

# HILLTOPPER

United Methodist Church of Parsippany

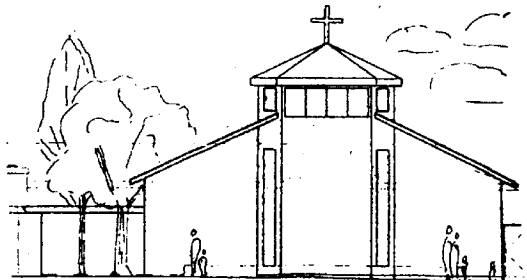
903 So. Beverwyck Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 887-4657

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"



SEPTEMBER, 2016

**REMINDER – WORSHIP RETURNS TO 10:30 A.M. ON SUNDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>**

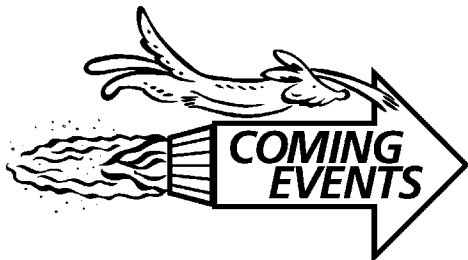
### BACKPACK BLESSING – Sunday, September 4th



On Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup> we will once again take time to **bless the backpacks**. Students, preschool through adult, bring your backpacks to worship service at 10:30 a.m. At the service we will lift up students of all ages as we bless the beginning of the new school year. We also want to recognize teachers, aides, secretaries... anyone who is helping others learn.

You are asked to bring your briefcase or lunch box to church that day to be blessed and affirmed in your job as we encourage and thank you as you for serving families in your daily work.

**Sunday School** begins on September 11<sup>th</sup>.



**Annual Ham Dinner – Saturday, October 8th from 4-7.** Come out and enjoy a wonderful fall dinner! If you would like to help out, please contact Barb or Connie.

**Happy Apple Bazaar and Garage Sale – Saturday, November 5th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.** If you are interested in a garage sale table, contact Barb or Connie.



Our **annual Church Conference** with our district superintendent, Rev. Steve Bechtold, will be held on **Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.** Please mark your calendar and join us as we celebrate the past year, look to the future, and share Holy Communion together.



**UPDATE YOUR PLEDGE** - As we return to our fall schedule, we ask that you remember to bring your pledge up to date after the summer months.

**SPARE CHANGE CAMPAIGN** - During July and August, you have been searching in your couch, under your chairs, and in all your nook and crannies for that precious spare change. We thank you for all the coins that you have discovered and are putting into your "first class spare change campaign baggie". You can begin turning in your spare change donations on September 4. Please remember to put your name on the bag, if you want credit on your annual giving statement. You can give your bags of change to the ushers when you come into church for Sunday worship or drop it off to the church office during the week. If you have any questions, please speak to Bob Keller.

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**A sermon preached on August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016 based upon Hebrews 11:29 - 12:2 entitled "Running the Race with Perseverance":**

Our scripture lesson this morning began by giving examples of people who had lived by faith. At first, it sounded like having faith means you'll be a winner in the eyes of this world. The author of the letter to the Hebrews talks about people who by faith "conquered kingdoms... became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight." It sounds like what is referred to as "the prosperity Gospel": Believe in Jesus and he will make you a winner in the eyes of the world.

But then the author pivots. He begins to describe people who weren't winners at all, rather in the eyes of the world they seemed like total losers:

*"Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup>They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two, they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented..."*

And finally after talking about all the saints who have come before us -- the *great crowd of witnesses* -- the author gets to his central point: *"let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us."*



Races, of course are athletic events. They call to mind the Olympics that many of us have been watching. The Olympics are captivating. We watch in part to simply witness athletes display extraordinary talents. But a large part of what holds our attention is the competition. Who will be the winner who stands on the podium clutching the gold medal, with the adulation of the cheering crowd? And who will be the losers?



