

The LINK



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF PATCHOGUE

Since 1791

September 2019

Under Construction With God On The Job

Okay, I'm going to say it, not like you haven't heard this before—"Where did the summer go?"

Isn't that the truth? It feels like it was just yesterday when the kids completed their last day of school anticipating a long, sun-filled summer break.

Now I see them at Staples and Target doing their back-to-school shopping. You know, my parents used to say that once you get older the days fly by. I am beginning to believe their warning.

Ah, September—when vacations come to an end, the baseball season begins to wind down headed for the Fall Classic and regular work routines start to sink in.

You ever wonder where the word September came

from? I am one of those odd persons who always likes to know the origins of words. September is from the Latin "septem" which means seven.

September was originally the seventh of ten months in the oldest known Roman calendar called Romulus, with, oddly, March being the first month of the year. This was the case up until around 451 BCE. Later the calendar was reformed and January and February were added to the beginning of the year; thus, September became the ninth month and retained its name.

Without going into too much detail, Julius Caesar introduced the 12-month Julian calendar—thus, this month that calls kids back to school and increases the profits of Target became the ninth month of the year.

Now, where do I go from here with all of this what some would consider useless information?

I would like to stick with September's Latin derivative: "Seven". What does the Bible say about the number 7? Well, Scripture represents seven as the number of completeness or perfection. It derives much of its meaning from the creation story in the Book of Genesis.

Continued on Page 2

WORSHIP IN SEPTEMBER

Sept. 1—The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Luke 14:1,7-14

Sept. 8—The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Luke 14:25-33

Sept. 15—The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Luke 15:1-10

Sept. 22—The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Luke 16:1-13

Sept. 29—The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Luke 16:19-31

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding.

Psalm 111:10, NRSV



Circle of Concern

For Guidance and Healing:

Bruce Kirshner, Lisa, Ernie & Alice Titus, Henry Prince. Ed Blum, Joann, Richard Olson, Boyce family, Thomas K., Jennifer Higbie, Laura Clifford, Luca Modonosi, Linda, Jerry, Terry Ryan, Frankie Scott Jr., Michael, Eleanor Prince

These in Rehab or Nursing Care:

Geri Sheridan, Robert Krawzak in Brookhaven Health Care Facility, 801 Gazzola Dr., East Patchogue, NY
Alice Zahnd in Gurwin Jewish Nursing Facility, 68 Hauppauge Rd., Commack, NY

Pray for our church and her future directions!

Prayer cards are located at the usher's station at the rear of the sanctuary.

Make a prayer request at
PatchogueUMC.com



September Birthdays

Sept. 1 Terry Ryan

Sept. 17 Isabelle Christine Wenke

Sept. 20 Renee James Schwartz

Under Construction (From page 1)

Thus, there are seven days in the week and God rested on the seventh day which became our Sabbath or day of rest.

Whether God ordained or coincidence, the Bible is divided into seven major divisions: (1) the Law; (2) the Prophets; (3) the Writings or Psalms; (4) the Gospels and Acts; (5) the General Epistles; (6) the Epistles of Paul, and (7) the Book of Revelation.

It is interesting that Jesus performed seven miracles on the Sabbath to the ire of the religious leaders of his day because there was to be no work on the Sabbath.

I like to look at the number seven within the context of a complete work of God in something that he always finishes and brings to completion once He starts. So, what does that have to do with you and me?

Well, Philippians 1:6 gives us a great clue for that answer. Paul writes: "I am convinced that He who has begun a good work in you will bring it to completion."

Now why is that good news? It means that God is not finished with us. We are sort of "under construction". We are a living and breathing construction project and God is wearing the hard hat.

Two days ago, I was driving into the Midtown Tunnel from Queens on my

way to the Museum of Natural History—and before I entered, I stood in awe at the incredible skyline of Manhattan and all of the enormous skyscrapers that were going up. Some were half-way done. Others were three-quarters of the way completed. And, others were standing tall fully dressed in all their glory.

We are like those buildings. Some are just beginning our Christian walk at the foundation level. Others

are a few stories high while several are further along on that journey towards completion.

