

HILLTOPPER

United Methodist Church of Parsippany

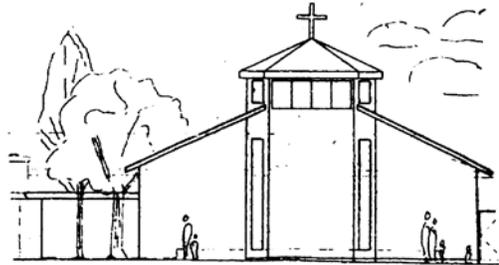
903 So. Beverwyck Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 887-4657

<http://www.parsippanyumc.com> E-Mail: jeffedwards1955@gmail.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, 2018

This September our worship time will continue at the 10 a.m. time that has been our custom during the summer months.

In the judgment of the Administrative Council this will allow us to enjoy a more relaxed atmosphere at the end of our worship service because we won't have to worry about making way for our Korean brothers and sisters who worship in our sanctuary after we do.



On **September 2nd** we will have our traditional "**Blessing of the Backpacks**" liturgy to help our children and youth (as well as teachers) prepare themselves spiritually for the beginning of a new school year.

On **September 8th** at 11 a.m. a **memorial service** will be held for **Heather Bostwick**.

On **September 9th** we will have our **first day of Sunday School**.



On **September 15th** we will have a church family **BBQ at noon** followed by a **concert by Tracy Booth**. Bring a dish to share. Meat will be provided. The concert is a fundraiser for our church.

On **September 16th** our **Administrative Council** will meet following worship.

On **September 23rd** we will **receive new members** during worship. *(Anyone who is interested in becoming a member of our church is invited to speak to Pastor Jeff.)*

On **September 30th** our church will have a table at the **Parsippany Street Festival** from 12 to 5 p.m.



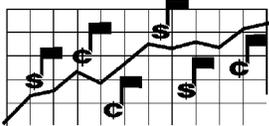
Annual Ham Dinner – Saturday, October 13th from 4-7.

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 3rd from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. If you are interested in a garage sale table, contact Barb or Connie.

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Financial NOTES

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 2. 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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From the
A sermon preached by Pastor Jeff on August 5th, 2018 based upon Ephesians 4:1-7; 11-15, following a week of rest and renewal, entitled “Full Time Ministry.”

So I want to start off by telling you “what I did on my summer vacation.” My wife Sarah has an ability to meet strangers out in public and quickly strike up an in depth conversation. Six months ago she was in this clothing shop and a woman was there trying on a dress. Sarah proceeded to offer some advice regarding what did and didn’t look good on her. One thing led to another and Sarah mentioned that she was married to a Methodist pastor, and the woman told her about a Christian organization she was a member of called “The Daughters and Sons of the King” – (mostly daughters.)

Apparently it’s been around for 130 years doing various service projects and one of the things they do is offer an all expenses paid for clergy renewal week in a beautiful summer community called Chautauqua on Lake Erie in western New York where they own a house.

Concerned about the fact that clergy spend so much time caring for others and often don’t get enough opportunity to be cared for, they host ten clergy with their spouses each summer. Chautauqua offers this wide range of cultural opportunities – lectures by authors, concerts, theater, as well as worship opportunities. Ordinarily it would be quite expensive to go to Chautauqua – beyond our budget – so this seemed like a gift fallen straight from heaven, so when Sarah came home and told me about it I went online and filled out an application and was happy to find out I was accepted.

So this past week from Saturday to Saturday Sarah and I relaxed, choosing from the myriad of offerings while Lori – a retired speech pathologist with the heart of a servant prepared



food for us and cleaned up after us – giving the other clergy and spouses opportunity to converse and reflect. It was pretty wonderful.

I will get back to Chautauqua in a moment, but first I want to tell a little story I once heard that I was reminded of by our scripture reading. Apparently Mother Theresa was in an airport once and one journalist in a crowd of journalists was being particularly obnoxious, calling out over and over, “Mother Theresa, are you a saint?!” Finally, she responded. “Yes I am. And so are you.” Which is to say, at our deepest nature, that is who we are created to be – people who shine the light of Christ.