I've been thinking about what it takes to become an Olympic champion. It seems to me that it involves three things. The first is a certain amount of innate talent. The right DNA, the God-given natural ability. The second is what could be called "luck" -- the good fortune to be born into a situation where you have the opportunity to develop your talent; the good fortune to avoid injuries and such. And the third, of course, is the willingness to work very hard to develop the talent.

Only the third one is within a person's control.

You likely have seen the wonder that is the 19 year old gymnast Simone Biles, who is being called the greatest gymnast ever. She is truly a marvel to behold. Innate talent, good fortune, hard work -- they all had a hand in bringing Simone to the place where she can raise the gold medals.

It would seem, however that the thing that distinguishes Simone from other gymnasts is her innate, God-given ability. I heard a coach describe how Simone can master moves in just a couple of days that take other gymnasts a year or more to master. She has certainly worked very hard, but so have all the other Olympic gymnasts, and some of them may well have worked harder. We just don't know.

So when we marvel at what Simone can do as a gymnast, in a very real sense it is ultimately God who deserves the glory for having created human being with such incredible athletic grace. Simone didn't create herself; God did.

Simone and other gold medal winners deserve praise for how hard they worked, but whether or not they worked harder than other athletes, only God really knows for sure.



In a certain sense it seems unfortunate that we feel compelled to make the designations of winners and losers in athletic competition.

The real issue, and the one that only God can answer, is what did a given athlete do with the innate talent and opportunities that were given to them?

Our now 21 year old son Bobby was born with a great deal of energy and a short attention span. When at the age of nine he tried out for travel soccer, the passion that awoke within him for the game was a real blessing. It gave him a focus for all that energy, and without that focus, Sarah and I can only wonder where all that energy might have been directed.

Through soccer Bobby learned how to discipline himself and work hard to meet a goal. Since soccer is a team sport he's had opportunities to learn something about cooperation and what it means to be a good teammate.

But having watched my son compete, I can testify that there is a dark side to sports. With the emphasis on competition -- on who wins and who loses, on who starts and who sits on the bench, on who makes the team and who gets cut -- it seems inevitable that the "the agony of defeat" will occur more often than "the thrill of victory." At every level, only one team gets the designation of "champions". All the others fall short. It can be tough at times for an athlete who has competed and lost not to internalize the sense of being a "loser."

As important as it is to Bobby to succeed in soccer, ultimately success at soccer doesn't really matter at all. It is, as they say, only a game. What matters is how one does with the gift of life itself. The hope is that when his playing days are done, there will be lessons Bobby has learned and personality traits he has developed through playing soccer that will help him make his way in life.

Psychologists have begun to take notice of something that has probably always been obvious to teachers, and that is that IQ tests don't necessarily predict how well a given student will do in school.

Some students with lesser natural intelligence do better than naturally brighter students because they possess a quality that has come to be referred to as "grit". Grit is the capacity to keep working hard in pursuit of a goal even when something becomes very hard to do; to get up and try again in the face of defeats and setbacks.

The one thing I feel fairly confident in regard to Bobby is that his passion for soccer these past twelve years has given him opportunity to display a fair amount of grit. Along the way there have been defeats, benchings, injuries that were at times deeply frustrating for Bobby, and though he got very discouraged at times, he didn't give up. He kept trying.

And so returning finally to our scripture reading, I think it was something very close to grit that the author of the letter to the Hebrews had in mind when he speaks of "*running with perseverance the race that is set before us.*" The race that is spoken of here isn't one that involves beating others to the finish line. That's the rat race, and as Lily Tomlin said, even if you win that race, you're still a rat.

In the race that truly matters the goal is simply to reach the finish line. It is about staying on the path of following Jesus, letting him slowly mould our lives in his image. It involves day by day, putting one foot in front of another, even when you are tired, worn out, tempted to give up.







For me, the most interesting thing about Michael Phelps is not the fact that he has won 23 gold medals, but the fact that he was able to apply some of the grit he presumably learned from sports to his personal life when his life was spinning out of control two years ago. It was then that he got a second DWI arrest, spent time in rehab, acknowledged his addiction and starting going to AA, got serious about working the program and get on the path of sobriety. That's the real race. The medals he is now winning are just icing on the cake, so to speak. It was the lessons he learned in facing head on defeat in his personal life that

really mattered.