On a spiritual level, of course, completion comes when we leave this life into the next. Meanwhile, be encouraged in knowing that God is always on the job building us up in our faith. And, every day we grow a little more as long as we remain open to His leading.

So, in a way we are all sevens in the making. I don't know about you, but that thought of God with a hard hat on my project brings me great joy, encouragement, and comfort.

In closing, don't let September bring you down because Summer is coming to an end. Just think of God with that hard hat and it just may be the best month out of the whole year.

In His Grip and Under Construction,

—Pastor Chuck

"I am convinced that He who has begun a good work in you will bring it to completion."

United Methodist Church of Patchogue September 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00 a.m.— Communion Worship 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	2 Labor Day Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA	3 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	4	5	6 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	7
8 9:18 a.m.—Choir 10:00 a.m.— Worship Blessing of the- Backpacks 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	9 Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA	10 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	11	12	13 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	14 9:30 a.m.—UMW
15 9:18 a.m.—Choir 10 a.m.— Worship 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	16 Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA	17 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	18	19	20 10:00 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	21
22 9:15 a.m.—Choir 10 a.m.— Worship/Sunday School 22:30 a.m.—Church Council 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	23 Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA	24 9:30 a.m.—Al Anon 10:00 a.m.— Noon—Food Pantry 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	25	26 5:00 p.m.—Wesley Dinner	27 10:00 a.m.—ESL 7-9 p.m.— Pentecostal MF UMW Retreat, Camp Quinipet	28
29 9:15 a.m.—Choir 10 a.m.— Worship/Sunday School 11:00 a.m.— Trustees 12:30 p.m.— Pentecostal MF	30 Office Closed 7:30 p.m.—AA					



with 1/4 inch plate glass. Window frames and trim will also be repainted. The project is expected to take two weeks.

Taking Responsible

Action

Over and over again, particularly after a mass shooting of innocent human beings in this country, we hear some variation of the cliché “It's not the guns, it's the people.”, or “guns don't shoot people, people do.” No duh. Recently, we have seen blame laid at the feet of the mentally ill or video games.

All this is stunningly disingenuous. Regardless of the underlying causes of gun violence in this nation (and they are complex and, in some cases, deeply entrenched in our culture) the fact remains that the easy and legal accessibility of these weapons of death puts guns in the hands of those who pull the triggers that fire the bullets that rip into the flesh of the innocent.

If they hadn't been able to legally purchase, either in person or online, the assault rifles and high capacity ammunition magazines, the murderers of Newtown, Columbine, Charleston, Las Vegas, Parkland, Gilroy, El Paso, Dayton, and on and on would not have been able to destroy so many lives in such a brief time.

The sad footnote here is that I'm sure I've left out some shootings, but there have been so many I just can't remember them all.

Next Phase of Church Work

Work began Aug. 22 on our next renovation project, repairs to our three rose Tiffany windows.

Under the \$10,000 contract, awarded to Outer County Construction Corp. of Ronkonkoma, deteriorated Plexiglas, protecting the outside of the three windows will be replaced

While mental illness may play a part in the murderous behaviors of the killers in the aforementioned massacres, the fact remains that most of the rest of the industrial, developed world does not suffer the level of mass shootings that we do.

Are the people of Canada, Germany, UK, Japan, for example, less crazy than we are? Probably not.

The difference is they have sensible gun control. (And perhaps better access to health care, including mental health therapies)

Politics and ideology should play no part in taking sane steps to minimize the availability of guns to those who would use them to commit murder.

At the very minimum,

1. We should have universal background checks, including at gun shows and private sales.

2. An immediate ban on all assault weapons and high capacity ammo magazines. No ordinary citizen needs an assault rifle. For those who hunt, if you need an assault weapon to kill Bambi, you probably shouldn't be hunting.

3. Ensuring that those convicted of violent crimes, domestic violence, or with mental health diagnoses that indicate the possibility of violent behavior, cannot purchase a gun legally.

And yes, I know that currently it is easy to purchase one illegally, Universal background checks can impact on that, as can the limiting of the number of weapons purchased at one time. What often happens, in states with little or no gun laws, a straw buyer purchases a number of guns legally

and then brings them back and sells them illegally.