In our reading from Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus Paul begins by emphasizing the unity that we are called to live out in the church. But then Paul goes on to say that though we are one, God has given us different gifts in order to serve different roles in the church. This verse in particular caught my attention:

“The gifts God gave were that some would be... pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...”

Who are the “saints”? We are the saints – you are the saints – we ordinary people Christ has called to be a part of his church.

Occasionally people will say to me in appreciation of the work pastors do, “pastors have the hardest job.” I appreciate the kindness of the sentiment, but I would say that the idea being expressed is wrong – or at least it should be wrong. As a pastor, Paul tells me that the setting of my ministry is the church – that my job is to equip you – supervise and support you — as you go about the work of ministry.



Typically the word “ministry” is misused. People refer to pastors and missionaries and such as being engaged in “full time ministry” with the implication that other Christians are only part timers.

But every follower of Jesus is called to full time ministry. My setting is the Church, but yours is out in the world, which is where Jesus was always found – with the “sinners and tax collectors” — to the dismay of the holy people.

I hear stories about churches that are full of dysfunction – demonically possessed in some sense – chewing up pastors and others by their toxicity and spitting them out. But you all aren’t one of those churches which one of the reasons I’ve stayed here for over 29 years. If a church really is Jesus’ Church than the love of God that he revealed has made inroads into our hearts, and though we are far from perfect and mess things up on a regular basis at least at our better moments we get it that love is the thing. To serve as I do as a pastor among people who get this is a lovely thing indeed.

But your full time ministry takes place primarily in this “hostile and hurting world” as our mission statement puts it, often among people who don’t get it that love is the thing.

Often when we think of being in ministry to this broken world we think of serving in hospitals and prisons or with the homeless and such, and these are certainly important Christ-like ministries. But what we often overlook is that whatever the work place you find yourselves in – that is your primary setting for ministry. And it can be a real challenge sometimes.

I’ve been talking to a number of people lately who describe workplaces – working in an office in a company perhaps – where people can be really brutal to one another sometimes. I hear about people taking the power and authority they’ve been given and using it to humiliate the employees beneath them. I hear about back-biting and dishonesty and gossip and work atmospheres that can wear a person down.



When you find yourself in such a setting, what would it mean for you to view your work as a ministry?

At Chautauqua a preacher talked about how when he was a 25 year old seminary student going through training to be a chaplain in a hospital, he had to deal with this profound sense of inadequacy. Who was he to think he had wisdom to share with people two or three times his age?

His supervisor said a helpful thing. *“Each time you put your hand on the doorknob to enter a hospital room,” he said, “say to yourself, ‘I am representing Christ.’”* His initial response was to feel even more inadequate, but as he thought about it he realized that this wasn’t about any personal wisdom he might bring to the table, but rather to the nature of God, who chooses to be present with fallible people like ourselves. He learned to inwardly surrender himself to the presence of God rather and let go of the pressure he felt to be wise and profound.

The preacher pointed out that this is the calling not just of pastors and chaplains but of all Christians.

What would it mean for you to think of your work place as your setting for ministry – a place to love people who at times can seem pretty unlovable?

This inward surrender won’t necessarily lead us to speak particular words about Christ as it will involve the manner in which we are present and the vibrations of love we give off.

One of the joys of the week was the opportunity to hear peoples’ stories. There was this African American pastor named Brenda who had tried to retire, but a local church had asked her to serve them. She told Sarah and I a story about how when she too at the age of 37 was undergoing the seminary training that places students in institutions to serve for a time as chaplains, her setting was an institution for severely handicapped adults – the sort of people my wife has worked with as a speech pathologists. Brenda described feeling at the outset totally thrown for a loss as to how she was supposed to be a chaplain to people who could barely understand language at all. But her supervisor challenged her, *“Go be their chaplain!”*

Eventually Brenda began to understand the language that is beyond words. She described this moment when this woman who weighed about three times as much as she did came and sat down in her lap, reaching down with her arms to take Brenda’s hands and wrap her arms around her. The woman had needed someone to rock her in their arms – to be a stand in for God – and she had sensed intuitively that Brenda was a woman from whom she could receive such a blessing.

