

# HILLTOPPER

United Methodist Church of Parsippany

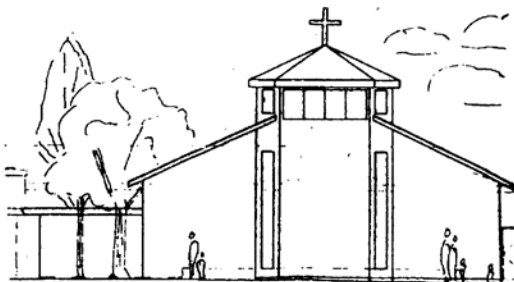
903 So. Beverwyck Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 887-4657

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

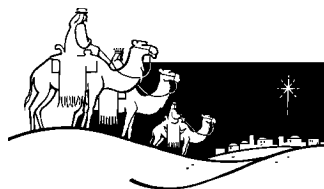
*Sunday Worship Celebration: 10:30 a.m.*

*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"**



**JANUARY 2013**



**A sermon preached on November 4th, 2012 – All Saints Sunday — and the Sunday after Hurricane Sandy ravaged New Jersey, based upon Revelations 21:1-6**

And so another All Saints Sunday comes around, with the reminder that we are a part of a great communion of saints that extends from this world to the next. With each passing year more of the beloved saints to whom we are deeply connected in this life transfer their residence to the other side. My wife Sarah's dad, my mom, Ruth Freerks and so many others, including Dawn Barhite's beloved mother who, along with many others, lost her life in this world as a result of Hurricane Sandy; we long for their physical presence with us. But we are reminded this day that they are still with us – that the love we share with them is very much alive and well.

It's been a rough week with Sandy passing through the land, evoking some measure of fear in all of us. How long will it go on? What if we run out of the basic stuff we need? And what if, as seems quite possible, this experience is one that is likely to become more and more common in the years to come as we finally face up to the realities of climate change.

In the midst of the fear, it is helpful to remember that the saints who have gone before us endured extraordinarily challenging times of their own, and some of them were far more terrifying than the things we are presently going through: World Wars, for instance, and the Great Depression. They must have wondered at times whether they would make it through, but they did, and now from their residence on the far side, they are rooting for us. They cheer us on as we face this adversity -- that the faith, hope and especially love we most need will rise up within us, and among us.



For most of us the experience this week has primarily been one of inconvenience -- living without power, without lights, without heat, waiting in long gas lines, knowing that in a matter of time it will be resolved.

But there are good things that come out of such a time as this. It encourages within us empathy for those in this world for whom these kinds of hardships are routine. It reveals our fragility, and the pretense and deceit that was our working assumption that we really could go it alone in this world. When the power grids go that we and our neighbors share goes, we realize how much we truly need each other, and a connection to God, the unchanging one – the alpha the omega, the beginning and the end.

And it gives opportunity for our best nature to rise up with acts of compassion and courage.

You can ponder the political calculations that may have gone into the photo op shared by President Obama and Governor Chris Christie, but nonetheless, it truly was a heartening thing to see these two adversaries sharing a common concern for, and willingness to work for the relief of the suffering caused by this storm. It was particularly heartening in that it took place in the midst of political campaigns that bring out some of the worst parts of our human nature. The sight of their hug brought hope: that when things get bad enough, we will put away our differences to work for the common good.

There has been some similarity this week to what we went through on 9/11 – the sudden appreciation of what truly matters, and the willingness to put away differences and to help your neighbor. But there is one difference that has occurred to me, and it is this: that in this crisis there is no human enemy to unite against – no Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda. There is just this massive, uncontrollable storm arising in the sea.

With this in mind, I was struck by the opening words of John's Revelation: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, *and the sea was no more.*"

For John who expressed this vision, the sea is symbolic, not literal: it symbolizes the realm of darkness and chaos out of which all evil arises.

