

TheLink



The United Methodist Church of Patchogue

November 2013

Edited By George Hoag

Thank You For Your Service

God's blessings and peace to all.

The November calendar brings to our attention a couple of important events for us, Veterans Day and later in the month, Thanksgiving. This past week I was reminded why it is important for us citizens to remember with great thanksgiving the service and sacrifices our current military service members and veterans of the military have given. As a soldier myself, currently serving as a chaplain in the United States Army, I invite you in these coming weeks to pray and remember the service of our veterans and those who serve currently, and as we count our blessings in thanksgiving, let us be a people who reflect in their words and deeds the love of God that is given to us through Christ Jesus. In these coming days thank a veteran, send a letter of thanks to a current soldier, and on our national Thanksgiving Day, truly count your blessings!

A Prayer for the Military Community by Kristi Hofman

Almighty God, Lord of Hosts, we call out to you as the One who is sovereign over all. Watch over and protect our nation's military members and their families. Sustain them with your everlasting arms.

Worship In November

Nov. 3—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez. *Seeking and Seeing*, Psalm 32:1-7. Luke 19:1-10.

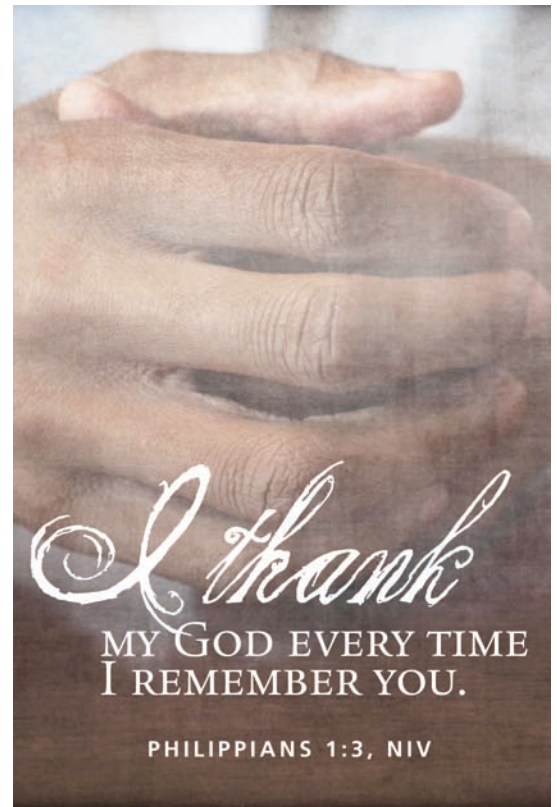
Nov. 10—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *New Life In God*, Psalm 17:1-9, Luke 20:27-38.

Nov. 17—Rev. Ernesto Sanchez, *Doing The Right Thing*, Isaiah 65:17-25, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13.

Nov. 24—Guest Speaker Ernest Ipke, Jeremiah 23:1-6, Colossians 1:11-20

Take into your most gracious protection our service members currently deployed. May you be their comfort and their guide as they live and walk in a foreign land. Give them reassurance that you are a shield around them, an ever-present help in time of need. Grant our service members courage so that in all things they may serve without reproach. Encourage them while they also encourage one another.

As they serve around the world, we ask that you guard their families and loved ones back home. Provide them with peace and surround them with love as they mourn the absence of their loved one and long for their return. May they find hope and strength in you for the trials of each new day. Be with military children who endure the difficult burden of knowing their father or mother is in harm's way for months on end. Guard these



Continued on Page 5

Circle of Concern

For Bereavement:

For the Family and Friends of Bob DeLaVergne.

For Guidance:

Janice, Louis D'Amico and family, Colleen Smith, Tim and Jen Mansfield, Carolyn Willis, Kathy, those affected by the government shut-down, members of our Congress.

These Who are Hospitalized:

Steven Werner, Josephine Adone, James Hayward, Keyana White.

These at Home:

Kathie Wells' aunt Gail, Wilfredo Franco.

We Get Letters

As most of you know, our Sunday services are streamed live to those who are unable to physically attend. Some who view the service every Sunday via the Internet may have never attended our services in person. The letter below is an example of one such viewer who has been touched by Pastor Sanchez's ministry and has become a regular attendee. Hopefully, there will be others who will also be touched by our beautiful Sunday services.