Lori, our housemother at Chautauqua told a beautiful story from her days working as a speech pathologist. She describe making for the first time a house visit to the home of a little girl she was beginning to work with at her school. The girl lived with her mom in this broken down trailer park. Lori said that she wasn’t usually particularly sensitive to smells, but when she entered the trailer that was their home she was overwhelmed by the stench of urine and feces. They had a cat, and apparently the cat had been allowed to relieve itself freely in the house. The floor was covered with clutter. Lori managed to make space for her self to take a seat in a chair. On this occasion she happened to be better dressed than was her normal professional attire – she was wearing an expensive Pendleton skirt. The little girl immediately picked up the cat and placed it Lori’s lap, which in turn led the mother to yell at the little girl and yank the cat off her lap, which inspired the cat to place its claws into the fine wool of the skirt.



Lori was feeling overwhelmed with a sense of revulsion and a desire to flee, but suddenly she caught sight of a picture of Jesus that was lying among the clutter of the floor. And she remembered – I am here to serve Jesus, and inwardly she surrendered herself.

Lori went on to work with the little girl and in time the girl progressed nicely with Lori’s gentle affirmations and encouragement. Eventually the girl advanced in grade and Lori was no longer assigned to her for speech pathology.

The girl’s birthday came around and her mother said to her, *“You don’t have to go to school today. This is your special day. We’ll do whatever you want.”*

And what the little girl wanted was to go visit Lori. Which is what they did.

The words old Apostle Paul wrote to the ordinary saints that made up the church in Ephesus are addressed to us and a good way to wrap this up: *“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love...”*

In the kindness of Jesus,
Pastor Jeff

The **Reconciling Ministries Network** works within the **United Methodist Church** to advocate on behalf of full inclusion of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender people in the life of the church. Enthusiasm was expressed at our all-church brainstorming session held in May for our congregation **taking the step of officially becoming a "Reconciling Congregation."**

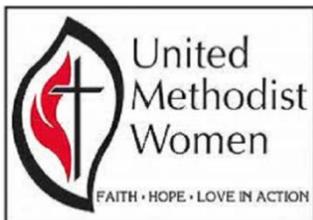
Unfortunately, far too often GLB&T persons have experienced a painful rejection from Christian Churches. As expressed in our mission statement of twenty years our congregation has a longstanding tradition of being welcoming and affirming of persons regardless of sexual orientation. Consequently, the primary significance of taking this step would be for our congregation to publicly align ourselves with the Reconciling Movement. The motivation to take this step at this time arises in large part by the fact that the worldwide United Methodist Church has been deeply divided over this issue. At the upcoming special General Conference in February of 2019 critical decisions will be made regarding official UMC policies effecting the inclusion of GLB&T persons.

An anonymous straw poll was held at the end of worship on June 10th and the results were overwhelmingly positive in regards to taking this step. At this point our tentative plan is to take an **official vote at our annual church conference** with our district superintendent present scheduled for **Thursday, October 25th**.

If any of you have concerns regarding this move I would be happy to meet with you privately to discuss them. It is very important to me that if we proceed with this vote that people have the opportunity to express their concerns and feel that they have been truly listened to.

In the Spirit of Christ our Lord,
Pastor Jeff

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Looking back... July & August Ladies' Nights Out were very well attended, and all enjoyed good food and fellowship. Thanks go to Connie Wallace and Laurie Wilken for hosting in July and the August hosting was done by Karen Wilk and Diane Anastasi. Since our summer break is over, please join us at our next program --
- All women of the church are invited, and bring a friend.....

Wednesday, September 5 –7:00 p.m.
PROGRAM: Care for the Caregiver
 By The Visiting Nurse Association
 Refreshments will be served

Sept. 3 – Labor Day	Sept. 11 – Patriot Day
Sept. 9 – Grandparent’s Day	Sept. 23 – 1 st Day of Fall
	Sept. 30 – Parsippany Street Festival

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

God Bless,
 Betsy Adams

Pastor Jeff has begun **writing the Christmas play** that is tentatively scheduled to be produced the weekend of December 14-16. Anyone of any age who would like to be in the play is invited to communicate their desire to Pastor Jeff *as soon as possible*.