Just as we will never know which of the Olympic athletes worked the hardest to take advantage of the opportunities and the innate talent they were given, we will never know for sure in this life what it means for any given person at any given moment to show perseverance and grit in the race that really matters. The TV cameras aren't pointed towards the race that really matters.



The Apostle Paul speaks of "*fighting the good fight*," and although some Christians have sometimes taken that to mean engaging in a battle against other people, that's not what Paul had in mind at all. Fighting the good fight is fighting against our own worst qualities: Our inclination to take the easy way out rather than to face our problems head on, our refusal to forgive, our tendency to be self-centered, hard hearted, arrogant, petty and cruel. Our refusal to reach out for help, or to offer help. Our temptation to give up on life.

*"Be kind,"* as the saying goes, *"because everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle."* None of us knows for sure what the full nature is of the battle another person must fight, and what it means for them to

persevere and show grit.

For instance, some of us battle depression, and from the outside it might appear to others that the depressed person just isn't trying, simply getting out of bed in the morning for somebody in the grip a deep, dark depression might be the very essence of what it means for them to act courageously, to persevere and have grit, to put one foot in front of another in the long marathon that is life.

And it is a marathon, not a sprint.

In the Middle ages, men joined up to fight in the Crusades because the Pope declared that to die fighting the unbelievers would provide them with a direct flight to heaven: no risk of losing your way and ending up in hell, or no time spent paying for your sins in purgatory. They wanted to make life a sprint, not a marathon. Suicide bombers are doing the same today.



We wouldn't need perseverance if life were just a short sprint. But marathons are all about perseverance: Being in a marriage, or a real friendship is a marathon. Raising a child is a marathon. Being a member of a church is a marathon. Or a citizen, for that matter.



Running in the marathon of life means letting go of trying to be perfect, because perfection simply isn't a possibility. It means getting up off the ground and trying again when we screw up. It means trying to learn from our mistakes, and trying not to make the same mistakes -- commit the same sins -- over and over again. It means hanging in there through the boredom and the frustration. It means committing ourselves to stay in the school of life where we slowly learn by trial and error what it means to truly love.

There isn't much applause in this world for the grit required to finish the marathon that is life.



But the author of the letter to the Hebrews suggests there is applause from the next world. We are surrounded by “a great cloud of witnesses,” he says. The real race in life isn’t to beat others, but to simply to reach the finish line, and those who finish before us, well, they climb up into the stands of heaven and cheer for those of us who are still running the race. Maybe remembering this can give us some encouragement.

Hanging eternally with God, the great cloud of witnesses see our lives as God sees. They can see what we in the middle of the marathon can’t fully see, which is exactly what perseverance and grit means in every individual life, and what real victory means. They know all this and love us more clearly than they did when they were with us on the earth.

So give a nod the heavenly stands, and get up off the ground and put one step in front of another, and keep your eyes on Jesus.

In the kindness of Jesus,  
Pastor Jeff

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We are now having one of our children serve as **acolytes** at the beginning of our worship service, processing in front of the choir to light the altar candles. If your child would like to serve as an acolyte, please Speak to Betsy Adams.

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Looking back... two summer Ladies’ Night Out dinners at the Empire Diner and Annabella’s found us enjoying food and fellowship.  
All women of the Church Family are invited to join us on.....



United Methodist  
Women

**Wed., Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 p.m.**  
**PROGRAM: Maidie Erickson -**  
**On her Tunnel Building**  
Refreshments will be served

Sept. 5 – Labor Day  
Sept. 11 – Patriot Day

Sept. 11 – Grandparent’s Day  
Sept. 22 – First Day of Autumn

GET WELL wishes to those of you who are ill, and  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY to those of you celebrating this month with Connie Keller, Betsy Adams and Pat Winz.

God Bless,  
Doris Bradley

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

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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 Thursday, October 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.