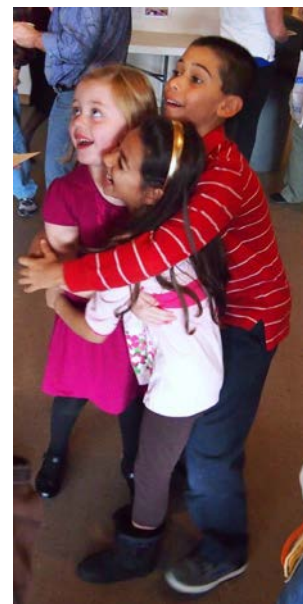
There will come a day, he declares when evil will be overcome.

John was a prisoner of the Roman Empire, held captive in isolation on the Island of Patmos, cut off from his Christian sisters and brothers to whom he reaches out – not with cell phone or internet – but the old fashioned way, with a letter to seven churches, meant to encourage them in a time of trial.

Much of the Revelation is filled with descriptions of harder times yet to come, but here as he reaches the end of his letter, John declares emphatically that in the end, God wins. Goodness triumphs. All the tears will be wiped away and death will be no more.

There is much that could be said about this passage, but this is what I want to focus on today: The promised redemption that will one day come involves a city: "*I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*"

Too often, salvation has been thought of as a purely individualistic thing. I am saved, or not, and you are saved, or not, and the question of my salvation is unrelated to whether you will be saved or not. But the redemption that John envisions is communal — a city where love alone characterizes human relationships. It is a city adorned like a bride for her husband, implying a quality of tender intimacy shared by all of the sort aspired to in our human weddings. That we're all in



this together, and that in some sense we are all redeemed together. All the tears will be wiped away, and that includes not only the grief we each individually have known, but also the tears we have caused one another through a failure to love. All the tears will be wiped away, and so in the New Jerusalem we can start afresh letting bygones be bygones.

It is worth remembering the story about the man given a vision of heaven and hell. He is shown hell, and surprisingly hell contains a beautiful banquet table around which people sit. In the midst of great bounty, the people are wasting away, because there is a strange paralysis that makes it impossible for them to bend their elbows, so they can not feed themselves.

And then the man is shown heaven, and he is surprised because it looks essentially the same: the same beautiful banquet with people sitting around the table. They even have the same paralysis whereby they cannot bend the arms and feed themselves. But in heaven, there is a shared joy, simply because people are feeding one another.

The next order of business this morning is to share Holy Communion, which is also a kind of banquet. It, too, is not meant to be consumed alone. It is intended to be shared by a community of people – people quite different from one another – and yet all united in an awareness that we can't make it alone — that in the deepest sense, we are all beggars who come seeking the bread of heaven – the grace we cannot achieve but only receive.

We do so this morning particularly conscious of the fact that this is a banquet shared not only with the very human saints who fill this room this morning, but with all the saints of heaven who have gone before us.



In the kindness of Jesus,  
Pastor Jeff

+ + + + +



United Methodist  
Women

Looking back...The Christmas Program is always fun – and delicious  
Pot Luck Supper – 2013 Officers installed and gift game fun.  
On to 2013....

**JANUARY 2013**  
**Winter – No Meeting**

Jan 1 – New Year's Day  
Jan 12 – Take Down Greens

Jan 21 – Martin Luther King Day

Get well wishes to those of you who are ill, and  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY to those of you celebrating this month.  
God Bless,

Doris Bradley

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



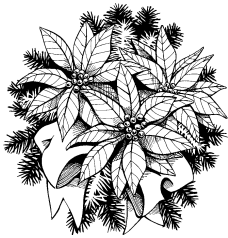
The PUMC Youth Fellowship would like to thank everyone attended our November spaghetti dinner raising money for Heifer International. Donations totaled \$588, and \$380 will be donated to the organization.

However we would like extend our gratitude to Gail Booth, who has generously donated over 1,000 dollars from in honor of Al Booth.

With the donations, we were able to purchase a heifer cow, a basket of assorted animals, and chicks to African families in need!

Also, please mark your calendars to support our annual Super Bowl Sub Sale on February 3, 2013. Look for youth members with sub order forms at the end of the month.

