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United Methodist Church of Parsippany

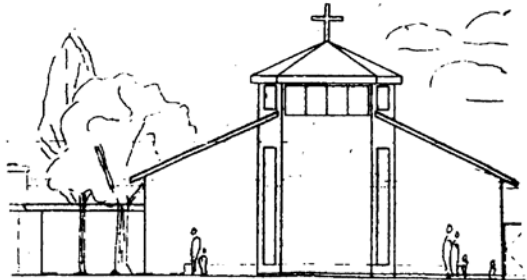
903 So. Beverwyck Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 887-4657

<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"



OCTOBER, 2017



HAM DINNER - Saturday - October 21, 4 to 7 p.m. We'll need help for this major fundraiser. Help is needed to set up, serve, work in the kitchen and clean up. Please see Barb Bradley or Connie Keller if you're interested in lending a hand. **We also need homemade CAKES to serve for dessert.**

Prices are:

Adults: \$15, Sr. Citizens: \$11, Children 6-12 - \$6

Doris Bradley has tickets you can buy, or tickets you can sell to your friends!



Our **annual Church Conference** will be held **Tuesday, October 10th at 7:30 p.m.** All members are encouraged to attend as we join with our district superintendent, Rev. Steve Bechtold to celebrate the past year and to look to the future, and to elect officers of the church for the coming year. We will celebrate Holy Communion together



HAPPY APPLE BAZAAR - Saturday, November 11th --- 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. We're planning to have our usual jewelry, scarves and hats, bakery, and books. **The rest will be garage sale, hopefully by a few members who would like to sell some stuff! Small things can be contributed and will be sold at the church table.** Look for further info at church. Speak to Barb or Connie if you would like to participate. **We'll need homemade bakery for this event as well.**



A sermon preached on September 17th, 2017 based upon Matthew 18:21 – 35 entitled, “A Matter of Perspective.”

The passage we just heard starts off taking about forgiveness with a parable that carries forth the theme, and therefore you might expect this morning's sermon to be about forgiveness as well. Perhaps I should be preaching a sermon about the importance of forgiving the people in your life -- that it isn't easy but keep at it, don't give up. Jesus wants us to keep on forgiving. And that would be a good sermon, essential to hear.

But the thing I heard this time as I read the parable Jesus tells leads me in a different direction. It was two details of the parable that are easy to overlook that caught my attention and I want to begin with the one that appears second. It is the amount of money that the central character is owed by his fellow servant: A hundred denarius. This is not an insignificant amount of money – in those days it was the pay a day laborer would make in for a hundred days of back breaking work. It's essentially about a third of somebody's annual income.

With this detail in mind, what happens if we jump into the parable midway through instead of at the beginning? What I mean is let's put ourselves in the shoes of the servant. Let's imagine you're the guy -- a contractor – a small business owner -- and a while back you did a major project for this guy who wanted a sunroom built off the back of his house. You trusted the guy when he said, *“I have a little cash flow problem right now, but I can assure you that in short order I will have plenty of cash in my account, so you can trust me when I say I'll be able to reimburse you for all the money you put out up front for construction materials, and pay you for all the work you put in, including the time you spent getting the permits.”*

So you took him at his word and did a high quality piece of work for the guy – the sun room came out beautifully. *“Great,”* the guy said when it was done. *“Looks wonderful. My money is coming next week, and the first thing I'm going to do when it does is cut you a check.”*

So a week passes, and then two, but no word from the guy. You start calling on the phone but the guy never picks up, never returns the messages you leave. You go to the guy's house a couple of times and ring the doorbell, but nobody ever comes to the door.

This is serious business. With the money you put out for materials, not to mention all the hours you put in, you're in danger of losing essentially one third of your annual income. You've got bills to pay, a family to feed. You trusted the guy and now it looks like you were scammed. You're furious and hey, rightfully so!

And then one day you see the guy walking down the street. He tries to slip away, but you corner him. *“Give me the money you owe me!”* you scream. The guy begs for mercy. *“The money is coming in next week. There was just a little delay. I will pay you, I promise.”* *“Sure you will, pal, sure you will.”*

If we still had debtor's prison, hey, you would be quite happy to have him locked up. I tell the story this way and we're right there with the contractor – right with the servant in Jesus' parable who refuses to forgive the financial debt of his fellow slave.

There are all kinds of other grievances Jesus could have put in his parable to talk about forgiveness. I think it's significant that he chose to have it be about a financial debt. We get pretty caught up in money. I know I do. Jesus talked about how money can easily become our god.