**Interfaith Furnishings** - Once every three months our church provides volunteers to assist **Interfaith Furnishings** in transporting donated furniture to people living in Morris County who would not be able to otherwise furnish their homes. **Our next Saturday to serve is Saturday, October 22nd.** Please speak to Claudia Bartek or Maidie Erickson if you would like to volunteer

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To make it easier for the Congregation to keep up with their financial pledges to the Church, a **PayPal link has been added to the PUMC Homepage.** If you've never used PayPal before, it's an easy and secure way to send a payment over the Internet. You can use your bank account or a credit card to make your payment, and PayPal takes a small transaction fee. For more information or a quick demonstration on how to use this new tool, please speak with Justin Cogan.

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On the **third Thursday of every month** Pastor Jeff leads a **worship service at Troy Hills Center at 10:30 a.m.** If you would like to share in this ministry to the people living in a nursing home, please join us. Speak to Pastor Jeff or Pat Winz if you would like more information. Our next service is **Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>.**

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

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Speak to Betty Polen.

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

## CHURCH CALENDAR and SCHEDULING EVENTS

The church calendar on our website [www.parsippanyumc.com](http://www.parsippanyumc.com) has been 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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**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 Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. All children and youth in 3rd grade and up (including junior and senior high school) are welcome. Directed by Aimee Letsch (973-585-7634)

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## SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR SEPTEMBER

### Sept. 4

Jeremiah 18:1-11  
Philemon 1-21  
Luke 14:25-33

### Sept. 11

Jeremiah 4:11-12,22-28  
1 Timothy 1:12-17  
Luke 15:1-10

### Sept. 18

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1  
1 Timothy 2:1-7  
Luke 16:1-13

### Sept. 25

Jeremiah 32:1-3a,6-15  
1 Timothy 6:6-19  
Luke 16:19-31





SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS			
1 <sup>st</sup>	Anna Larsen	12 <sup>th</sup>	Jim Steen, Jr.
1 <sup>st</sup>	Carissa Bramley	12 <sup>th</sup>	Karina Barreto
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Amanda Piccolo	16 <sup>th</sup>	Ray Steen
4 <sup>th</sup>	Ryan Erickson	17 <sup>th</sup>	Sandy Bostwick
5 <sup>th</sup>	Emma Crowningshield	19 <sup>th</sup>	Pat Winz
6 <sup>th</sup>	Anita Laux	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Jennifer DePietro
7 <sup>th</sup>	Paul Adams	27 <sup>th</sup>	Keith Anastasi
7 <sup>th</sup>	Michael Miloslavsky	28 <sup>th</sup>	Ben Chauhan
8 <sup>th</sup>	Connie Keller	28 <sup>th</sup>	Glen Post
8 <sup>th</sup>	Michael Krisa	29 <sup>th</sup>	Vincent Bianchi
9 <sup>th</sup>	Greg Elbin	29 <sup>th</sup>	Mariahna Suzan
9 <sup>th</sup>	Betsy Adams	30 <sup>th</sup>	Sarah Wink

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES	
15 <sup>th</sup>	Ann & Charles Nye
28 <sup>th</sup>	Susan & Nick Valcoff

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Back in June the following presentation was made to our beloved **Doris Bradley**:

*Fifty years ago on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1966 it was the great good fortune of this congregation to have Doris Bradley, along with her beloved husband Tom take the vows of membership: to support our ministries with her prayers, her presence, her gifts and her service. In all of these ways throughout these fifty years Doris has been an altogether exemplary model of what it means to be a member of the Body of Christ.*

*Doris has faithfully led the United Methodist Women for decades in their important work of providing fellowship for the women of our church, as well as support for both our local church and the larger mission of the church throughout the world. She has happily served at every fundraiser our church has ever hosted. Doris has always sung in our choir, and serves as the keeper of memories as the historian of our church.*

*On a more personal level Doris has been a model for other women in our church family of how to suffer and survive the loss of a greatly beloved husband. With her wonderful capacity to find and share the humor in life, as well as her faithful presence in times of need, Doris has been a loyal and treasured friend for so many of us. The children of our church family have always found in Doris an extra grandmother who takes delight in their lives and remembers every birthday.*



*And finally, Doris has blessed our church as the mother who raised up so well her beloved daughter Barbara who herself serves our church so lovingly as our music director and in so many other ways.*

*On this day, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016 we pause to express our profound gratitude to God and to Doris for the great gift of her presence among us all these many years.*





On Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup> our church was blessed with **five new members** who affirmed their faith in Jesus.

