



## **Palm Sunday Music**

On April 14, 2019, the Wesley Bell Choir, Cantata Choir, and Praise Dance Team joined together to lead the church in a day of worship. The day was highlighted by a Palm Sunday Cantata of Joel Raney's arrangement of Sydney Carter's hymn, "Lord of the Dance." More than 180 were in attendance that Sunday, and many were blessed by the powerful musical expression of the Gospel story.

Photos taken by Andrew Chang from the Palm Sunday Music performance.



## **Wesley United Methodist Church**

### **Vision Statement**

We are deeply passionate emissaries of Christ's love to our neighborhood and the world.

### **Mark Your Calendar For May**

- 4 Stephen Minister Class Begins (20 weeks)
- 10 Wesley Word Deadline
- 12 Mother's Day Breakfast served by Men's Club
- 19 Children's Sunday
- 21 Road Runners Trip to Doolan's in Spring Lake

## Pastor's Corner



*Amy was baptized on April 7, 2019 by her grandfather Rev. Dr. Sehyoung Lee.*

What if she kicks? What if she cries? What if, God forbid, she bites me or my Dad in front of everyone (again)? These are the questions swirling through my head as I anticipated the baptism of my daughter, Amy. Don't get me wrong - she is absolutely a joy in my life, but like most four-year-olds, she's an unpredictable ticking time-bomb that could explode in giggles or growls without any warning. The thought of cold water poured over her head and more than a hundred people watching (who may be later called to testify to the assault charges against her) is a terrifying one.

The night before Amy's baptism, after putting the kids to bed, my Dad and I got to sit down and talk about my baptism many years ago at the church my Dad pastored in the Bronx, when I was a few months old. He told me that I wouldn't stop screaming and crying my entire baptism, that he and mom were completely embarrassed, and that the entire congregation lovingly laughed the entire time. This for some reason gave me relief - that somehow Amy's baptism couldn't be worse than mine.

So, why are we willingly giving ourselves over to this tradition (or terror) that millions of other parents have before us? Jesus was baptized (Matthew 3) and calls us as a church to baptize people of all nations (Matthew 28). Jesus specifically calls us to prioritize the presence of little children (Matthew 19). But, I think baptizing children in all its terrifying unpredictability, reminds me of another essential spiritual truth: **The Spirit of God moves in the unexpected**, and in every moment of life both planned and unplanned, giggles and growls, God wants to be there. God is not interested in well-rehearsed faith where we put on our best suits and best manners. God is interested in an unscripted, authentic, kicking, crying, laughing faith that displays God's grace in the midst of our messiness.

And however Amy decides to react, I told myself, we as her parents and the congregation committed to growing with her in faith are reminded that her baptism is not an event, it's a process. This won't be the only time when God is moving in her life and she feels like kicking, crying or biting. She has kindergarten, an awkward adolescence, the college years, and perhaps one day her own children to experience the wonderful challenge of discipleship. Yet, I have faith that, like the many children baptized before her, when the water flows down her face she will be comforted by the voices of God's people reciting in unison: "We will surround you with a community of love and forgiveness, that you may grow in your trust of God, and be found faithful in your service to others. We will pray for you, that you may be a true disciple who walks in the way that leads to life (United Methodist Baptism Liturgy).

I'm so glad that we are together in the journey.

Pastor James

# A New Connectionalism

By Bishop John Schol

From *The Bishop's Relay Column* of April 2019



You know how well people are connected with each other by how they engage during challenging issues.

*Do the people try to convince each other of their point of view?*

*Do they move to problem solving?*

*Do they immediately go to the "rules" that govern the relationship?*

Each of these tactics weakens the connection people have with each other. These tactics lower trust, reinforce barriers, and narrow the opportunities for a transformative engagement where everyone grows and develops together and individually.

Jesus most often used a different engagement. He became curious. He asked questions. He took a genuine interest in the individual's well-being. Jesus had an outward mindset.

Organizations, particularly large and diverse organizations, often try to address challenges through new policies, or task forces to solve problems, or members of the organization campaign to convince others they are "right." These tactics were evident in The United Methodist Church at our General Conference in March.

Today I begin a three-part series about turning the church outward to engage our deepest challenge. We will look at:

- Outward vision
- Outward conversations
- Outward engagement

## Outward Vision

The church is outwardly nice, but we don't necessarily have an outward vision. We care about people in ways that make us comfortable. Outwardly nice is not the Gospel. In fact, it is sinful. We are nice as long as it fits into our needs rather than being engaged in what the world needs. Outwardly nice does things to make ourselves feel good.