+ + + + + +



Your help will be needed on **Saturday, January 12** to take down all of the Christmas decorations.

Please gather at the church at **10 am**. Coffee and donuts will be available.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with Connie Keller.

+ + + + + +



The Sunday before Thanksgiving we held a food drive for the Parsippany food pantry. The picture to our left shows our children bringing the bounty to the altar of God.

Prior to Christmas, members of our church family signed up to provide Christmas presents (shown in picture to right) for three

families living in poverty through Head Start Morris County.



+ + + + + +

Anthony DiPietro is **collecting coins for Heifer International**. A little bit goes a long way!

+ + + + + +

**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.



Beginning in January, our church will hold **Spaghetti Dinners on the second Saturday evening of each month.** Our first dinner will be **Saturday, January 12<sup>th</sup> from 5 – 7 p.m.** The dinner provides many things: 1) an opportunity to demonstrate the warm hospitality of our church good, hearty, inexpensive dinner that demonstrates the warm hospitality of our church, bringing people from the larger community into our church home; 2) an opportunity for forging friendships within our church family for those who share in the meal, as well as those who work to present the meal; 3) fund raising for both our church **AND** a mission project of the month. **This month's mission project is CUMAC**, the United Methodist ministry to the poor of Paterson, NJ. A schedule of volunteers to work on the dinners each month is being developed, and if you haven't already expressed your willingness to serve this way (as 30 people already have) you are invited to speak to Pastor Jeff.

+ + + + + +

**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.

+ + + + + +

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

+ + + + + +

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.



**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](mailto:connie@mhmlender.com)

++++++



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.



**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 JANUARY

Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>

Isaiah 60:1-6  
Ephesians 3:1-12  
Matthew 2:1-12

Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>

Isaiah 43:1-7  
Acts 8:14-17  
Luke 3:15-17,21-22

Jan 20<sup>th</sup>

Isaiah 62:1-5  
1 Corinth 12:1-11  
John 2:1-11

Jan 27<sup>th</sup>

Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10  
1 Corinth 12:12-31a  
Luke 4:14-21



1 <sup>st</sup>	Harold Gantert	20 <sup>th</sup>	Jim Cochrane
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Barbara Bush	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Heather Weiss
5 <sup>th</sup>	Barbara Anderson	25 <sup>th</sup>	Jennifer Collins
5 <sup>th</sup>	Gene Lange	25 <sup>th</sup>	Chris Salink
11 <sup>th</sup>	Jim Sakelakos	25 <sup>th</sup>	Kathryn Montecucollo
13 <sup>th</sup>	Olivia Evans	27 <sup>th</sup>	Darryl Sokolowski
16 <sup>th</sup>	Marissa Cintineo	29 <sup>th</sup>	Michael Weiss
19 <sup>th</sup>	Dominick Pesquera	30 <sup>th</sup>	Chris Payne
20 <sup>th</sup>	Pauline Rich		

### JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

12<sup>th</sup> Fred & Grace Schlosshauer  
25<sup>th</sup> Ruth & Charles Faulend

+ + + + + +

Our Bishop has set up a **relief fund for victims of Hurricane Sandy** here in New Jersey. If you would like to contribute to it you can either bring a check to worship, or send it directly to this address: GNJ Sandy Relief Fund, 1001 Wickapecko Drive, Ocean, NJ 07712

Because of the apportionment give of United Methodist Churches, this is the most efficient way to give to the relief effort. 100% of all offerings will go directly to where it is intended. You can make a check out to Parsippany UMC, and mark it "Hurricane Relief."



Pastor Jeff's fourth annual Christmas play was produced on December 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. As in the past, in this year's production, "Flashpoint: A Christmas Story" the unexpected becomes the norm, evoking a range of emotions from laughter to tears.

With a cast of thirty ranging in age from 5 to 85, Flashpoint imagined benevolent aliens who happen to look exactly like human children arriving from a far-off planet at Christmas time to assist the human race as we find ourselves in an age

where the acceleration of knowledge without wisdom runs the risk of wreaking global devastation. The CEO of Apple Computer, a psychiatric patient, a middle-aged man facing the loss of his job, teenagers focused on typical adolescent obsessions, an elderly couple finding happiness in old age driving a truck for an orphanage are some of the characters led on a fantastic journey to distant parts of the Earth.