**June and Steve Blake** – June (Idakaar) was born in East Meadow, Long Island and grew up on a lake in Roxbury. Fun fact: June was a starter on the Roxbury High School basketball team along with Claudia Bartek. In the course of her life she has lived in Albany, NY, Piscataway and in a farm house on 50 acres in Mendham. She has a brother Bobby who still lives in Roxbury, and a sister Judy in Connecticut, both of whom June is close to. She has cousins, aunts and uncles who live in upstate New York. June earned a BA in Art from Long Island University.

Steve was born in Providence, RI where his first five years were lived before his family moved to NJ in 1959. They located in Livingston due to the (Swedish) Covenant Church having just moved there from East Orange. A lot of his youth revolved around scouting and the outdoors; Steve worked his way to Eagle Scout. Steve has two younger siblings, Shar and Ron both of whom he has been close to throughout his life. Both his parents and grandparents lived long enough for Steve to be present at their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversaries.

After graduating from the Newark College of Engineering (now NJIT) Steve lived in Randolph. Steve and June met through mutual friend at the Jersey shore in Manasquan in the summer of 1976. In their married life they have lived in Clark's Summit, Pa and in Trumbull, Conn., before moving to East Hanover 19 years ago. They have one daughter, Kristin who lives and works in Morristown. June says that she cherishes being a mom, and that her daughter is the best thing that ever happened to her. Both June and Steve miss their own parents, who live in heaven.

Steve made a career in the business of large commercial and manufacturing property, mainly in the Highly Protected Risk arena. He is currently between jobs, doing some free lance risk inspection work. June has been a free lance artist, a graphic designer in design studios, and an Art Director in Medical/Pharmaceutical Ad Agencies. She is currently working in art enrichment with students. She does substitute teaching in Music, PE and Art. This summer she has been working as an art instructor in an enrichment camp in Chatham.

Steve's interests include people, taking care of the yard, fishing, golf, watching sports and car racing, cooking and grilling. He loves the outdoors and has done a lot of backpacking, an activity to which he introduced June. He enjoyed rock climbing in the Adirondacks until his knees gave out. As a youth Steve loved going to the beach and wanted to be an oceanographer. He has always been interested in learning about nature, dating back to his childhood and his collection of Zim Golden Nature Books that listed every type of class of animal, plant, and insect. He continues to enjoy learning about nature as well as about history. He likes music, singing and an occasional concert. He enjoys kayaking with June.

June finds pleasure making art with water colors, pastels, oil paintings, sketching, and photography. She enjoys studying art mediums at the Visual Art Center in Summit. She loves swimming and being by a lake or ocean, and traveling up to the Adirondacks in New York. She enjoys working in her veggie garden and has a particular fondness for pickles.

In regards to what wisdom they might want to pass on to youth, Steve says, *"Always maintain the child in you as you grow into adulthood. Treat others as you would want to be treated. Keep love and your smile with you as you move through life. If you pay attention, you will feel the grace of God through your interactions with other people and other living things on this Earth. Keep a sense of humor with you, and take life one step at a time. All things usually turn out for the best even though this may not seem so when you're going through them. Pray and be thankful."* June says, *"Do what's right, even when peer pressure would push you to do otherwise. In your busy lives, pay attention to what you learned from your parents. Your actions and words will show them how much you truly care about them, and will validate what they tried to instill in you."* June quoted words from Gandhi that her daughter Kristin loves: *"Be the change you want to see in the world."*

Both Steve and June were struck by the welcome they received at our church. June felt like members the day she first walked in, noting that *"even the little children talked to us that day!"* Steve is struck by the cross section of age groups and the way they really interact with one another. He says that *"the grace and love of God and his Son is felt throughout the congregation. It is truly an open family that is nurturing and gracious, reaching out to others in need. God and Christ are very much alive here. In just a short time here I have genuine friends."* June says of our church, *"There is great vibe here. When we walked in, you just know this is the one! It has great energy."*