Having an outward vision means we do things to praise God and see and serve others from the needs they identify. We serve the poor or youth or other groups with what we think they need rather than asking them what they need. I may be committing heresy, but I believe that it might be better to say, "Do unto others as they want done," rather than "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Let's unpack this for a moment through the lens of our current context.

The most recent General Conference session was called to find a way forward on our controversy concerning the church's policies about engaging with and using the gifts of the LGBTQ community. Many of those involved at General Conference focused inward. The conversations, concerns and the results were inward. People took stands on one side or the other, they campaigned and they proposed new rules. The result was a policy change to address an inward vision. The policy change maintained the current exclusion of lesbian and gay people from ordination and marriage in our churches and added clear, direct and harsher punishment for those who do not follow our Book of Discipline. This led to a church that is now more polarized and inwardly focused than prior to the General Conference.

The mandate for this particular General Conference was to find a way forward that would recognize contextual differences and unify us for the mission. Instead, the action of General Conference adhered to the policies already in place and disregarded context and diversity of thought.

Another and even more damaging failure was our witness to the world. The world did not hear or witness what it means to be the body of Christ. At General Conference, people did not follow the rules, voted illegally, and knowingly approved unconstitutional legislation. Protesters proclaimed they would not follow our policies. The world is confused by The United Methodist Church. The world perceives that we are fractured around our love for God and one another, inwardly focused, discriminatory, unable to live in unity.

Taking on an outward vision will be the first step to healing. Rather than continuing to try to change each other and policy, we need to refocus ourselves on God and those in our communities. I am convinced the way forward will require an outward vision and a focus on those in our communities and in the world around us.

There is a difference between being outwardly nice and outward vision. Outwardly nice is being nice to others but still focusing on our needs. For example, outwardly nice is buying a cake for a coworker's birthday for an office celebration, but making sure it's a chocolate cake because that's your personal favorite. While you are doing something nice for another person, you are more concerned about your enjoyment than the enjoyment of the one being celebrated.

Many advocates of the Traditional Plan and the One Church Plan are so deep inside their position that they can barely see each other except in the harshest and most divisive ways. They make statements that they love the other side, but these statements are like birthday cakes that are the flavor we desire. Both groups claim Jesus, but I am not sure Jesus is claiming us right now.

Most of those with Christ-like hearts who advocate for the Traditional Plan are not saying they hate or despise the LGBTQ community. Instead they are telling us to be faithful to God. They hold and live by a traditional view of the Bible. They believe if the denomination does not follow the Bible on this

matter, they will bring the judgement and condemnation of God upon The United Methodist Church and weaken our mission to serve God by making disciples and transforming the world.

Most of those with Christ-like hearts who advocate for the One Church Plan are not saying they hate traditionalists or despise traditionalists. They are saying that for us to be faithful to scripture, we need to allow room for difference on this matter. They feel by not welcoming all, we weaken our mission to serve God by making disciples and transforming the world.

An outward vision is essential to be more like Jesus, to be more effective in sharing the Gospel in the world. I believe our vision in the midst of our current difference is to renew the church so that it has an outward vision like Jesus demonstrated. I believe this calls for us to renew everything.

- **Renew our mind and heart** from an inward to an outward mindset that has the mind of Christ so that we are completely focused on God and the people in our communities.
- **Renew our mission** from being outwardly nice to knowing the mind of Christ for our church and knowing the mind of those in the community. What are their hopes for the ministry and mission of the church in the community? How can we serve to praise God by being in authentic connection and engagement with the people in our community?
- **Renew our policy** from being focused on the institution and the preservation of the denomination, to reorienting every aspect of our Book of Discipline to focus on how to turn the church, its bishops, superintendents, clergy, lay leadership, lay servants, general church agencies, conference agencies and congregations toward the community and mission.

This is not to say that we are not focused outwardly; it is to say that we are more often outwardly nice rather than outwardly Christ. If

we became outwardly Christ, the world would fall more in love with Jesus.

Think about what would happen if we became a denomination that the people of the world said, "This is a church turned outward. This is a church that has the world's best interest at heart."