Catherine Adams

September 14, 2013

Pastor Ernesto Sanchez
United Methodist Church of Patchogue
10 Church Street
Patchogue, NY 11772

Dear Pastor Sanchez,

Let me introduce myself—I am a very good friend of one of your members, Jim Graham. Since I have known him he has told me about the wonderful church he belongs to and about the incredible pastor there. Although I know Jim to be an honest man, I thought maybe some of what he said was surely exaggeration. When he recently told me that I was able to watch the live airing of the service, I was elated to have the chance to see for myself of what and whom he spoke, and I can say now that what he told me was an understatement.

I was truly touched by the love I could feel coming through the screen from the members and especially from you. You exemplify everything a spiritual leader should be—kind, loving, funny, generous, and warm—and I felt that from a great distance. I, unfortunately, have not had the pleasure of being a member of a church with such a leader, and so I truly understand the respect and caring Jim has for his place of worship.

I have become a devoted attendee of your services and I love the wonderful feelings I have from listening to your excellent sermon and from being able to share it with my friend, even though we are hundreds of miles apart. If I ever have the occasion to visit Patchogue, I will certainly show up on your doorstep and shake your hand. You are a true servant of God.

Sincerely,

Catherine Adams

These who are in Rehab or Nursing Care Facilities:

Alice Zahnd in Patchogue Nursing Center, 25 Schoenfeld Blvd., Patchogue, NY.

Esther Davies in Brookhaven Health Facility, 801 Gazzolla Drive, E. Patchogue, NY 11772 Room 78D 631-289-3150.

Ted Davies in Brookhaven Health Facility, 801 Gazzolla Drive, E. Patchogue, NY,

Ed Dew in Sunrise Assisted Living.

Pray for our church and its future direction.

Make your Prayer Request on line at PatchogueUMC.Org

Remember
the Church
in Your Will

Special Music In Our Church

Sunday, November 24
Bay Area Chorus presents
"Fall Concert"
4:00 PM

Sunday, December 15
Moriches Choral Society and
Orchestra
Handel's *The Messiah*
3:00 PM

Both events conducted by our Music Director Martha Campanile

The deadline for contributions to the December edition of **TheLink** is November 15. Please e-mail your copy to gbhoag@optonline.net.

Lift up your church with your prayers, presence, gifts and service.

LESSONS ALONG

the Way

May God's peace be with you.



I have a question for you: why is it so hard to trust God? I'm not asking this question

to put anyone on the spot; I'm trying to figure out why, with all the incredible blessings I've received, I still have this insane need to prop myself up by feeding my own ego. (I've heard it said that "EGO" stands for "edging God out".) When I look back over the timeline of my life, I see that when I a) try to stand alone and be the boss of me, things sooner or later go very badly; but when I b) trust in God, ask Him for help, and surrender myself to His purpose, while things might not go the way I want them to go, at least the journey goes a whole lot smoother. It is truly surreal that, with all that empirical data and history in front of me, I still don't get it. Or maybe the correct term is that I "un-get" it?

So I'll give you a perfect example, while it's fresh in my mind (less than 12 hours ago; my "born on" date as far as my memory goes passes much more quickly than the one on the beer bottle). It has to do with money. Church money. Church budget money. Don't worry, that's the last time I'll even mention money in this month's column, because while it was a meeting to prepare a budget for proposal to the

church council on Nov. 17, I'm talkin' 'bout Demon Ego here, and nobody else's but mine.

One of the gifts God has given me is a pretty good understanding of business math and numbers. In his sermon just this morning, Pastor Tito reminded us once again that everything we have is a gift from God. Not some things, mind you, nor most things—everything is a gift from our Creator. And now that I have grown just a little bit in my young Christian journey, I firmly believe that to be true—until someone wants to challenge my use of those gifts. More specifically—here it comes, hang on—dares to challenge my numbers. My Numbers.

Don't they understand how many hours I've put into these gloriously-crafted, fully-linked spreadsheets? Can't they see that I've been doing this type of thing for a third of a century?? Is not my vast experience the trumping card of wisdom that can resolve any difference, if just played the way I want it to be played?

Is that the thought sequence, perhaps, that led to the "glorious crafting" of the first golden calf? That worked well, didn't it.