Steve comes to us by way of transfer from the Trinity Covenant Church in Livingston. Remarkably, June was born five hours before Steve on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1954

**Barbara Burke** was born in Jersey City and grew up in Hoboken, living there until she was 18. Since then she has lived in Fairview, North Bergen, Cliffs Park, Weehawken, Clifton, Bloomfield and finally Belleville where she currently resides. The most important people in Barbara's life include Jean, Tom and Kathryn, as well as other friends, including Eric, Pam, Karen and Linda. Over the years Barbara has worked at a variety of jobs. She began as a nurse's aide at a nursing home. She next worked at a machine operator /silk screen at AQL factor, followed my fifteen years as a machine operator at All Lace factory. She also worked part time as a cashier at Pathmark. Barbara then went to school to learn bookkeeping after which she worked as a bookkeeper for Barnes and Noble for five years. During this time she got her commercial driver's license and worked part time for NJ Transit, Academy and Red & Tan bus lines, driving buses in and out of NYC, as well as tour buses around Manhattan. More recently Barbara worked for four years in a group home for disabled and Down Syndrome adults as well as assorted bookkeeping jobs. She has also worked part time as a babysitter (including Kathryn!) which is her favorite job of all!

Along with enjoying children, Barbara like to read, bake, and crochet (making dolls and doll clothing, teddy bears, and afghans.) She loves horses and has a collection of horse statues, paintings and books! She also loves cats, and throughout her life she has had cats for pets. Presently she has three!

Regarding our church, Barbara writes: *"What I like best about the church is that the people are warm and friendly, and I feel comfortable here. The sermons also are helpful and often speak to me. And since I have a sweet tooth, I also appreciate all the great snacks at coffee hour!"*

What Barbara has learned in the course of her life and would want to pass on to young people can be summed up pretty simply: *"Be honest, be true, and treat people the way you want to be treated."* Barbara's birthday is April 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Amina Thomas and Cheryl Judge** – Amina was born in San Mateo, California. She has a daughter Kadija (Kadi), 14 as well as another daughter, Jessica Mae, 26 who lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Cheryl grew up in Lake Parsippany and graduated from Parsippany Hills High School with Anna Christal and Barb Bradley. Her family included a sister and three brothers, one of which was Dennis who was active in the First Aid Squad and died in 2008. Cheryl's remaining siblings do not live close by. Cheryl has fond memories of being a part of a very active youth group of the Parsippany Christian Church on Vail Road which involved camping trips.


Cheryl and Amina met in Massachusetts. They moved to Oklahoma before returning to New Jersey, where they now live in Pine Brook. There were married on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Cheryl worked for the Hartford Insurance Company for many years and most recently worked as a cashier at Shop Rite. In Massachusetts Amina worked as a direct support staff person with women with disabilities at Seven Hills Foundation, similar to ARC here in New Jersey. She has worked a secretary and as a cook, and presently works at Sky Zone Trampoline Park. Cheryl looks after Kadi when Amina is at work.

Cheryl loves Twinkle Mae, the five year old Chihuahua and Jack Russell Mix dog that Amina gave to her as a gift. Cheryl enjoys softball, having once the coach of a girls team called the Bad News Bears. The experience gave her a great deal of fun. She enjoys rooting for the Mets and playing online games. Amina roots for the San Francisco 49ers, enjoys working out, walking, watching TV and posting on Facebook, where on one occasion she demonstrated a sweet talent for singing Gospel music.

Cheryl appreciates the kindness of the people she has met here at our church, and that Pastor Jeff is very compassionate and understanding. Her advice to a young person would be *"to believe in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Go to Sunday School and worship and keep on sharing God's good work."* Amina likes that the people here are *"friendly and very loving."* Her advice to a young person would be to *"never give up."* Amina's birthday is March 27<sup>th</sup> and Cheryl's birthday is April 4<sup>th</sup>.

September 2016

United Methodist Church of Parsippany

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																									
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