## Springtime

Springtime, springtime, blest season of the  
year  
Awaking us from winter's slumber. Bringing  
hope and cheer.  
We watch the rain as it falls drop by drop  
Loving it yet often hoping it would stop.

Springtime, springtime, making us happy and  
gay  
With hope in our hearts we watch every day.  
The forsythias bloom shedding their bright  
yellow light  
Too soon they fall away but our hearts are  
warm to stay.

Azaleas come along bringing color and light  
blooming for a while saying  
My brightness is here to make you smile, for  
soon I must go away.  
Lillies bloom in pastures everywhere  
Reminding us of God's tender loving care.

How he awakens them and clothes them with  
beauty and splendor.

Next time, we will look at the outward  
conversations that move us to being the  
church in which the people outside the church  
see Jesus.

Keep the faith!

Bishop John Schol  
United Methodists of Greater New Jersey



They gladden our hearts and fill the earth with  
their fragrance everywhere,  
Even smiling in candor.

The trees bud and blossom, each twig sends  
forth new leaves.  
Soon all is changed from dark brown to bright  
green.

Our eyes beam with delight by what we have  
seen.  
The green grass on the ground cushions our  
feet  
As we dare to trod upon it with steps that  
retreat.  
The birds fly to and fro as they go singing songs  
of praise  
To Him who enables them, too.

The lilacs bloom purple and bright.  
Enjoy me now. They say I am not here to stay.  
I'll be gone as soon as day turns to night,  
Leaving sweet fragrance along the way.  
Saying Goodbye,  
I will be back again someday!

By Rosalind Fraser  
Submitted by L Wanzer

## Stephen Minister Training

Do you hear God's calling to make a difference in the lives of others? One of the highest callings in the life of the church is to "feed my sheep" (John 21:17), and that is exactly what Stephen Ministers do.

Stephen Ministers are congregation members who are trained to offer high-quality, one-to-one Christian care to people going through crisis or transition. In life situations such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, the Stephen Minister visits once a week to offer a listening ear and give confidential, compassionate support.

We will begin training our fourth class of Stephen Ministers on **May 4, 2019**. This is a Christ-centered experience that equips participants with essential caring and relating skills. Participants will learn how to listen to, care for, and walk with those going through difficult times in life.

The training:

- Runs for 20 weeks, totaling 50 hours
- Will be on Saturday mornings 10:00am to 12:30pm
- Has a one-time fee of \$50.00 to cover books and supplies
- Concludes with a Commissioning Service on September 15, 2019

The training you receive will enable you to know how to help while still being genuine and to connect you with a network of other Stephen Ministers who will guide you in your journey as a caregiver. You will be blessed and strengthened by God who is the cure-giver to all. Go to [stephenministires.org](http://stephenministires.org) for more information.

To sign up for the training, please reach out to one of our Stephen Leaders today:

Pastor James Lee ([pastor@wumcsp.org](mailto:pastor@wumcsp.org))

Kathy Winner ([kjwinner49@gmail.com](mailto:kjwinner49@gmail.com))

Annette Clervoix ([amclervoix@aol.com](mailto:amclervoix@aol.com))

Thank you for considering Stephen Ministry. We ask that you think and pray about joining this fulfilling and life changing ministry.

Together in the journey,  
Your Stephen Ministers and Leaders

## Wesley Men's Club 2019 Scholarship Awards



Applications are available in the Narthex or from a Men's Club member. All applications must be returned **no later than June 2, 2019**, to a Men's Club member.

The Scholarships will be awarded on **Father's Day, June 16, 2019**, during the 10:30am worship service.

## Sunday School Calendar

Events coming up in the life of our Sunday School students --

May 19 – Children's Sunday

May 26 – Mission Project

June 30 – Lemonade Stand



**July 8-12, 2019**

Our theme this year is: *To Mars and Beyond*. Our children and youth are invited on a space travel adventure to explore where God's power can take them. Along our journey they will discover a new realm of possibilities as they reach for the stars and encounter the limitless power and love of God.

## Ignite 2019 – October 4-6

All Youth in Grades 6-12, please put these dates on your calendar. Ignite Youth Conference will be held that weekend at the Wildwood Convention Center, Wildwood, NJ. Ignite is more than a conference, music and speakers, it's about a generation united for Jesus Christ hosted by the United Methodist Church of Greater New Jersey.

