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United Methodist Church of Parsippany

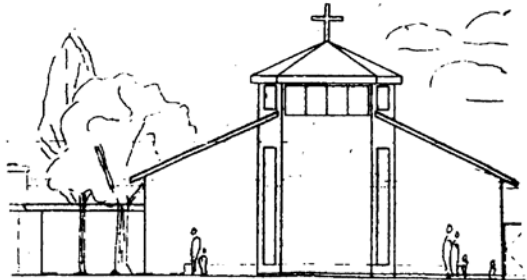
903 So. Beverwyck Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 887-4657

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, 2014



Barb and Darryl in Concert – Saturday, Nov. 22 at 7 pm.

Come and join us for an evening of songs and silliness. Barb and Darryl will be singing all kinds of songs: some country, some ballads, some contemporary Christian, some just plain fun. It'll be an evening of solos, duets and surprises. **We are asking that you bring a non-perishable food item as admission' to the concert.**

The concert is the week before Thanksgiving and we are having a food drive to help the Parsippany Food Pantry. **A love offering** will also be taken during the evening to **support**

our Monthly dinners at Homeless Solutions.

At this time of the year we are reminded to be thankful for our blessings and to help those less fortunate than us. I hope you will join us for this event that will surely leave you smiling.

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**Hanging
of the
Greens**

Hanging of the Greens – We will be decorating the church for the Christmas season on **Saturday, Nov. 29**. We will gather at **10:00 am** to decorate the sanctuary, narthex, Fellowship hall and front lawn/door of the church. Everyone is welcome. It usually takes a little over 2 hours; if you can't come for the entire time, come when you can. Many hands make the job more fun. Coffee and donuts will be available in the morning. If you have any questions, please speak to Connie Keller.



A sermon preached on October 5th, 2014 based upon Exodus 20:1 – 4, 7 -9, 12 – 17, entitled, “Revisiting the Ten Commandments.”

According to poll-takers, a vast majority of Americans believe that the Ten Commandments should be posted in courthouses and other public places. This might be because poll-takers also tell us that a vast majority of Americans can't name even four of the commandments.



I hope that you will do a whole lot better when to poll-takers come calling by the time this sermon is over.

A covenant is being forged with the giving of these commandments between God and the people. In the keeping of the covenant -- in the keeping of God's commandments -- they will be a “priestly kingdom and a holy nation.” (Exodus 19:6a) This is key, and we will return to it shortly. The ten commandments begins this way:

Then God spoke all these words: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery;

It's easy for us to quickly pass over these words, but they are crucial. God acted on behalf of the people -- God loved the people -- before they ever did anything to earn that love, before they ever even knew there were commandments to keep. They didn't do anything to impress God, to make them “worthy” of God's attention. We are simply told that God had heard their cries -- that God was moved out of compassion to intervene in their lives to set them free from Pharaoh.

God's love for them was a gift of pure grace. Once they are out in the wilderness, the people, set free from Pharaoh quickly murmur and complain, demonstrating that there wasn't anything inherently noble about them. And so this means that when we set out to keep the commandments, we aren't trying to earn God's love. God's love is already a given. What we're trying to do is respond to that love.

The ten commandments begin with a reminder that the people have been set free. Often when we talk about freedom we define it as simply the freedom to do whatever we want to do. “I can do whatever I want to do. I'm free.” But freedom in and of itself doesn't amount to much. The people who are most “free” in this sense are people with more money than they know what to do with, and more often than not, their lives don't amount to much. The so-called “freedom” of the rich and famous is meaningless; they live empty, hollow lives. Freedom finds its meaning only when it serves a higher purpose -- a purpose given to us by God.

And so the people are free in order that they may choose in their freedom to be a “holy nation” and a “priestly people.” By keeping the commandments they will reveal to the world the nature of God, and thereby be a part of what God is doing to redeem a world broken apart by the power of sin.

