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United Methodist Church of Parsippany

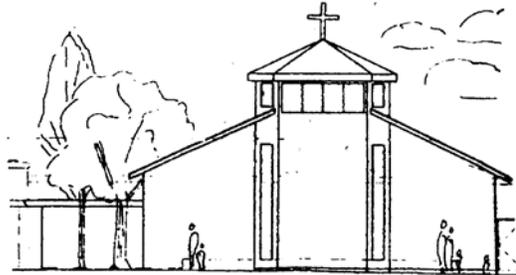
903 So. Beverwyck Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 887-4657

http://www.parsippanyumc.org E-Mail: jeffedwards1955@gmail.com

Sunday Worship Celebration: 10:00 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, 2018



Saturday, October 27th at 7 p.m. please join us for a **Movie Night** as together we watch "Will You Be My Neighbor?" the award winning documentary about Fred Rogers. Refreshments and discussion will follow. All are welcome. Invite your friends!

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The first read through of the Christmas Play will be Sunday, October 28th at 6 p.m. The second read through/rehearsal is Thursday, November 1st at 6:30 p.m. Anyone who would like to help with the production are invited to speak to Pastor Jeff. The performances will be December 14th, 15th and 16th.

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HAPPY APPLE BAZAAR – Saturday, November 3rd --- 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. Items can be brought to church on Friday, November 2nd, only.** 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.**

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Keep your eye out for a big feature article in the October edition of Parsippany Life on our church and in particular our Theater Ministry. If you have a copy and are done with it, please bring it to the church.



A sermon preached on September 30th, 2018 based upon James 5:13-20 entitled "Offering Our Hands to Jesus -- the Healing Power of Touch Offered in Love."

One reaction I had to this passage was to think how it can be used to provide fodder for some of the worst excesses of the TV evangelists: James reference to Elijah's prayers seeming bringing first drought and then rain conjured up Pat Robertson's claim of having sent a hurricane out to sea through his personal prayers. The certainty of the efficacy of prayer to bring healing that James seems to express calls to mind the sort of cruelty wrought in the name of Jesus that John Oliver called to attention to on his expose: TV evangelists telling people viewing them at home not to avail themselves to the help that modern medicine has to offer when they are diagnosed with cancer but rather to send their "seed" money to their TV ministry as expressions of faith that the televangelists assure them will bring a cure to their cancer. This is a particularly heinous form of sin.

But that's not what this passage is about. The deeper meaning of this passage is especially relevant now in this age of ever increasing isolation where people often find what little human connection they have from disembodied online "communities." James reminds us of the healing power of a flesh and blood community of people willing lovingly to be there for one another. He reminds us the importance of belonging to a community of people where a deep trust exists that allows us to be honest with one another, freely confessing our sins that we might experience forgiveness, to own our failures and flaws without the fear of abandonment. There is an expression in AA, "We're only as well as our secrets," which is to say that when we have secrets that we feel ashamed to share there is a kind of spiritual brokenness that cannot find healing. James reminds us that although there is no guarantee that we will receive what we pray for, that prayer as an expression of love is indeed extraordinarily powerful.



What the passage also invites us to be mindful of is the embodied nature of our existence. Sometimes the mind and body, or the soul and body are viewed as distinctly separate things, but a truly Biblical view of the human person reminds us that our bodies, minds and spirits are inseparable, and what effects our souls impacts our bodies, and what afflicts our bodies impacts our spirits.

And so James instructs us that if we feeling good to express our joy in the flesh and blood of our bodies through singing. And if we are sick, to call the elders of the church to gather around us anoint us with oil, laying their hands upon us in prayer. I am struck by the embrace of physicality expressed here: we need loving touch as a means to experience healing. When James speaks of "elders" I think a good way to think of such is of people with a well developed capacity for love, which means the capacity to set their egos aside to allow themselves to be channels of God's grace. In some instances, an elder could be a child.



Our "passing of the peace" is a crucial part of our liturgy, giving opportunity to use our bodies as instruments of mutual blessing, speaking one another's names aloud as we gaze directly into one another's eyes, exchanging either hand shakes or hugs as seems appropriate.

Recently we have been reminded of the destructive power of unwanted touch; specifically of sexual assault and it's capacity to leave psychic wounds that can last a life time, and so we need to be mindful to touch only when we have been granted permission to do so, and to be sensitive to the message conveyed both verbally and non-verbally regarding the desire of the other to be touched. But one of the unfortunate impacts of the sin of sexual assault as well as of the sin of homophobia is that

it creates an atmosphere where people are reluctant to touch at all. Men especially can be particularly guarded in offering loving touch to one another, and perhaps one of the attractions of sports is that it provides a socially acceptable avenue for men to hug other men.

