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United Methodist Church of Parsippany

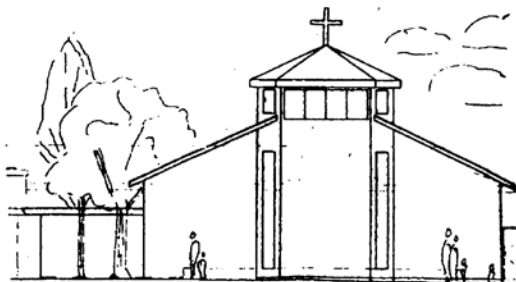
903 So. Beverwyck Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 887-4657

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

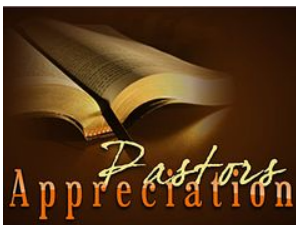
Sunday Worship Celebration: 10:30 a.m.

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"



MAY, 2014



CELEBRATE 25 YEARS WITH PASTOR JEFF - Pastor Jeff has been with the Parsippany United Methodist Church for 25 years. We will be celebrating the occasion on **Saturday, May 17**. Join us for a pot luck dinner buffet starting at **6 pm** that will be followed by dancing and fun until 11 pm. If you plan to join us, please let Connie Keller know by email at connie@mhmlender.com or by phone 973-568-5404. We want to make sure we have enough seating for everyone! **All you need to bring is a dish to share.** We'll be accepting donations to help defray the cost of the band. If you have any questions, please reach out to Connie Keller, Barb Bradley, or Anita Laux.!

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Joe Mohan, the young pianist of extraordinary talent who has graced us with three performances in our sanctuary is graduating from Julliard. We will once again be hosting Joe in concert at our church on **Friday, May 9 at 7:00 p.m.** He performs a family-friendly concert, so bring your kids as well.

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Saturday, May 31 – Garage Sale and Shred Event – 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (shredding until noon). Church members will be selling their own wares – garage sale “stuff”, crafts, and other goodies. Table price is \$25. See Barb Bradley or Connie Keller if you would like to participate.

The **Shred Event will be from 9 a.m. to noon.** The shredding company will shred paper and electronics. There are separate prices for different items – see Connie Keller for a list of prices.

From the



A sermon preached on the 5th Sunday in Lent based upon John 11:1 – 45.

It has been a long winter, and we are all happy for the recent signs of Spring. But even with the coming of Spring, I realize I am not a Spring chicken any more. I look at pictures of myself from when I got here 25 years ago, and I don't have gray hair, or wrinkles, and several less pounds. When I was young retirement wasn't anything I ever thought about; now at times I find myself thinking of retirement, with the appealing thing in my imagination being that I won't have to shoulder the same responsibilities, that I will be free to relax more, to sleep late if I want.

I am not a morning person. Frequently it isn't easy for me to fall asleep at night — the brain won't shut down. And then I don't sleep all that well, in large part because I have the afflictions that occur to men as we age, which means I make several trips to the bathroom. By the time morning comes along though I'm really getting into sleeping, and so when the alarm goes off, I **really don't** want to get up. I get up because I have to — I have responsibilities that oblige me to get out of bed. In the early morning, sleep seems like the best thing in the world — better than anything — and I continue to feel this way until I get a cup of coffee into me.



So as I read our Gospel lesson this week, I found myself wondering whether when Jesus initially cried out in a loud voice, "*Lazarus, come out!*" Lazarus' reaction might not have been like mine to the sound of the alarm: "*Can't I sleep some more?*" Sleep is exactly what Jesus says Lazarus is doing at the beginning of our story. "*Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.*"

It seems quite possible that Lazarus was enjoying the silence and stillness, and the fact that no one places any demands on a dead man, and the thought of coming back out of that tomb where life involves so much work, and there are bickering sisters to try and broker peace between, no problems at all. In this painting, doesn't it sort of look like Lazarus is asking if he can't go back into the tomb?

There is something to be said to the idea that ***it isn't death that is the problem; it's life.***

So my attention was drawn to the words that follow Jesus' command to Lazarus to wake up:

"The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them (the people present), 'Unbind him, and let him go.'"

Jesus calls Lazarus back to life, but he also commands those who are present to help make Lazarus glad that he is alive again.

In John's Gospel, there is this concept of the "*beloved community.*" Said Jesus, "*This is how people will know you are my disciples: if you love another.*" Jesus got down on his knees to show them how far love in his community should go; he washed his disciples' feet.



I think of Lois' story about how after first her husband Jack's death, and then her mother's death, she felt the heaviness of grief descend. It was the love that she found when she came back to our church that brought her back into the land of the living.



The church family took off the grave clothes.

