

Kids Bell Choir – rehearses every Sunday after worship. All children and youth in 3rd grade and up (including junior and senior high school) are welcome. Directed by Aimee Letsch (973-585-7634).



SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR NOVEMBER

Nov. 4th
Ruth 1:1-18
Hebrews 9:11-14
Mark 12:28-34

Nov. 11th
Ruth 3:1-5,4:13-17
Hebrews 9:24-28
Mark 12:38-44

Nov. 18th
1 Samuel 1:4-20
Hebrews 10:11-14,19-25
Mark 13:1-8

Nov. 25th
2 Samuel 23:1-7
Revelation 1:4b-8
John 18:33-37



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 st	Andrew Letsch	19 th	Ann Nye
2 nd	Marvin Labis	19 th	Dawn Barhite
2 nd	Richard Dierbach	20 th	Rachel Elbin
3 rd	Trudy Hunt	20 th	Bob Laux
4 th	Bob Scherzer	22 nd	Gloria Fuechsel
4 th	Ken Barhite	22 nd	Janet Chauhan
7 th	Tom Smith	23 rd	Shawn Beckler
7 th	Maya Baretto	24 th	Dan Kinsley
9 th	George Hawkins, Jr.	24 th	David Kinsley
13 th	Carolyn Pasqua	24 th	Carol Haeussler
14 th	Bart Routhier	26 th	Anita Baldwin
16 th	Pastor Jeff Edwards	29 th	Garret Belanus
17 th	Joanne Rich	30 th	Russ Schnetzer
18 th	Joshua Gropper	30 th	Marissa Cogan



Hanging of the Greens

Hanging of the Greens – Saturday, Dec. 1

Please come and help decorate the church for Christmas. We'll begin at **10 a.m.** There's lots to do, and lots of help makes the time go quickly.

There'll be coffee and donuts/bagels for the helpers. Come and sing Christmas Carols with us as we spruce up the place for the Christmas season.

If you have any questions, please talk to Connie Keller 973-568-5404.

Everyone is welcome!!

Give Thanks



Sing a prayer at your Thanksgiving meal—or any meal!



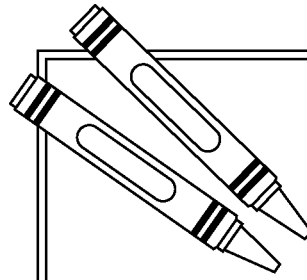
(sung to the tune of "Kum Ba Yah")

For our food, o Lord,
we give thanks.
For our homes, o
Lord, we give thanks.
For our families,
we give thanks.
O Lord,
we give thanks.

For our friends, O
Lord, we give thanks.
For our earth, O
Lord, we give thanks.
For each night and
day, we give thanks.
O, Lord,
we give thanks.



—Marie Senften



Just for KIDS

Ephesians 5:19b-20

Fill in the blanks using the code below.

“

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“Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

November 2012

United Methodist Church of Parsippany

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																									
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<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">4</p> <p>Worship 10:30AM</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">5</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">6</p> <p>7:15 AM Men's Breakfast</p> <p>Election Day</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">7</p> <p>11:00 AM Living in the Light</p> <p>7:30 PM Watoto Children's Choir</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">8</p> <p>7:00 PM Bell Choir</p> <p>7:45 PM Adult Choir</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">9</p> <p>1:00 PM Men's Discussion Group</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">10</p>																																																																																																									
<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">11</p> <p>5:59 PM Finance</p> <p>Ad Council after church</p> <p>Worship 10:30AM</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">12</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">13</p> <p>7:15 AM Men's Breakfast</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">14</p> <p>11:00 AM Living in the Light</p> <p>7:00 PM UMW</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">15</p> <p>7:00 PM Bell Choir</p> <p>7:45 PM Adult Choir</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">16</p> <p>1:00 PM Men's Discussion Group</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">17</p> <p>6:00 PM UMYF Church Family Spaghetti Dinner</p>																																																																																																									
<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">18</p> <p>Worship 10:30AM</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">19</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">20</p> <p>7:15 AM Men's Breakfast</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">21</p> <p>11:00 AM Living in the Light</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">22</p> 	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">23</p> <p>1:00 PM Men's Discussion Group</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">24</p>																																																																																																									
<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">25</p> <p>Worship 10:30AM</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">26</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">27</p> <p>7:15 AM Men's Breakfast</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">28</p> <p>11:00 AM Living in the Light</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">29</p> <p>7:00 PM Bell Choir</p> <p>7:45 PM Adult Choir</p>	<p style="color: red; font-size: 24pt;">30</p> <p>1:00 PM Men's Discussion Group</p>																																																																																																										