What we call “morality” in the deepest sense of the word isn't something we human beings create. There is a moral order that God has knit into the universe, and as creatures made in the image and likeness of God, we human beings are designed to live in harmony with God's moral order. The ten commandments are a gift given to us: they

make explicit the moral order, that in obeying these commandments, we might flourish and be a blessing to the whole world.

The first four commandments deal with our relationship to God, and begin with

1) You shall have no other gods before me.

This can sound antiquated, dating back to a time when people believed there were a whole host of gods out there to choose from. But in truth, we make a god out of anything that takes the center place in our lives, the thing we value more than anything else, and as such, we all worship other gods a good deal of the time. Maybe it's money or success, maybe our children, maybe our reputation, maybe our need to always be right. The possibilities are endless. And when there is something other than God at the center of our lives, our lives lose the balance and harmony they were designed to have, and the consequences are dire.



2) You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

In the ancient world, an idol that represented a specific god was often created by people as a way to try and manipulate the god the idol represented into doing what the people wanted. But the God who created the universe isn't a god we can manipulate to conform to our wills. Life is designed in such a way that peace is found in surrendering to God's will.

3) You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

When we hear this commandment we think of using God's name as a swear word, and there is something to that. But it means more than that. Again, in the ancient world there was the belief that in knowing the name of a god you were given some degree of access to, even control over that god. When we use the name of God to try and justify our own prejudices and desires, we abuse the holy name which refers to the Lord of the whole Universe and not merely the god who loves America more than any other nation, or the god who prefers white people, or the god whose purpose is to make me prosperous. The God with the inscrutable name "I am who I am" as opposed to who we might make this God to be, is always bigger than the little gods we might try to name him to be.

4) Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

Living in the modern world, unless we are going to pattern our lives after orthodox Jews or the Amish, it is not likely that we will be able to keep this commandment in a literal sense. But what we do know is that if we don't regularly carve out time in our lives not to merely "escape" but to truly "rest", to simply be, and not do, we will lose contact with what matters, and lose our connection to God at the center of our lives. We will lose our souls: we will become human doings, rather than human beings.



When Jesus was asked what he considered the greatest commandment to be, he answered by naming two commandments. He said that the greatest commandment is to "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy

mind.” This commandment sums up the first four commandments. And then Jesus said there was a second commandment that was “like unto the first: *“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,”* which sums up the next six commandments. The commandments to love God and to love neighbor are, as Jesus implies, inseparable.

St. Augustine said, *“Love God and do whatever you please: for the soul trained in love of God will do nothing to offend the One who is Beloved.”* To truly love human beings, you must first love the God who created **all** human beings. And you’re not really loving God if you’re not loving the human beings God created and loves so.

The fifth commandment is

5) Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

In that the relationship of God to us human beings is like a parent to a child, this commandment serves as a fitting transition.

The family is the foundational unit of human society. We have a special responsibility towards our parents, perhaps especially as they age and become more vulnerable and in need. This is, of course, a challenge for those who have experienced abuse or neglect from their parent.

6) You shall not murder.

Human life is sacred, belonging to God and not to us. We do not have the right to take it; only God does. Although there are plenty of parts of the Old Testament where this commandment doesn’t seem to be carried out, the principle holds, and in the New Testament Jesus really presses the point. When a crowd is taking a woman away to be stoned to death in accordance with a law that was later added to the ten commandments, Jesus says in so many words that everyone of us stands in the need of mercy, resulting in the woman’s life being saved.

Jesus pushed the commandment even further, declaring in the sermon on the mount that harboring anger in our hearts is akin to murder, because it is from such anger that murder arises. When we are caught up in rage, we lose sight of the fundamental truth that all human life is sacred.



7) You shall not commit adultery.

As with the command to honor our parents, here again we are reminded that the family is at the heart of where life either flourishes or diminishes, and the loving, integrity of the core relationship is crucial to making the family a place of life rather than death.