All of us have a deep need to be touched lovingly. Most of us are familiar with the sad stories of orphans beginning their lives in understaffed orphanages, how their bodies fail to grow and their immune systems weakened, how their brains fail to develop and their capacity for bonding to others hampered for the rest of their lives. The story of the neonatal ICU Grandpa I spoke about with the children is so moving. He volunteers his time twice a week to do nothing other hold little premo babies and pour love into them, and what is particularly powerful regarding his testimony is that the healing power of love flows in both direction: the ICU Grandpa is blessed by his physical contact with the babies' skin.

It's foolish to imagine that just because we are "grown up" we no longer need to experience loving touch. I played a Ted Talk to the men recently in which a doctor argued that although much is gained by the technological advances of modern medicine, something is lost when in deference to these technologies the sacred ritual of an unrushed personal physical examination that includes touch often is neglected, and when this happens something crucial is lost.

A week ago Friday I went to Morristown Medical Center to visit Maidie before she underwent surgery. I met Jessica and Maidie's aunt in the waiting room while Maidie was being prepped and before long we were allowed to visit her. As we entered, various doctors and nursing staff, all with a demeanor of kindness and professional competency came and went quickly. We are fortunate to live so close to one of the best cancer hospitals in the country. The cancer center includes on their staff practitioners of what is called alternative medicine, and soon after we arrived a woman who does what is called "energy work" or therapeutic touch came by, her services having been requested by Maidie. Maidie introduced us all, and in order to make my positive attitude towards this woman's work clear I referred to it as another form of "prayer." The woman smiled and encouraged me to go ahead and offer my more traditional form of prayer as she preceded to do what she had come to do. We watched as with a clearly loving intent she began by gently touched Maidie after which she proceeded to slowly pass her hands six inches above Maidie's body in a very mindful way seeking to encourage the flow of energy through Maidie's body and "aura", the energy field that extends beyond a person's skin. Alternative medicine like this is often considered "pseudo science" which simply means its theory and practice hasn't undergone the rigorous scientific testing that traditional medicine requires, but there was no mistaking the fact that as this woman lovingly went about her work a great peace descended upon Maidie and all of us. Midway through the woman's energy work I clasped Maidie's hand and vocalized my Christian prayer. There was a rich sense of blessing present in the room. To go into surgery is anxiety inducing, but Maidie entered surgery that afternoon clearly calm and at peace.



Many times in the Gospels Jesus is described lovingly touching people. The little child he held in his arms when the disciples were being carried away with their worldly ambitions. The deaf man in whose ears Jesus placed his fingers. The woman with the flow of blood who came Jesus to touch him and in doing so, Jesus felt healing energies go forth from his body.

At the heart of the Gospel is the idea of incarnation – that in Jesus the Word became flesh. Together we now are the Body of Christ, which means among other things that we can offer our hands to Jesus to be his hands in this world.

On the third Thursday of every month Andee, Charlie, Pat and I go to the local nursing home where I lead a worship service for the wheelchair bound residents there. They put up with my preaching and such but what I think they really appreciate is what we do at the end. We go to

each person to pray over them, inviting the others present to pray along with us. We ask permission to touch them, and we offer our hands to Jesus, and I speak a prayer in response to their spoken needs. My impression is they hunger for this kind of loving touch – that it blessing them in body and spirit.

Sometimes touch can express love in a way that words cannot. One of my favorite spiritual writers is Parker Palmer. Parker has written about having undergone a couple of episodes of clinical depression in his life. He described the first time this occurred he was living in a Christian community. Many people expressed their love and concern for him, but some peoples' expressions were less helpful than others, indeed sometimes causing more harm than good. For people who don't understand how powerful the death grip of the dark cloud of depression can be at times, certain words meant to be encouraging can be leave the depressed person feeling simply all the more isolated and misunderstood.

Parker described one friend who was consistently a blessing during this period of time. He would stop by regularly for short visits late in the afternoon. He would speak very few words. Instead, his routine was to sit down in front of Parker, take off his shoes and socks and spend twenty minutes massaging Parker's feet. This simple Christ like act moved Parker deeply.



If you were present for the memorial service for Justin's twin brother John I expect you were struck as I was of the mystery of the distinctive paths lives can take. Although John had a deep capacity for love, loyalty and courage, for reasons often beyond his control in John's life led him overtime to an increasingly isolated place, with his primary connection to others being through the internet. Justin, in contrast has a wife and five children who give him lots of hugs and other expressions of love that include a wife nagging him to make healthy food choices, and a church family that adds another layer of love and hugs and prayers and blessing. It all registers in the body and the soul.

This afternoon our church will once again have a table at the Parsippany Street Festival. Inspired by this passage, I've printed out a sign that says, "If you would like to have a pastor pray for a concern for a loved one, or for yourself, please stop by." I suspect there are people passing by who are carrying burdens for others and for themselves who will (if they can overcome their self-consciousness) stop by and allow me to hold their hand as I pray for whatever it is that is troubling them. Feel free to stop by and join me. There is a great hunger in this world for loving, prayerful touch.