And by the way, "My numbers"? Whose numbers? One Who is blameless and without sin, One Who has made everything I have part of my gift. One Who loves me in spite of my flaws, my arrogance, even my ego; one Who loves me because I am His. How's that for an incredible gift? Back to my original question, and now I'll make it first person: why is it so hard for me to trust God? If you subscribe to the view that sin is separation from God (I certainly do), then the answer is

that it's part of my sinful nature. But whenever I get out of my ego enough to get down on my knees and ask for help from my Savior, that's when I experience the return of that most precious gift of all—the peace of God in my heart.

And so, while I am farther along in my JesusJourney than I was a few years ago, the nomination for saint-hood still seems to elude me. And I still make plenty of mistakes, sometimes even with numbers (yeah, in spite of my little tantrum above, I had switched two of my "perfect numbers", causing more confusion than there needed to be); but most often, just dealing with people. As much as I would rather it be otherwise, I still revert to "petulant child" much more often than I would like. But perhaps someday I'll learn to sit through an entire budget planning meeting with the love of Christ for my brothers and sisters foremost in my mind, rather than How Great I Art. Perhaps not.

Or maybe, next year at this time, I can just ask Jesus for help, and trust in Him to provide it. What a concept.

Yours in Christ,

—Tom Bracken



Celebrate your life! Witness for your faith!

Service (from Page 1)

children's hearts and minds despite the loneliness and uncertainty of having a parent deployed.

Lord God, be with marriages in the military. Preserve the bonds of husband and wife despite the stress that military life brings, stress only compounded by the decade of war our nation is in. Help military chaplains in their efforts to equip military marriages with ways to stay connected and communicate effectively despite the challenge of frequent deployments. Give husbands and wives strength and resilience to endure separations, frequent moves, and all the uncertainty military life brings.

For some, Lord, service takes their toll permanently in physical and emotional damage. For those wounded in battle, we pray you would come beside them. Sustain and strengthen them amidst treatment, pain, and adjustments to life with an injury. Help them to find competent care and support, and to not be afraid to reach out for a helping hand or a listening ear. Be with their caregivers in the demanding role they have. Give caregivers renewed energy to offer support and love as they tend to the needs of the injured. Strengthen them as they both monitor and advocate for their loved one.

We know that war is very costly. Some have made the ultimate sacrifice, laying down their precious lives in service to our nation. Each one of them was a son or daughter, perhaps a husband or wife, father or mother. For all those who feel the pain and the toll of this war in the loss of their loved one, comfort them. Be a father to the fatherless and defender of widows. As

they cast their cares on you, may they know the consolation of your love. We thank you for the freedoms these service members fought for which we enjoy today.

For each and every veteran who has served our country through the years, we thank you for their sacrifice. Comfort those who struggle in life after war. Help us to honor and care for those who have given so much for us. Be with our nation's leaders as well, and all those who make decisions for our military. Give them wisdom and discernment in everything they do. Father God, we long for the day when swords will be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. We long for your peace, for your shalom.

In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

(Kristi Hofman has been a military spouse for 10 years. She and her husband, an active duty Army chaplain, have four young children. They have journeyed through deployments to both Iraq and Afghanistan and currently call Fort Bragg, NC home.)

Blessings,

—**Pastor CPT Ernesto Sanchez**
(Chaplain)



VETERANS DAY
November 11

Help Me Thanksgiving Day Prayer

O God, when I have food,
help me to remember the hungry;
When I have work,
help me to remember the jobless;
When I have a home,
help me to remember those who
have no home at all;
When I am without pain,
help me to remember those who
suffer,
And remembering,
help me to destroy my complacency;
bestir my compassion,
and be concerned enough to help;
By word and deed,
those who cry out for what we take
for granted.
Amen.