Again, in the sermon on the mount Jesus specifically pushes this commandment further, declaring that lust – which involves a kind of dehumanizing of people, turning them into objects of desire rather than beings of sacred worth -- is the source of such betrayal, and therefore having lust is akin to committing adultery. By that standard, we all stand in need of mercy and grace. So we are to deal with what’s in our hearts.

8) You shall not steal.

In this commandment we are reminded of the way the first commandments -- the ones about our relationship to God -- are the foundation for being able to keep the commandments about human relationships. Why do people steal? There is the rare instance where stealing is done in order to feed one’s family, but more often than not people steal because desire for material things has taken the center place in their hearts – they’ve taken the place that belongs to God alone.

In the Gospel of Luke, when Zacchaeus, the rich tax collector up in the tree is reconnected to God through the grace he experiences when Jesus invites himself over

to his house for dinner, Zacchaeus spontaneously restores fourfold the money he has stolen from persons in his capacity as tax collector.

9) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

We bear false witness against a neighbor whenever we judge them on the basis of a single action, and then proceed to bad mouth them to others. If someone were to judge our entire character on the basis of something we did in a moment of fatigue and stress, we would recognize the inherent unfairness of such an act.

Live by the truth. Don't tell lies. A failure to tell the truth undermines every relationship. Don't gossip.

When you read the newspapers and hear all the bad things people get caught doing, you recognize that there is this toxic self-deception people live by, and that is the notion that "If nobody knows I did it, it didn't happen." Much of the theft, adultery, and destructive addictions of all kinds that are committed in this world happen in large part because at the center of peoples' lives a commitment to telling the truth has been lost.

10) You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

The surest way to a miserable life – a life not truly lived – is to spend our days imagining that we would be happy if only we had what our neighbor has. Strive to be content with what we have been given – to recognize the bounty of blessings that we have been given and tend to overlook and be grateful.

Perhaps when you were young your mother or your father would say to you before you went out of the house, "Remember who you are." By this they meant that as



a member of their family, there were certain values that came along with your identity as a family member: presumably things like integrity, honesty, kindness.

"This is who you are," they were saying. "Don't forget and go behave in some manner that contradicts your core identity."

At the outset of God's relationship with His chosen people, God said essentially the same thing. "Remember who you are. You are the people who show how life was intended to be lived. You are the

people who reflect my life by the quality of your lives. You are the people who cultivate a sense of holiness at the center of your lives, who live with integrity, who tell the truth, who recognize the sacredness of life.

In the kindness of Jesus,
Pastor Jeff



P.S. I have begun leading ten of our youth in what I'm calling a "Confirmation Adventure." With the assistance of Amy Gripp, Maidie Erickson and Greg Elbin we are exploring what it means to be a follower of Jesus and a member of the church by exploring Bible stories. In the course of the year we hope to develop a major theatrical production to be presented in the late Spring. We welcome your prayers for the journey ahead.



United Methodist
Women

Looking back...Anita Laux entertained us with the extraordinary story of her career as a dancer, including videos of her children and her students dancing in numbers she beautifully taught them. We were proud of all she accomplished.

And now, on to the next program....

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5 – 7:00 p.m.
PROGRAM: Budget-Pledge-Program Planning-
Nominations
Refreshments will be served – Join us!

Nov 2 – Daylight Savings Ends

Nov 4 – Election Day

Nov 7 – World Community Day

Nov 11 – Veteran’s Day

Nov 27 – Thanksgiving Day

Nov 30 – 1st Sunday of Advent

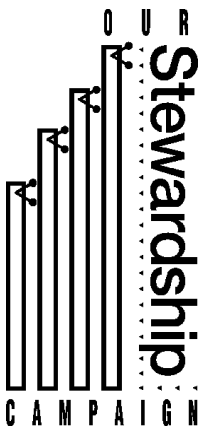
GET WELL wishes to those of you who are ill, and

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to those of you celebrating this month with Pastor Jeff.

God Bless,
Doris Bradley

Prov. 17:17 “A friend loves at all times.”