Registration begins April 1, 2019. We need to know if you want to attend by April 28, so we can arrange housing and transportation. If you have any questions, talk to Laura Conrad or Michelle Biggs.



## Road Runner Trip

Road Runners invites Wesley members and friends to join us on **Tuesday, May 21**, for a trip to Doolan's in Spring Lake, NJ. The cost is \$98/person and includes a family-style luncheon (pot roast, turkey, or salmon), a show, round-trip bus transportation, and all taxes and gratuities. The show is "STAND, DON'T KNEEL," and is a musical tribute to our Veterans and Armed Services.

The bus loads at Wesley Church at 9:30 am and returns by approximately 3:30 pm.

For more information contact Dick Petrone at 908-757-7107.

## UMW Events

I regret that the first thing I have to report is that **there will not be a Mother's Day Tea this year**. Unfortunately, there was a serious mix-up in the date of our tea and we cannot change it to a suitable time in May. We are hoping to have some other get-together if it can be arranged later in the spring or in the early summer. We will let you know as soon as we can. Keep looking for word on plans.

\* **Father's Day Breakfast** will be on June 16. It's not just for fathers. Come and bring your appetites.

\* **General Meeting in November** is on November 30. We will have a cup of coffee to get us going, then we will decorate Fellowship Hall. After our work is done, we will have a short (and I mean short) business meeting. We really could use all the hands we can get.

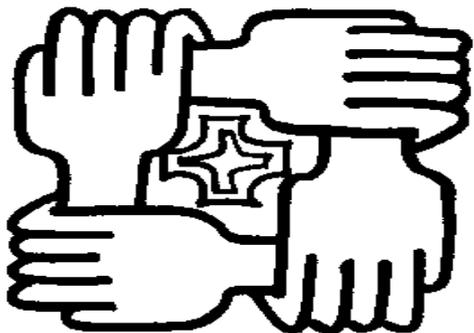
\* **Someday Group** meets on the first Wednesday monthly, weather permitting. A light supper is provided by one of our members. We then talk, knit, crochet or discuss important issues in the church. If you have a hobby you can work on, we even do that.

\* **Grasshoppers** meet on the first Monday of each month at 7:30pm. We do a devotion, a little business and we have an interesting program, Then we have dessert. Great Fellowship. See Debbie for info.

\* **Candeliers** meet on the third Tuesday monthly at 11am. Bring a sandwich and get some dessert. See Sonja Black for info.

**God loves you and so do I**

Donna Rowlands



# DOING MISSION TOGETHER

## Hygiene Kits for UMCOR

**Please support the Sunday School's May Mission Project. We will be assembling Hygiene Kits for UMCOR.** Hygiene kits provide basic necessities to people who have been forced to leave their homes because of human conflict or natural disaster. Hygiene kits are also used as learning tools in personal hygiene, literacy, nutrition, and cooking classes.

### Hygiene Kit Materials

- One hand towel (15 x 25 –17 x 27 inches). No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels
- One washcloth. No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels
- One comb. Must be sturdy with at least 6 inches of teeth. No pocket combs or picks. Rattail and combs without handles are acceptable but must have at least 6 inches of teeth
- One toenail or fingernail clipper. No emery boards or metal nail files
- Bath-size soap (3 oz. bar or larger). No Ivory or Jergen's soap. Do not remove from packaging
- One adult toothbrush. Do not remove from packaging. Personal advertising not acceptable
- 10 adhesive bandages (¾ by 3 inches). Common household bandages acceptable

**The Sunday School students appreciate all donations of any of the above. A Collection Box will be set up in Fellowship Hall starting April 28th.**

## Another Matching Opportunity Coming in June



The Sunday School will be doing its annual Lemonade Stand Fundraiser on June 30<sup>th</sup> to raise funds for the Nyagidha Education Center. We will be selling lemonade and Sunday School-made cookies. We may be trying out some new recipes this year that promise to be tasty.

The Mission Team would like to match the profits and any monetary donations that may come in from the congregation up to \$500.00.

Efforts by the Sunday School in the past have always received great support and we are looking forward to continued success.

# An Afternoon of Blessings

On Friday, April 5, Laura and I had the privilege of attending the Drew University Benefactors' Luncheon and Day of Scholars. The Harris Memorial Trust Fund was established in 1966 and includes an annual scholarship distribution to the Drew School of Theology to support a student interested in pastoral ministry. Each year, the Harris Memorial Trust Fund Trustees receive invitations to several Drew University events. The students and school associates find it meaningful and supportive to receive personal contact with the donors.