Incorporating video clips, the play highlighted the theme that we truly all are connected, and that our actions effect people we may never see face to face. The play celebrated the joy found in giving, and that if we have the eyes to see it, the Christ-child is found in the most vulnerable of human beings.



The play incorporated the true story of nine year old girl named Rachel who asked her friends not to give her presents on her birthday, but instead bring nine dollars to help provide clean water to people who had none. Rachel died



shortly thereafter in car accident, and in her memory \$1.2 million was raised that provide clean water to 60 thousand people in 100 villages in Ethiopia. You can

see a video of her story at <http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=WDLZPGNX>. Free will offerings at the performances raised over \$350 for the church and the same amount to fund water projects in Rwanda like the ones built in Rachel's memory through [Help@ChraityWater.org](http://Help@ChraityWater.org).

The cast included Garret Belanus, Earl Christofferson, Kayla Christofferson, Ryan Christofferson, Arianna Urban, Carlee Urban, Beth Cogan, Cassie Cogan, Marissa Cogan, Vijay Dasari, Joe Dente, Bobby Edwards, Jeff Edwards, Jennifer Eng, Josie Fortes, Terry Germann, Amy Gripp, Anna Gripp, Erika Gripp, Maggie Letsch, Katie Mihalko, Mary Mihalko, Lloyd Newberry, Betty Polen, Eric Roelofs, Garin Roelofs, Julia Sklow, Eleanor Soriano, Michael Soriano, and Alexa Taylor.







Bishop John R. Schol  
New Jersey Area  
Greater New Jersey Annual Conference  
The United Methodist Church  
1001 Wickapecko Drive, Ocean, NJ 07712  
Office: (732) 359 - 1010 / Fax: (732) 359 - 1019  
bishopjohnschol@gnjumc.org

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The recent shooting at the Sandy Hook Elementary School causes all of us to pause and wonder. On Friday December 14, 2012 we lost future doctors and firefighters. We lost future teachers, scout leaders, and soccer coaches. We lost children, the most vulnerable people within our society and we lost those who help to shape and guide their lives, teachers, a principal and parents. December 14 is a sad day for our Nation. There will be quick responses of judgment and attempts to fix the great challenges before us as a culture. Rather than judgment and quick solutions right now, I call all United Methodists to prayer and to recommit your life to the ways of Christ – healer, savior, prince of peace. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us all look at our own lives and ask what can we do this Christmas to heal a broken relationship, to be a peacemaker and to mend broken souls. It may be the best gift you can give this Christmas.

I also call all United Methodists to pray for the families that are grieving. They do not deserve the pain that has been inflicted upon them. They need our support, our love and our prayers.

I also know events like these bring to our mind our own deep wounds from the past. The loss of a love one, the deep pain after Superstorm Sandy, or violence we have experienced in our own life. Do not be afraid to talk about this. Share your thoughts and feelings with God through prayer and with a fellow family member or disciple of Jesus Christ. I pray with you today. I pray for the children, parents, teachers, administrators and community of Sandy Hook Elementary School. I also pray for you. I pray that in our fallen world where violence is too often a solution that we together will stand strong as the body of Christ to heal and mend broken souls.

Peace of Christ be with you and your family.

John Schol, Bishop  
The United Methodist Church  
Greater New Jersey Conference

# Follow the Star

**Wise Men  
Worship Jesus**

—Matthew 2

Follow each numbered ray of light from the star to find the letters you need to put in each numbered box. Then you will know what the wise men planned to do when they found Jesus.