To those who worry about the power of the government or perhaps harbor survivalist anxieties, the way to ensure that government is responsive to the needs and wants of the people, is to have an informed, active citizenry that cherishes the promise of our country and participates fully in the institutions of democracy.

That includes gathering information about issues, making decisions based on facts, not sound bites or visceral emotions; discussing different opinions in an atmosphere of mutual respect, and, voting. Assembling arsenals of deadly weapons is not the answer.

For those of us who not only say we are Christians, but genuinely try to act like followers of Jesus (even though we often fall short), we need to carry the teachings of Christ in our hearts and display them in our every behavior.

Humility, love, compassion, mercy, these are the things that that can guide us and those we come in contact with through the wilderness of ideology and conflict.

—Barbara Becker

Mass Shootings Prompt Prayer, Action

After two U.S. mass shootings that killed at least 31 people, United Methodists are responding with both prayers and plans of action to address gun violence and hate.

Mid-morning Aug. 3, a gunman attacked the shoppers at a popular El Paso, Texas, retail area — claiming

the lives of at least 22 people, including at least eight Mexican citizens.

Less than 14 hours later, another gunman opened fire into a crowd in the Dayton, Ohio, entertainment district — killing nine and injuring 27 in less than a minute. The suspected shooter, Connor Betts, 24, is also dead.

No United Methodists were known to be among the victims.

Nevertheless, many United Methodists across the country used Sunday worship for the now-familiar ritual of praying for those brutalized by violence. Pastors also took on the task of ministering to the traumatized.

The Rev. Eduardo “Eddie” Rivera, superintendent of the El Paso District, phoned his pastors on the evening of the tragedy, offering encouragement for the hard service ahead.

“The call to them was, ‘Tend to your flocks. Be with them, and be a source of peace and comfort,’” Rivera said.

That challenge fell to Salvador Perales Jr., on his first Sunday as pastor of The Ridge United Methodist Church in El Paso.

Perales, a certified lay servant, had earlier in the week chosen to debut with a sermon called “Faith in Uncertain Times.” While he kept the title, he scrambled to adapt the sermon to the heartbreaking circumstances.

“My message to the church was, ‘God is our refuge. God is our strength,’” he said.

Perales emphasized that El Paso residents had pulled together, with so many lining up to give blood that local blood banks had to turn people away.

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Campbell.

"Bless this spinach, albeit the work of the devil."

Don't Forget Your Pledge

The deadline for the October issue of **The Link** is September 20.
 Please email your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

For security purposes, the Church St. entrance is now locked as soon as Sunday services begin. If you are running late, be sure to use the Sanctuary entrances.

Methodists React To Gun Violence (From Page 5)

“In the midst of this tragedy, we saw the love of God and the love people have for each other,” said Perales, an El Paso native.

Still, the people of El Paso are confronting the possibility that white supremacy motivated the massacre.

The suspect — 21-year-old Patrick Crusius of Allen, Texas, near Dallas — is in custody. Local prosecutors have announced they will seek the death penalty, and federal authorities are investigating him for hate crimes and domestic terrorism.

News accounts noted that social media evidence, including a hate-filled manifesto, indicates Crusius may have crossed the state to El Paso to target Hispanic immigrants.

“This is a tremendous shock to the collective soul of our city,” Rivera said. “El Paso being 80 percent Hispanic, Latino, and the shooter targeting Mexicans — that also brings up a new level of concern and shock.”

Lydia Patterson Institute is a venerable United Methodist school in El Paso that offers an English language, college prep education. Students include many young people who venture daily from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. The school informed New Mexico Conference officials that its community of students, faculty and staff apparently had not been directly touched by the attack. El Paso is part of the New Mexico Conference.

But the shootings are on everyone’s mind as a new school year looms.

“My reaction was that now more than ever we proclaim being the de-

liverer of good news,” said Socorro de Anda, longtime president, in a note to trustees. “We teach love and respect to all regardless of race, religion, national or any other God-given grace unlike our own.”