When I get here on Sunday morning, the love of this community makes me glad to be awake — to be alive. You appreciate me for who I am — I'm kind of an odd duck. You help me take off my grave clothes.

We need one another; and we need to share the gifts God gave us. I heard this story about a famous psycho-therapist named Milton Erickson whose central idea was that everybody is unique,

and that we need one another to honor our uniqueness.

His philosophy reminded me of a line from our mission statement:

“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.”

Milton Erickson was flown in by a wealthy family to this small town in the Midwest to consult with a chronically depressed woman who had been through many doctors and therapists with no relief from her depression. He came to her house to talk with her for one hour. While he was there he focused on two facts he learned about the woman: She had purple violets around her house – she grew them herself; and she went to church every Sunday and quietly sat in the back without much contact with the other people in worship.

He gave the woman an assignment: get a couple of hundred purple violet bulbs to raise up, and then start giving them away to people in her church for pretty much any occasion: a birth, a wedding, a death, a sickness. Whatever.

Six months later there was an article in the local newspaper about the **purple violet lady** – how much her church family, and the community at large had come to appreciate this woman and her peculiar gift with purple violets. She had become a new person – or you could say, she had become the person she was always waiting to be. They’d helped her take off her grave cloths.

I thought of this story – one of my favorites, when I thought about the raising of Lazarus.

Like any good mother, when Karen found out that another baby was on the way, she did what she could to help her three year old son, Michael prepare for a new sibling. They found out that the new baby was going to be a girl, and day after day, night after night, Michael would sing to his little sister inside his Mommy’s tummy. He was building a bond of love with his little sister before he even met her.



The pregnancy progressed normally for Karen, an active member of the Panther Creek United Methodist Church in Morristown, Tennessee. In time the labor pains began. Soon it was every five minutes, every three, every minute. But serious complications arose during delivery and Karen found herself in hours of labor.

Finally, after a long struggle, the baby was born. But Michael’s little sister was in very serious condition. With a siren howling in the night the ambulance rushed the infant to the neonatal intensive care unit at St. Mary’s Hospital, Knoxville, Tennessee.

The days inched by. The little girl got worse. The pediatrician had to tell the parents there was very little hope. “Be prepared for the worst,” the doctor said. Karen and her husband had fixed up a special room in their house for their new baby, but now they found themselves contacting the cemetery about a burial plot.

Michael, however, kept begging his parents to let him see his sister. “*I want to sing to her,*” he kept saying. But kids are never allowed in Intensive Care. Karen decided to take Michael whether they liked it or not. If he didn’t see his sister right then, he may never see her alive. She dressed him in an oversized scrub suit and marched him into ICU. He looked like a walking laundry basket. The head nurse recognized him as a child and bellowed, “Get that kid out of her now! No children are allowed in here.”

The mother bear rose up strong in Karen, and the usually mild-mannered lady glared steel-eyed right into the head nurse’s face, her lips a firm line. “He is not leaving until he sings to his sister.” Then Karen led Michael to his sister’s bedside. He gazed at the tiny infant losing the battle to live.

In the pure-hearted voice of a three year-old, Michael began to sing one of his favorite songs to sing to his little sister. Sing with me: “*You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, you make me happy when skies are grey. You’ll never know, dear, how much I love you. Please don’t take my sunshine away.*”

Instantly the baby girl seemed to respond. The pulse rate began to calm down and become steady. “*Keep on singing, Michael,*” encouraged Karen with tears in her eyes. As Michael sang to his sister, the baby’s ragged, strained breathing became as smooth as a kitten’s purr. “Keep on singing, sweetheart.” The next day... the very next day... the little girl was well enough to go home. Michael had sung the grave cloths off of his baby sister.

The baby was named Marlee. This is a picture of her as a 16 year old high school student. She sings in her church choir as well as school choir. Marlee says that her special gift is singing.



We have no idea just how powerful is the love that lives among us as the body of Christ – powerful enough to call people from death to life... to call forth the unique gifts within us that we need – really need to share with one another... to make us glad to get up in the morning.

Right after Jesus raised Lazarus from the tomb, the religious authorities began conspiring to put Jesus into a tomb. He offered himself willingly – allowing himself to be lifted up on the cross so that he might draw all people to himself. He died, that we might have life, and have it abundantly.

The bread and the cup that we receive this morning remind us that He is yet with us, and we need not be afraid of either death, or life.

In the kindness of Jesus,
Pastor Jeff]

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On April 5th a service of remembrance was held for Helen Miller. In the course of Helen's life she endured a lot of hardships. Through it all, she was compassionate to others in their troubles. Through it all, she maintained a capacity to give thanks and to appreciate the beauty of this world. Through it all she never lost the capacity to laugh and enjoy the friendship of others.



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United Methodist
Women

Looking back...an evening of good food and fellowship was enjoyed at Ladies' Night Out at IHOP.