So this brings me to the other easily overlooked detail of the parable, and it also involves money -- the amount of money that at the outset of the parable the servant owes the king. In today's dollars, it's something like a billion and a half dollars -- an amount of money that makes 100 denarius seem like nothing by comparison.



The only way to make sense of the servant walking away from just having a billion and a half dollar debt suddenly forgiven by the king, only to immediately become a total hard-ass about the 100 denarius debt owed him is to conclude that somehow the servant didn't really take in the magnitude of the gift he was just given. If he had really taken it in, he would be in a state of such profound gratitude that it would simply be impossible for him to behave the way he does towards his fellow servant.

But somehow he's blocked it out. There's some kind of major self-deception going on – a self-deception implied in the servant's promise to the king that if the king will just be patient, the he will pay the debt back in full for sure.

He somehow thinks he's still in control, but there's no way he will ever pay a billion and a half dollars back. If we insist on seeing ourselves as the masters of our fate, there's no room for gratitude in the equation.

Week before last a police officer spoke to a bunch of people at our church about scams and things we can do to protect ourselves from getting cheated of our money. This week there was news regarding an enormous security breach at Equifax, the result of which is that probably a majority of us in this room had our personal account data stolen – our social security number, our birth date, stuff like that.



It can be pretty anxiety producing. We imagine somebody out there taking advantage of us akin to the way we imagined ourselves being the ripped off contractor, and so we spend a lot of time making sure we've done all we can to assure this doesn't happen to us.

But here's what most of us don't worry much about. Every time we get in our car and drive somewhere, there is a real possibility of something far worse happening than losing a third of our annual income. We drive down roads going 45 miles an hour or more with drivers in cars coming back at us at the same speed, trusting that we'll all stay on our own side of the little yellow line, when all it would take for a devastating accident to occur would be the slightest movement of the hand by ourselves or the drivers coming towards us.

But we think nothing of it.

I started reading this New Yorker article recently that was about people who had survived the experience of taking the life of another. It began by telling the story of a woman who by coincidence was a college student about the same time as me, attending a school just 45 minutes away from where I was at college. She described the moment everything changed. She was driving her car in the manner that most of us drive our cars a lot of the time – sort of on auto-pilot -- when suddenly there was this blur that came out of the corner of her eye as a child darted out into the road in front of her car. The child was killed.

I stopped reading. I simply couldn't go on. It was making me face the uncomfortable truth that I don't want to face which is that it could just as easily have been me driving that car back there in college. That would be pretty devastating, to say the least. I stand in awe of people who have survived such tragedy and found a way to go forward to embrace life. The fact that I haven't had to face such an ordeal hasn't been because my driving ability is superior. It's simply been my good fortune.



Understandably, we don't want to think about these things. But if we did, maybe we would get down on our knees and give thanks and praise to God right there in the parking lot of Costco every time we arrive safely.

I have a friend who recently experienced a significant, permanent drop in his family's income. If I were to experience a similar drop in income, I think I'd be freaking out, worrying about the future. I asked him how he was handling this. He was surprisingly calm about it. He related it to serious health issues he has dealt with in the past, and continues to deal with, which have led him to view life differently than I do. There were occasions in the past when he could easily have

died, but he didn't. The health challenges are ongoing. He has no certainty that he has a lot of time left in this world. Maybe, maybe not.

In this larger context, my friend views his drop in income as relatively small potatoes – another version of *“why sweat the small stuff?”* because he's looked the big stuff straight in the face. And so he's got this basic gratitude for being alive. He's grateful for each day he's able to wake up and get out of bed and greet a new day. The loss of income doesn't touch this underlying gratitude.

It's a matter of perspective, my friend said.

There was this Bill Moyers documentary I watched a few years back about World War II vets – pretty old guys who had survived the D-day invasion when they were just young men. Two things struck me. On the one hand, they had this basic awareness that there is so much we're not in control of in life – that thy myth of self-sufficiency and self-reliance that they had bought into before going to war didn't hold water. Life is scary sometimes, and macho posturing is the stuff of fools.

On the other hand, in the years following the war they had found themselves much less inclined to be afraid when it came to taking non-life-threatening risks. If they started a business and it went belly up, leading them to lose all their money – well, as they said, *“at least nobody is shooting bullets at me. I'm alive.”*

It's all a matter of perspective.