10 R M  
3 M  
9 I  
2 O  
6 I  
1 W  
5 H  
8 S  
4 P  
7 H

1 2 3 4 5 6 7      8 9 10




BIBLE PUZZLES for KIDS Ages 6-8



# January 2013

## United Methodist Church of Parsippany

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																									
<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td colspan="7" style="text-align: center;">Dec 2012</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td style="text-align: center;">M</td><td style="text-align: center;">T</td><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">T</td><td style="text-align: center;">F</td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">5</td><td style="text-align: center;">6</td><td style="text-align: center;">7</td><td style="text-align: center;">8</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">9</td><td style="text-align: center;">10</td><td style="text-align: center;">11</td><td style="text-align: center;">12</td><td style="text-align: center;">13</td><td style="text-align: center;">14</td><td style="text-align: center;">15</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">16</td><td style="text-align: center;">17</td><td style="text-align: center;">18</td><td style="text-align: center;">19</td><td style="text-align: center;">20</td><td style="text-align: center;">21</td><td style="text-align: center;">22</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">23</td><td style="text-align: center;">24</td><td style="text-align: center;">25</td><td style="text-align: center;">26</td><td style="text-align: center;">27</td><td style="text-align: center;">28</td><td style="text-align: center;">29</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">30</td><td style="text-align: center;">31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>		Dec 2012							S	M	T	W	T	F	S							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b> 11:00 AM Living in the Light	<b>3</b> 7:00 PM Bell Choir  7:45 PM Adult Choir	<b>4</b> 1:00 PM Men's Discussion Group		
Dec 2012																																																															
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																									
						1																																																									
2	3	4	5	6	7	8																																																									
9	10	11	12	13	14	15																																																									
16	17	18	19	20	21	22																																																									
23	24	25	26	27	28	29																																																									
30	31																																																														
<b>6</b> Worship 10:30AM	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 7:15 AM Men's Breakfast	<b>9</b> 11:00 AM Living in the Light	<b>10</b> 7:00 PM Bell Choir  7:45 PM Adult Choir	<b>11</b> 1:00 PM Men's Discussion Group	<b>12</b> 10:00 AM Take Down Greens  Spaghetti Dinner 4-7 p.m.																																																									
<b>13</b> Worship 10:30AM	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 7:15 AM Men's Breakfast	<b>16</b> 11:00 AM Living in the Light	<b>17</b> 7:00 PM Bell Choir  7:45 PM Adult Choir	<b>18</b> 1:00 PM Men's Discussion Group	<b>19</b>																																																									
<b>20</b> Worship 10:30AM	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 7:15 AM Men's Breakfast	<b>23</b> 11:00 AM Living in the Light	<b>24</b> 7:00 PM Bell Choir  7:45 PM Adult Choir	<b>25</b> 1:00 PM Men's Discussion Group	<b>26</b>																																																									
<b>27</b> Worship 10:30AM	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 7:15 AM Men's Breakfast	<b>30</b> 11:00 AM Living in the Light	<b>31</b> 7:00 PM Bell Choir  7:45 PM Adult Choir	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td colspan="7" style="text-align: center;">Feb 2013</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td style="text-align: center;">M</td><td style="text-align: center;">T</td><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">T</td><td style="text-align: center;">F</td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">5</td><td style="text-align: center;">6</td><td style="text-align: center;">7</td><td style="text-align: center;">8</td><td style="text-align: center;">9</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">10</td><td style="text-align: center;">11</td><td style="text-align: center;">12</td><td style="text-align: center;">13</td><td style="text-align: center;">14</td><td style="text-align: center;">15</td><td style="text-align: center;">16</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">17</td><td style="text-align: center;">18</td><td style="text-align: center;">19</td><td style="text-align: center;">20</td><td style="text-align: center;">21</td><td style="text-align: center;">22</td><td style="text-align: center;">23</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">24</td><td style="text-align: center;">25</td><td style="text-align: center;">26</td><td style="text-align: center;">27</td><td style="text-align: center;">28</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>		Feb 2013							S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28										
Feb 2013																																																															
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																									
					1	2																																																									
3	4	5	6	7	8	9																																																									
10	11	12	13	14	15	16																																																									
17	18	19	20	21	22	23																																																									
24	25	26	27	28																																																											