This month, join us, and bring a friend....

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7 – 7:00 p.m.
PROGRAM: Speaker, David Kinsley
Refreshments will be served

May 11 – Mother's Day (Bulletin insert) May 26 – Memorial Day (Obs)

Get well wishes to those of you who are ill; and
HAPPY BIRTHDAY to those of you celebrating this month with Anna Weiss, Lyn Krisa, Doris Bradley and Lois Kelshaw

God Bless,
Doris Bradley

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

On the second Thursday of every other month our congregation provides dinner for the families at **Homeless Solutions**. Our next scheduled dinner is **June 12th**. If you would like to take a turn in helping with this outreach, or if you would like to donate money towards the expenses, please speak to Laurie Wilken or Connie Wallace.

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The Cogan's are couponing! We are collecting coupons to help purchase food for the Parsippany Food Pantry. We also have a book of coupons that any church member is welcome to browse and take any coupons that they could use. We plan on getting to church at 10am on Sundays to cut and organize, helpers welcome. Please save your extra Sunday coupons for us!

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The local schools collect both Box Tops and Labels for Education. Anyone interested in saving these off of your general purchases can bring them to church, and one of the families with kids will be GLAD to hand them in. The closest elementary school, Troy Hills, uses the money earned from Box Tops to purchase new books for the school library. Bring them in and give them to Alison Cogan if you have no other school to donate them to.

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A day time men's discussion group with Pastor Jeff that meets on Fridays at 1 p.m. **will resume following Easter**. We discuss short readings or videos during the 90 minute sessions. Any men available in the day time are invited to join us.

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"Living in the Light" meets on **Wednesdays** promptly at **11 a.m.** in Pastor Jeff's office. Pastor Jeff leads a Bible Study of the scripture lesson he will preach on the following Sunday, followed by a guided mediation and prayer. Anybody who is available at that time of day is warmly invited to attend.

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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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CHURCH CALENDAR and SCHEDULING EVENTS

The church calendar on our website www.parsippanyumc.com has been updated. The calendar in the church office is no longer being updated. If you want to schedule an event, you need to look at the website calendar to see if the date is available. All requests for use of the church facilities need to be approved by the trustees, Connie Keller or Amy Gripp.



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. 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.

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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 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 MAY

May 4

Acts 2:14a, 36-41
1 Peter 1:17-23
Luke 24:13-35

May 11

Acts 2:42-47
1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

May 18

Acts 7:55-60
1 Peter 2:2-10
John 14:1-14

May 25

Acts 17:22-31
1 Peter 3:13-22
John 14:15-21



1 st	Beth Cogan	17 th	Don Gatto
2 nd	Alison Cogan	18 th	Kayla Hook (Beckler)
2 nd	Olivia Duran	19 th	Doris Bradley
3 rd	Anna Weiss	19 th	Lyn Krisa
4 th	Norma Aragon (Owens)	19 th	John Chauhan
5 th	Joshua Christian	20 th	Susan Elbin
5 th	Garin Roelofs	22 nd	Zak Jernstrom
6 th	Henry Isaacks	23 rd	Georgia Zibura
7 th	Dawn Colletto	24 th	Anna Gripp
8 th	David Brodock	25 th	Darlene Miller
9 th	Anthony DiPietro	26 th	Lois Kelshaw
10 th	Michael Smith	29 th	Darren Yacenko
10 th	Paul Larsen, Jr.	29 th	Lois Pongo
11 th	Erika Gripp	30 th	Isabella Duran
11 th	Kaia Joy Mihalko	31 st	Diane Anderson
12 th	George Hawkins, Sr.	31 st	Nichole Raier
12 th	Katie Rose Milhalko	31 st	Jessica Maclay
14 th	Kaitlyn Sklow	31 st	Austin Atkinson
14 th	Michelle Hess	31 st	Sophia Atkinson
15 th	Leigh Colletto		

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

20th Ted & Bekki Schnetzer



In the photo to our left, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on top of a donkey in our Palm Sunday re-enactment. Garin and Eric Roelofs play the central figures, while the crowd seems especially delighted by the Savior's entrance into the city. To the right, the cast "Witness to the Crucifixion," performed twice during holy week.



MOTHER'S DAY BULLETIN INSERT



Mother's Day is right around the corner, and the UMW will be sponsoring their annual special Mother's Day insert to appear in the bulletin on May 11th. The UMW offers you the opportunity to honor or memorialize your mother, grandmother, aunt, etc. by placing her name on a special bulletin insert. \$1.00 donation per name is requested. Please use the form below and give it, together with your donation, to Doris Bradley by May 4th.

.....
In HONOR of:

Placed by:

In Memory of:


Placed by:

Total Names _____

Total Amount \$_____

May 2014

United Methodist Church of Parsippany

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
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