At our luncheon table were Professor Johnnie, and three individuals working towards their Masters of Divinity – the same degree our dear Lark McCalman completed last spring. We were especially blessed to have Dean Javier Viera at our table. It was a truly delightful time of learning and sharing across such a diverse mix of people. Dean Javier sends his appreciation and blessings to our congregation.

Archie, one of the students, shared that his whole family is very involved in the world of music. One daughter is on Broadway in the Lion King and another is in various TV children's shows and doing voice overs. Archie teaches music in several locations.

Joanne is looking to make a career change to become a pastor in the Baptist Church. She shared the eye-opening experience gained in her cross-cultural appointment to a Native American congregation in southern NJ. This congregation has blended their ancestral beliefs with Christianity and being involved with them has broadened and reshaped her thinking.

Peter Karanje is the 2019 Walter and Mabel Harris Scholarship recipient. Peter is from Kenya and was involved in helping Syrian migrants in Germany. He hopes to bring a special ministry to migrants, possibly in the southwestern US.

Surprise! Some of you may already know Peter. He led the outdoor games at our VBS last

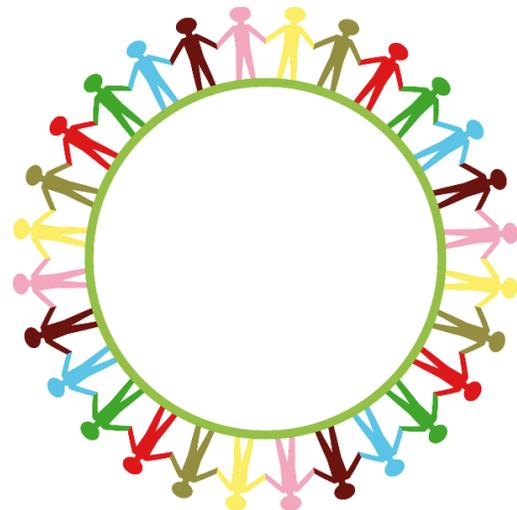
summer! Peter looks forward to visiting us. And do any of you remember Mary Mugambi's mother, Penina Otieno? Peter had heard of her husband, who was a bishop in Kenya. It is a small world, isn't it? Together, we were able to share about Nyagihda Village, Homa Bay, the need for clean water, the problems caused by water lilies, and other Kenyan life experiences.

After the luncheon, we heard the keynote speaker, M. Teresa Ruiz, President Pro Tempore of the NJ Senate and a Drew alum. She spoke passionately on the value of a good education and shared stories of the challenges she has faced growing up in Newark and how that focuses her to make a difference for others.

Throughout the afternoon, the student body proudly shared many arts and science projects on exhibit, as well as musical performances.

It was a real blessing to be able to see the diversity of thought, the keen desire for learning, and the passions for such a broad range of ministries that these people represent. It is people like these who will lead our society forward to better accomplish God's vision.

And His people say, AMEN  
Dean Livingston



!!

# The Past Presents Itself

Compiled by Karen Hochman

Recently, our church building was vandalized in search of valuables. Although nothing was determined to be stolen, there was damage done to the building itself. The large safe in the basement which stored many documents was breached. Luckily, the thieves found no value in these and gave us the discovery of records not seen in many, many years.

As church historian, I found great interest in the following history of South Plainfield documented in one of the scrapbooks in the safe. Unfortunately, the author did not take credit for his or her work.

I hope you will enjoy reading about our town's history here and in future issues of Wesley Word.

## History of South Plainfield

### Chapter 2

Almost simultaneously with the Quaker settlement was the influx of Baptists from New England. The Baptist congregation today is the oldest existing organization in our Borough. It is interesting to note that while the Quakers and the Baptists settled in this area, the Quakers gradually moved their headquarters from Woodbridge to Plainfield and the Baptists gradually established a permanent headquarters here having previously had headquarters in Scotch Plains and Piscataway.



The original Baptist Church was built in Sampton in 1792. The original building having been razed by fire, the present structure was built in New Brooklyn in 1879.