The recent hurricanes: A man loses his home. Understandably, he's devastated. But if in the course of the flood he thought that his wife or children had drowned, and then is relieved to find they hadn't, well, the loss of the house wouldn't seem like so much.



Perspective is the theme of the classic, *“It's a Wonderful Life.”* George Bailey is about to lose his business. He thinks it would be better if he had never been born. He's about to take his own life. Clarence the angel allows him to see what it would mean for him never to have been born, and it shakes George to the core.

The part we tend to remember from the movie is how he gets to see the positive impact he had on the town without realizing it. But a big part of what Clarence lets him see is simply how precious and beautiful his ordinary life is – the profound blessing it is to have people who know and love him, and whom he has been allowed to know and love as well. After seeing what he was about to lose in his wish to take his life, it doesn't really matter that his business is going bankrupt.

So in the end, it is all a matter of perspective, and the possibility exists in each moment of awakening to that deeper perspective -- to be set free from our own self-imposed prison of grudges and worries that sometimes it seems like we're destined to inhabit eternally.

In the end, maybe forgiveness wouldn't be so hard if we didn't deceive ourselves by thinking we are the master of our fates when in fact the deepest truth is that we have been given a great gift when God chose to give us life. Life can be very hard sometimes -- very painful -- but it is also exquisitely beautiful. It's a gift. We didn't earn this gift, nor can we pay this gift off. It is pure grace, and to grasp this is to find ourselves filled with gratitude – a gratitude that leaves no room for grudges, no room for making money our god. It only leaves room for love.

In the kindness of Jesus,
Pastor Jeff

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A new year of **Sunday School** is underway. We are grateful for our teachers: Lynn Barbarite, Carolyn Pasqua, Arlene Sklow, Deana Larsen and Lynn Agre; our youth helpers, Kaitlyn Sklow, Julia Sklow, and Cassie Cogan, and our superintendent, Newton Barreto.





United Methodist
Women

Looking back... Great tips and information from Ptl. Remo D;Alessandro from the Parsippany Police Department!

Next ... All church family women are invited to join us, and bring a friend, on.....

Wednesday, Oct. 4 – 7:00 p.m.
PROGRAM: "Where Is It?"
Presented By: The UMW Local Church Committee
Refreshments will be served

Oct. 9 – Columbus Day (obs)	Oct. 21 – Ham Dinner
	Oct. 31 - Halloween

GET WELL wishes to those of you who are ill, and
HAPPY BIRTHDAY to those of you celebrating this month with June Schnetzer.

God Bless,
Doris Bradley

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

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Pastor Jeff has a vision of creating **small groups** in our congregation of 6 – 8 people who would commit to meet for four weeks in a row. The object of the groups would be to provide an **intimate, safe setting** where persons can tell the stories of their lives -- their struggles, as well as their joys – and find mutual care and support, and to pray for one another. If this vision interests you, please speak to Jeff who is beginning to suggest possible groups of people.

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Laity Sunday is a special Sunday established by the General Conference to be observed on the third Sunday in October. It focuses on the celebration of the ministry of all lay Christians. In many local churches, Laity Sunday is observed by having lay persons lead all parts of the worship service. PUMC will observe **Laity Sunday on October 15**. If you would like to participate in any of the many facets of leading the worship service, please see Bob Keller or you may contact him by calling 973-887-4384 or email keller4384@aol.com.

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Pastor Jeff is putting the finishing touches on another **original Christmas play** that will be produced December 15th, 16th, and 17th or December 8th and 9th and 15th and 16th. Any adult, child or youth who is interested in being a part of the production is invited to help. In addition to the large cast of actors, there will be a need for help in a variety of other capacities as well.



Our church website has recently been updated by Pastor Jeff and Justin Cogan. Check it out at ParsippanyUMC.com. There you can find all of Pastor Jeff's sermons and eulogies, as well as the sermons of Bob Keller. You can also find all the newsletters, as well as a calendar that gives the times of events held at the church. You can also find a little church history, a listing of all the plays we've produced at the church, and a summary of the various church fellowship and mission groups.

If you aren't presently on **Facebook**, consider joining with a secret identity so you can be a member of the Parsippany United Methodist Church Congregation Group and received day by day prayer concerns and announcements and other postings regarding the life of our church.