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Stewardship—I want to first thank all those who have supported the life and ministry of our church this year with their generous pledges and donations. While it can be difficult to talk about, the financial support of our church and God’s mission for it is an important part of all that we do as a congregation. As we prepare for our annual stewardship campaign in November, please begin to prayerfully consider pledging out of generosity for the coming year. **Stewardship Sunday** will be on **November 23, 2014**. On Stewardship Sunday we will dedicate our pledges of financial support to work of God through our church. Pledge cards will be handed out, to be filled in and returned by Stewardship Sunday. In the month of November, the stewardship committee will be highlighting the ministries of our church and the impact they have on people.

Paul Adams
Stewardship Chair

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On the second Thursday of every other month our congregation provides dinner for the families at **Homeless Solutions**. Our next scheduled dinner is **December 11th**. 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.

Temple Beth Am installed Rabbi Steven Mills on October 10th. Pastor Jeff was on hand as an expression of our congregation's long standing friendship with our Jewish neighbors. Temple Beth Am, "House of the People", was founded in 1966. Their present home in Parsippany was built in 1972. Rabbi Mills is their fifth full time spiritual leader.

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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 day time men's discussion group with Pastor Jeff that meets on Fridays at 1 p.m. 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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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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WARMTH IN THE WINTER, HOT WATER AND WARM NOSES



We are launching a capital fundraising project over the next year to **replace the 60 year old boiler in our church.** It's running on prayers and patches and we are keeping our fingers crossed that it will be a faithful provider of its services for one more Winter. It will be replaced by a cost and energy efficient model, 1/3 the size of the current boiler that is projected to reduce to our current heating bills.

In the next few months, we will be providing **RED** envelopes for any donations that you would like to make. Red is to help you remember that your "hot" donation is going to this one specific project. Any donation you make over the course of this fund raising campaign will be recorded on your giving statement along with your offering towards the general budget. We will accept any amount, big or small, a single donation, or many over the next year.

In the Fall there will be a chart posted in the narthex showing all of the *HOT* donations to date. We'll be able to watch the thermometer heat up over the Winter and hopefully get us to our **goal of \$40,000 by July 2015.**

Thank you for your consideration and help on this project!!

The PUMC Board of Trustees



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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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.

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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. 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.



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. 2
Joshua 3:7-17
1 Thess 2:9-13
Matthew 23:1-12

Nov. 9
Joshua 23:1-3a
1 Thess 4:13-18
Matthew 25:1-13

Nov. 16
Judges 4:1-7
1 Thess 5:1-11
Matthew 25:14-30

Nov. 23
Ezekiel 34:11-16
Ephesians 1:15-23
Matthew 25:31-46

Nov. 30
Isaiah 64:1-9
1 Corinth 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37



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



We are collecting shoe boxes (regular size, not large like for sneakers) and items once again this year for Operation Christmas Child.

These boxes are distributed to needy children throughout the world through the organization Samaritan's Purse.

We need your shoe boxes and any items from the list below to be brought to church **by November 9th**. The boxes will be assembled after church on that Sunday. You can stay

and help with that project if you would like. If you have any other questions, speak to Tracy Booth.

It costs \$7 to ship each box, so if you can, please donate \$7 with your empty box.

Remember the size of the box when you purchase your items.

Toys – yo-yos, jump ropes, dolls, toy cars, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, balls, etc.

School Supplies – pens, pencils, crayons, markers, notebooks, paper, solar calculator, coloring and picture books, etc.

Non-Liquid Hygiene Items – toothbrushes, bar soap, combs, washcloths, etc.

Accessories – t-shirts, socks, hats, sunglasses, hairclips, jewelry, watches, flashlights

Do Not Include – Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures; chocolate or food; out of date candy; liquids or lotions; meds or vitamins; breakable items; aerosol cans.

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We now have three women from our church serving in the office.

Betty Polen on Monday, Betsy Adams on Tuesday, and Pat Winz on Wednesday. They are there from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to answer the phone and greet visitors, among other useful things.



November 2014

United Methodist Church of Parsippany

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																						
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