In the kindness of Jesus,
Pastor Jeff

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HANGING OF THE GREENS - We will be decorating the church building and grounds for the Christmas season on **Saturday, Dec 1 beginning at 10:00 am**. We will be decorating outside the front of the church, the narthex, fellowship hall, and the sanctuary. If we have enough help, we can put up 3 Christmas trees too! New ideas are always welcome, just email me to discuss. So please join us, for a morning of Christmas caroling and decorating. Morning refreshments will be provided! If you have any questions, please reach out to me, Connie Keller 973-568-5404 or connie@mhmlender.com

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Schlosshauer.

A big thank you to all the people who helped us this summer with PUMC summer child care. Thanks to Anna Egorova, the Cogan Family, Hetal Patel, Aimee Letsch, Nancy Polen McAllister, Michele Chafee, Terry Germann, Jean Sakelakos, Tracy Booth, Pauline Vander Vrede, Betty Polen and Fred



Looking back...the men from the Parsippany Rescue and Recovery Program gave us a new appreciation for the work that they do for all of us.

All women of the church are invited to join us.....

Wednesday, November 7 – 7:00 p.m.
PROGRAM: **Budget/Pledge/Program Planning/
Nominations**

Refreshments will be served

Nov. 3 – Happy Apple Bazaar	Nov. 12 – Veteran’s Day (obs)
Nov. 4 – Daylight Savings Time Ends	Nov. 22 – Thanksgiving
Nov. 6 – Election Day	

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,
Betsy Adams

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A NOTE FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE...

“He instructed them to take nothing for the journey but a walking stick – no food, no sack, no money in their belts.” (MARK 6:8)

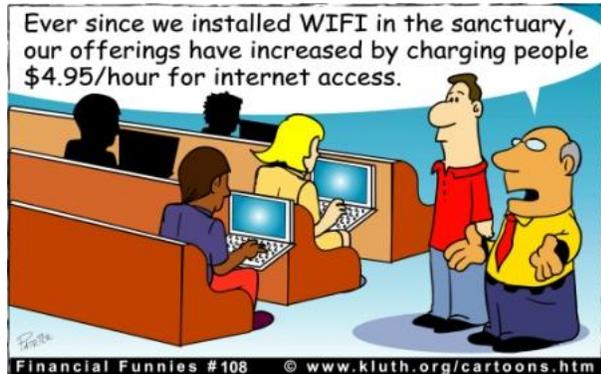
How different we are from the Apostles who took nothing when they ventured out to serve God. Today, we make our life’s journey more difficult because of all the material baggage that we drag along. When we really put God first in everything and put money and possessions second, we experience more freedom to joyfully serve God and others.

November 18th will be our Stewardship Sunday. It’s easy to understand the definition of stewardship. The hard part is living it! As we each look at our individual budgets to determine what our pledges of giving will be we will combine practical considerations with our aspirations about what we can do as a church. How do you see our church in 2019? What part(s) do you see yourself playing?

He gives us the resources we need to do His work. However, do we listen to God when He calls? Do we get up on our feet and use our talent to do the work He asks of us? You will be receiving the church’s Stewardship letter along with a pledge card in November. We ask for you to pray on how you can serve and support the church in 2019.

Sincerely,

Paul Adams
Chair Stewardship



CHURCH CALENDAR and SCHEDULING EVENTS

The church calendar on our website www.parsippanyumc.org 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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Our church website has recently been updated by Pastor Jeff, Justin Cogan and Eric Christiango. Check it out at ParsippanyUMC.org. 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.



Parsippany United Methodist Church is now on Instagram. To find us, search - Parsippany_umc

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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, December 13th**.

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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, November 15th.**

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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 and Credit Card 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 NOVEMBER

<u>Nov. 4</u>	<u>Nov. 11</u>	<u>Nov. 18</u>	<u>Nov. 25</u>
Ruth 1:1-18	Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17	1 Samuel 1:4-20	2 Samuel 23:1-7
Hebrews 9:11-14	Hebrews 9:24-28	Hebrews 10:11-14,19-25	Revelation 1:4b-8
Mark 12:28-34	Mark 12:38-44	Mark 13:1-8	John 18:33-37



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 st	Andrew Letsch	19 th	Dawn Barhite
2 nd	Richard Dierbach	20 th	Rachel Elbin
6 th	Chip Chaffee	20 th	Bob Laux
7 th	Tom Smith	22 nd	Janet Chauhan
7 th	Maya Baretto	22 nd	Pauline Vande Vrede
9 th	George Hawkins, Jr.	23 rd	Shawn Beckler
10 th	Shane Petzinger	24 th	Dan Kinsley
13 th	Carolyn Pasqua	24 th	David Kinsley
14 th	Bart Routhier	25 th	Navnit Patelia
16 th	Pastor Jeff Edwards	26 th	Anita Baldwin
17 th	Joanne Rich	29 th	Garret Belanus
18 th	Joshua Gropper	30 th	Russ Schnetzer
19 th	Ann Nye	30 th	Marissa Cogan

November 2018

United Methodist Church of Parsippany

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																									
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