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On the second Thursday of every other month our church provides a meal for the people living temporarily at **Homeless Solutions**. If you would like to volunteer as a server, please speak to Laurie Wilken or Connie Wallace. If you would like to help cook speak Tom or Justin. **Our next opportunity to serve is Thursday, October 12th.**

CHURCH CALENDAR and SCHEDULING EVENTS

The church calendar on our website 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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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, November 18th.** Please speak to Bruce Letsch or Pastor Jeff if you would like to volunteer

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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, Pat Winz or Andee Mihalko if you would like more information. Our next service is **October 18th.**

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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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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.



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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A **small gathering of men** from our church meet together **every Tuesday at 7:30 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

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Parsippany Emergency 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.

We received a letter from Gloria Wilson of the Office On Aging extending *“sincere gratitude for your very generous monetary donation and non-perishable food items... This donation will help us greatly to meet the ever-growing needs of families here in Parsippany who are suffering due to the current economic conditions.”*

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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.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR OCTOBER

Oct. 1	Oct. 8	Oct. 15	Oct. 22	Oct. 29
Exodus 17:1-7	Exodus 20:1-4,7-9,12-20	Exodus 32:1-14	Exodus 33:12-23	Deuteronomy 34:1-12
Philippians 2:1-13	Phil. 3:4b-14	Phil. 4:1-9	1 Thes. 1:1-10	1 Thes. 2:1-8
Matthew 21:23-32	Matthew 21:33-46	Matthew 22:1-14	Matthew 22:15-22	Matthew 22:34-46



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS			
1 st	Betsy O'Grady	12 th	Abigail Dadaian
1 st	Tyler Mortensen	12 th	Madilynn Dadaian
3 rd	Linda Routhier	14 th	Jahn Schnetzer
5 th	Spandan Patel	16 th	Mark Chauhan
6 th	Diane Anastasi	18 th	Donroy Gounaud
8 th	June Schnetzer	19 th	Brenden Laux
9 th	Jean Montecucollo	23 rd	Devin Bradley
9 th	Charles Nye	24 th	Carrie Correale
10 th	Keith Hawkins	25 th	Kathy Isaacks
10 th	Mae Lange	26 th	Muriel Christal
11 th	Bert Morris	30 th	Alyssa Letsch
12 th	Nicole Dadaian		

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES	
10 th	Kathy & Henry Isaacks
17 th	Rev. Jeff & Sarah Edwards
19 th	Jim & Karen Steen



We are collecting shoe boxes (regular size, not large like for sneakers) and items once again this year for Operation Christmas Child. Check with friends and co-workers as well for boxes. 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 12th**. 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.

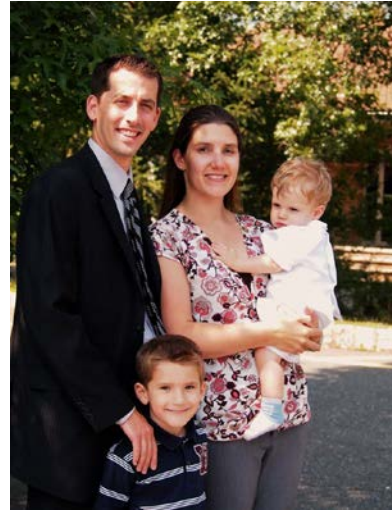
Non-Liquid Hygiene Items – toothbrushes, bar soap, combs, washcloths, etc.

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 – food; out of date candy; liquids or lotions; meds or vitamins; breakable items; aerosol cans.

On September 10th we rejoiced to receive three new members:

Michele and Chip Chaffee have two children: five year old Matthew and one year old Tommy. Chip was born in Lockhaven, Pa but grew up in Parsippany and as a part of our church where his parents Gary and Kathy were long-time active members. With his Dad serving as scoutmaster, Chip was heavily into scouts, attaining the level of Eagle Scout and hopes to be similarly involved with his own sons.



Michele was born and raised in Newton, NJ. She studied special education at Seton Hall University and has taught special needs students for the past thirteen years at Morris Knolls High School. She remains close to her mother Margaret who still lives in Newton, as well as her sister Summer who lives in Riverdale.

Chip studied marketing at Montclair State University and now works in behavior analytics to improve marketing efficiency. He enjoys all major sports, and competes in obstacle course races such as Spartan Race and Tough Mudder.

Chip and Michele lived in Little Falls before moving to Parsippany two years ago. Their son Matthew began kindergarten at Troy Hills School this past week. Michele enjoys cooking, reading and traveling. Both Chip and Michele have been struck by how welcoming and friendly everyone at our church has been, and appreciate the casual and comfortable spirit of community they have found here.