The next major event in the history of our community was the Revolutionary War. In June 1777 the Continental troops under General Washington came perilously close to being captured by Lord Howe and Lord Cornwallis. The Red Coats, camped in New Market, tried by a series of strategic moves to dislodge General Washington from his vantage point in the Watchung Mountains. Howe and Cornwallis moved their troops through Tow Town in an effort to have Washington pursue them. History tells us that arms and other supplies were hidden from the British in private homes that are still standing in the Borough today.



Many of the old homes of the Borough were built of lime and red sand stone foundations, hand hewn timber and handmade wooden pegs. Some of these pre-1800 homes still stand on the same roads that were main thoroughfares of that day; New Market Road, Samptown Road, and Oak Tree Road.

(more next month)

# May 2019

## Lay Participants

	5	12 Mother's Day	19 Children's Sunday	26
<b>Liturgist</b>	Donna Rowlands	Trish Boyce		Vivian Caramanna
<b>Counters</b>	Calvin Davis Patti Taber Steve Fulton (data entry)	Ron Winner Bob Smith Don Palmer (data entry)	Connie Palmer Dick Petrone Amy Fulton (data entry)	Dave Walter Ellie Wilson Lynne Yates (data entry)
<b>Ushers</b>	Mike Lamberson Len Rowlands Bob Smith Patti Taber	Howard Boyce Trish Boyce Faith Mworia Geoff Mworia	Nathan Enwerekowe Lisa McCall Dick Petrone Gloria Petrone	Debbie Apgar Dottie Ewing Betty Fulton Arlene Ritchie
<b>Fellowship Pads</b>	Patti Taber	Trish Boyce	Lisa McCall	Betty Fulton
<b>Nursery</b>	Josephine Ofunwa	Amy Fulton	Denise Horan	Lynn Lamberson
<b>Children's Chat</b>	Pastor James	Karen Hochman	Cindy GaNun	Laura Conrad

Trustee of the Month – Fred Ayers



# May 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b> 6:00pm Someday Group 7:00pm Mission/Outreach 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>2</b> 10:00am Knit & Kneel 7:30pm AA 7:30pm Wesley Ringers	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 9:30am Prayer Meeting 10:00am Gospel Choir 10:00am Stephen Ministry Training
<b>5 Native American Ministries</b> 9:00am Contemporary Service 10:30am Traditional Service/Church School 12:00pm Trustees 12:00pm Sunday School Teachers 12:00pm Nominations 12:30pm Girl Scouts 7:00pm Youth Group	<b>6</b> 12:00pm AA 7:30pm Grasshoppers 7:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>7</b> 10:00am Bible Study 7:00pm Tuesday Night Bible Study	<b>8</b> 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>9</b> 10:00am Knit & Kneel 7:30pm AA 7:30pm Wesley Ringers	<b>10 Wesley Word Deadline</b>	<b>11</b> 10:00am Gospel Choir 10:00am Stephen Ministry Training 12:30pm Boy Scout Court of Honor
<b>12 Mother's Day</b> 8:30am Men's Club Breakfast 9:00am Contemporary Service 10:30am Traditional Service/Church School	<b>13</b> 12:00pm AA 7:00pm Stephen Ministry 7:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>14</b> 10:00am Bible Study 7:30pm Finance	<b>15</b> 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>16</b> 10:00am Knit & Kneel 7:30pm AA 7:30pm Wesley Ringers	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 9:30am Prayer Meeting 10:00am Gospel Choir 10:00am Stephen Ministry Training
<b>19 Children's Sunday</b> 9:00am Men's Club 9:00am Contemporary Service 10:30am Traditional Service 12:00pm Evangelism 7:00pm Youth Group	<b>20</b> 12:00pm AA 7:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>21</b> 10:00am Bible Study 11:30am Candeliers 7:00pm Tuesday Night Bible Study	<b>22</b> 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>23</b> 10:00am Knit & Kneel 7:30pm AA 7:30pm Wesley Ringers	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 10:00am Gospel Choir 10:00am Stephen Ministry Training
<b>Annual Conference May 19 - 21</b>						
<b>26</b> 9:00am Contemporary Service 10:30am Traditional Service/Church School 12:00pm SPPRC 5:30pm Confirmation Class 7:00pm Youth Group	<b>27 Memorial Day</b> 12:00pm AA	<b>28</b> 10:00am Bible Study 7:30pm Church Council	<b>29</b> 7:30pm Chancel Choir	<b>30</b> 10:00am Knit & Kneel 7:30pm AA 7:30pm Wesley Ringers	<b>31</b>	