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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.



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.

FACEBOOK LIVE – Pastor Jeff has recently done a few Facebook Live broadcasts of the service. We are looking for someone interested in helping with this endeavor. If you are interested in furthering the ministries of our church through Live broadcasts, please reach out to Pastor Jeff.

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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 Albert or Justin Cogan. Our next opportunity to serve is **Thursday, October 11th**.

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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 17th**. Please speak to Bruce Letsch or Pastor Jeff if you would like to volunteer

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Newton Barreto offers **free math tutoring to elementary school children** on Thursdays at 5:15 p.m. at the Lake Hiawatha Library and on Wednesdays at 5:45 p.m. at the Van Buren Branch Library in Newark. Please speak to Newton if you would to join him in serving young people in need.

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On the fourth Sunday of every month at 3 p.m. **Fred Mendez** leads a **worship service in a Nursing Home in Montclair**. Please speak to Fred if you would like to accompany him.

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 **Thursday, September 20th.**

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Anyone aware of a **Prayer Concern** is invited to contact Doris Bradley at 973-887-3219 who will put the **Prayer Chain** into action. If Doris 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.

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A 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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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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BORROWING CHURCH FURNITURE

We are very fortunate to have an honest and trusting congregation, and we are fortunate to be able to loan some tables and chairs to our church family as needed. Our supply of chairs is getting smaller and smaller and it is now necessary to keep a more accurate count of our equipment. Going forward if you would like to borrow chairs or tables from the church, please speak to one of the trustees. You will need to tell them what you are borrowing, how many of that item and when you will return the items. Our trustees are: Amy Gripp, Bob Laux, Connie Keller, Steve Blake, Tom Albert, Bill Gripp, and Ian Crawford. Thank you for your cooperation.

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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.



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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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 SEPTEMBER

<u>Sept. 2</u>	<u>Sept. 9</u>	<u>Sept. 16</u>	<u>Sept. 23</u>	<u>Sept. 30</u>
Song of Sol 2:8-13	Proverbs 22:1-2,8-9,22-23	Proverbs 1:20-33	Proverbs 31:10-31	Esther 7:1-6,9-10
James 1:17-27	James 2:1-10,14-17	James 3:1-12	James 3:13-4:3,7-8	James 5:13-20
Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23	Mark 7:24-37	Mark 8:27-38	Mark 9:30-37	Mark 9:38-50



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 st	Anna Larsen	9 th	Connie Wallace
1 st	Carissa Bramley	12 th	Jim Steen, Jr.
2 nd	Michelle Chaffee	12 th	Karina Barreto
3 rd	Amanda Piccolo	16 th	Ray Steen
4 th	Ryan Erickson	17 th	Sandy Bostwick
6 th	Anita Laux	19 th	Pat Winz
7 th	Paul Adams	22 nd	Jennifer DePietro
7 th	Michael Miloslavsky	27 th	Keith Anastasi
8 th	Connie Keller	28 th	Ben Chauhan
8 th	Michael Krisa	28 th	Glen Post
9 th	Greg Elbin	29 th	Vincent Bianchi
9 th	Betsy Adams	29 th	Mariahna Suzan

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

15 th	Ann & Charles Nye
28 th	Susan & Nick Valcoff

One Sunday during the summer a guitar-based band filled in for Barb. If you would be **interested in being a part of a church band** that occasionally offers music as a part of worship, please speak to Greg Elbin or Pastor Jeff.



Also during the summer Terry Germann gathered some of our youth together to perform a skit during worship that helped express the theme of the sermon. If you would like to be involved in being a part of **adding theater as a part of our worship**, please speak to Terry or Pastor Jeff.



Thanks to everyone for their contributions to the school supply drive for CUMAC, our Methodist Outreach in Paterson. We filled the car that came to pick up the supplies!

Name: _____ Date: _____

Back to School Word Search

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

SCHOOL	BOOKS	COMPUTERS
TEACHER	CRAYONS	PLAYGROUND
STUDENT	READING	CLASSROOM
DESK	MATH	BUS
PENCIL	SCIENCE	GYM
PAPER	ART	LUNCH
RULER	MUSIC	



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