Chip's advice to a young person would be, "Don't be afraid to fail. Often the best lessons are learned in failure. Take what you learn and try again." Michele's advice: "Figure out what your passion is, and find a job that pays you to do it! Don't let anyone tell you it's not a 'real job.'" Chip's birthday is November 6th and Michele's is September 2nd.

Liz Matheis was born in Coney Island, living in Brooklyn until she was three, in Jersey City until the age of five, and then in Livingston until she was married in 2003 to her husband Rob. Liz and Rob met in graduate school at Fairleigh Dickinson where they were both pursuing PhDs in Clinical Psychology. They live in Parsippany with their three children: Jake, Abby and Ben. Liz has a private practice as a psychologist with a specialty in working with parents of children dealing with ADHD, autism, anxiety and learning disabilities. She has great love for being outside, especially at the beach or in the mountains. Liz enjoys crafts. She appreciates the laid back, accepting, loving, supportive atmosphere of our church, and her children have enjoyed being a part of the Christmas plays and playing bells. Liz's advice to a young person would be to "work hard, play hard, and be kind to yourself." Liz's birthday is May 10th.



Play A Game

You will need:

- 68 index cards or construction paper cut into 68 card-sized pieces.
- Marker
- Rubber band to keep your game together
- Bible



Prepare:

- Write "Old Testament" on a card. Write "New Testament" on a card.
- Write each of the 39 Old Testament books on a separate card.
- Write the 27 New Testament books on cards.



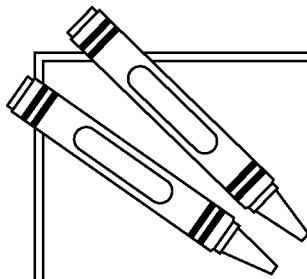
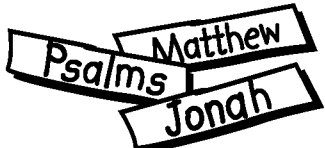
To Play:

Lay the "Old" and "New" Testament cards on the table. Shuffle the other cards well. Lay them face down on the table.

Draw a card and place it by the correct card – "Old" or "New."

Continue until all cards have been drawn. Check your Bible to see if you were correct!

For an added challenge – arrange the books in order!



Just for KIDS

The Old Testament

The Old Testament of the Bible contains the story of creation, history, words of prophets, God's law, songs, poems, stories of adventure and stories of love.

Find the books of the Old Testament hidden below. Use your Bible or the list below for the names. There are 39. You will find 3 books are listed 2 times each.

Find them → ← ↓ ↑ ↘ ↗

G	E	N	E	S	I	S	A	A	U	H	S	O	J	B	C
D	X	J	U	D	G	E	S	S	J	O	B	N	D	S	H
E	O	S	A	M	U	E	L	E	A	M	O	S	F	E	R
U	D	R	G	H	B	H	A	C	I	M	J	O	E	L	O
T	U	U	H	O	S	E	A	I	O	E	U	L	C	C	N
E	S	T	H	E	R	L	R	L	D	Z	L	E	C	I	I
R	P	H	J	A	E	Z	O	S	A	R	H	V	L	N	C
O	S	M	A	O	I	S	L	K	N	A	A	I	E	O	L
N	A	U	J	G	F	M	U	M	I	H	I	T	S	R	E
O	L	H	N	O	G	K	E	R	E	A	M	I	I	H	S
M	M	A	G	O	K	A	A	R	L	N	E	C	A	C	E
Y	S	N	P	A	Q	H	I	R	E	O	H	U	S	I	Z
S	O	T	B	U	C	V	W	X	Y	J	E	S	T	S	E
S	L	A	M	E	N	T	A	T	I	O	N	S	E	A	K
Z	H	A	Z	E	P	H	A	N	I	A	H	B	S	I	I
K	I	N	G	S	B	R	E	V	O	R	P	C	D	A	E
E	K	I	N	G	S	N	O	O	B	A	D	I	A	H	L
F	J	L	H	M	A	L	A	C	H	I	I	K	P	M	G

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, (1) Samuel, (2) Samuel, (1) Kings, (2) Kings, (1) Chronicles, (2) Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

October 2017

United Methodist Church of Parsippany

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
1 10:30 AM Worship	2	3 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast	4 7:00 PM UMW	5 7:00 PM Bell Choir 7:45 PM Adult Choir	6 1:00 PM Men's Discussion Group	7																																																																																																		
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