The motive of the Dayton shooter remains uncertain, though the Twitter account that appears to belong to him contained extreme left-wing and anti-police posts. The alleged killers in both cities are white men.

But as Bishop Gregory V. Palmer reeled from the tragic news, he ruminated on how such violence has become all-too common.

“It continues to be unthinkable that going about the ordinary activities of life is dangerous. It is nevertheless sobering,” wrote Palmer, whose West Ohio Conference encompasses Dayton. “We must find ways to act sensibly, faithfully and hopefully to make mass shootings a thing of the past.”

So far this year, the number of mass shootings in the U.S. has outpaced the number of days, according to the nonprofit Gun Violence Archive. The research group defines mass shootings as four or more shot, not including the shooter.

As of Aug. 5 — the 217th day of the year — the U.S. had experienced 255 mass shootings by the archive’s count. In a little over a week, mass shootings also occurred at the Gilroy, California, Garlic Festival, killing three; a Brooklyn block party, killing one; a Southaven, Mississippi, Walmart, killing two, and seven were wounded in a shooting in a Chicago park.

United Methodists have long

looked for ways to stop gun violence in all its forms. The denomination’s Book of Resolutions encourages congregations to advocate for such measures as universal background checks for all gun purchases and bans on large-capacity ammunition magazines and weapons designed to fire multiple rounds each time the trigger is pulled. In both El Paso and Dayton, the suspected gunmen were armed with assault weapons and extra magazines.

But such changes require federal action. Since earlier this year, the United Methodist Board of Church and Society joined with church members in advocating for the U.S. Senate to take up a bill for universal background checks. The House of Representatives passed a companion, bipartisan bill on Feb. 27.

The Rev. Jeania Ree V. Moore, director for civil and human rights at Church and Society, said the advocacy includes more than individual pieces of legislation.

“The argument the church makes is not that some type of guns are OK, and others aren’t,” she said. “It’s more profoundly the vision of the prophet Micah that weapons of war will be turned into instruments of peace.”

For small-group reflections, her agency offers the Bible study “Kingdom Dreams, Violent Realities,” based on Micah 4:1-4.

Moore also called on white United Methodists to preach against the sin of white supremacy wherever it occurs. The denomination in the U.S., she noted, is overwhelmingly white.

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10 Church St., Patchogue, NY 11772

The Rev. Dr. Charles Ferrara, Pastoral Minister
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 Email: PatchogueUMC@Yahoo.com
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Worship Video Live Streaming at PatchogueUMC.Org

Sunday Worship and Sunday School—10 AM
 Fellowship Coffee Hour—11 AM
 Hearing assistance provided



Gun Violence (From Page 7)

“If United Methodists don’t preach explicitly against the glorification of whiteness, against white nationalism, against any vision of the world in which whiteness is dominant, that is a threat,” she said.

MARCHA, Methodists Associated Representing the Cause of Hispanic Americans, made a similar call during its Aug. 1-4 meeting in Philadelphia.

“We call all United Methodist and other people of faith and good will to pray for all impacted and demand our elected leaders to address these issues with urgency,” the Hispanic caucus said in a statement.

The group also called on General Conference, the denomination’s top lawmaking body, “to unequivocally denounce the evil of white suprema-

cy and declare it as incompatible to Christian teachings.”

Bishop W. Earl Bledsoe, whose area includes El Paso, noted in a statement that United Methodists in the city are not backing down from welcoming the sojourner.

“For many years now, the El Paso area has been besieged by the controversy over immigration, and yet our faith communities have worked together to respond to the needs of those seeking asylum and a better way of life for their families,” he said. “I want to thank all our churches that have given of their time, resources, prayers and love.”

—Heather Hahn and Sam Hodges,
 UMNS

A Labor Day Prayer

O God, through human labors you continually perfect the immense work of your creation.

Listen to the prayers of your people, and grant to everyone employment that calls us to our best and unite us with each other, so that we can serve our brothers and sisters, and your world, through our work.

This we ask through your Son Jesus Christ, who lives in unity with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. *Amen.*

—buildfaith.org