—**Samuel F. Pugh**

birthdays

November 16 Josie Hoag

November 24 Sabrina Chae

**Hear Our Sermons and
Watch Our Services Online**

Click on the Links at
www.PatchogueUMC.org

Get **IN** volved

United Methodist Church of Patchogue

November 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<i>1</i> 7:30 p.m.—N/A	<i>2</i>
<p>3 9:00 a.m.—Bible Study 10 a.m.—Communion Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—Sunday School Meeting 12:30–5:30 p.m.—Salvation Army Class & Service</p>	<p>4 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>5 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>6 11:00 a.m.—Bible Study 7:30 p.m.—Adult Study</p>	<p>7 7:30 p.m.—Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>8 7:30 p.m.—N/A</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>10 9:00 a.m.—Bible Study 10 a.m.—Worship/Sunday School 12:30–5:30 p.m.—Salvation Army Class & Service</p>	<p>11 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>12 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 7:30 p.m.—Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>15 7:30 p.m.—N/A</p>	<p>16 9:30 a.m.—UMW</p>
<p>17 9:00 a.m.—Bible Study 10 a.m.—Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—Church Council 12:30–5:30 p.m.—Salvation Army Class & Service 6:00–9:00 p.m.—Rainbow Girls</p>	<p>18 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>19 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>20 7:00 p.m.—BAFFA Dress Rehearsal</p>	<p>21 7:30 p.m.—Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>22 7:30 p.m.—N/A</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24 9:00 a.m.—Bible Study 10 a.m.—Worship/Sunday School 11:30 a.m.—Trustees 12:30–5:30 p.m.—Salvation Army Class & Service 4:00 p.m.—BAFFA Concert</p>	<p>25 7 p.m.—Prayer Ministry 7 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>26 9 a.m.—Al Anon 10 a.m.—Noon—Food Pantry 7:00 p.m.—AA</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 Thanksgiving Dinner</p>	<p>29 7:30 p.m.—N/A</p>	<p>30 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.—UMW Fair</p>

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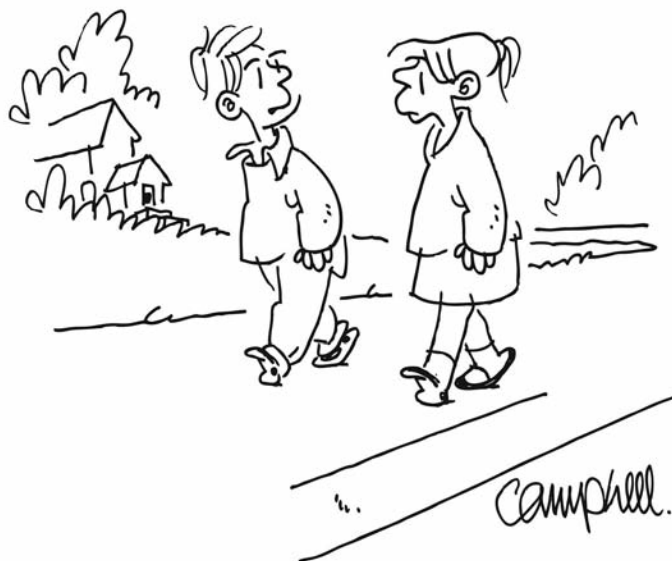
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"We're going to my Grandma's on Thursday
 to pig out ... and also be thankful."

Campbell.

NOV.
 3



Racism and Church History

The United Methodist Church ought not and cannot be silent about race and racism.

The Historical Statement in the United Methodist Book of Discipline provides a history of Methodism's response to race/racism.

Sojourners magazine has described racism as America's "original sin."

We read: "John Wesley was an ardent opponent of slavery. Many of the leaders of early American Methodism shared his hatred of human bondage."

But we also read of the "separation" over slave ownership in 1844 that created the Methodist Church South. That separation ended in 1939 in a "Unification Conference" establishing the racially segregated Central Jurisdiction as a compromise for those who were willing to exchange their pro-slavery attitudes for pro-racial segregation practice.

Our Methodist history cannot avoid the fact that because of racially insensitive attitudes, black Methodists formed the African Methodist Episcopal and African Methodist Episcopal Zion denominations.

Living the experience

I cannot be "silent" about my personal experiences of Methodism and race. My preacher father attended the Unification Conference that established the racially segregated Central Jurisdiction in 1939. When I became old enough to talk with him about Methodism, he expressed how hurt and wounded he and other black delegates to that conference were by the establishment of the Central Jurisdiction.

While in college in Greensboro, N.C., I lived with my grandfather who was born near the end of slavery. He shared with me his memories of the slave owners whose name, Caldwell, became our family name.

Some of them were Methodists, and my grandfather became an active Methodist, serving as treasurer of St. Matthews Church in Greensboro.

While I lived with him and attended college in Greensboro, I became active in the North Carolina Methodist Student Movement. There were few white churches at that time willing to host meetings of this student movement because of the presence of black persons like myself.

Whenever I told my grandfather that one of my white colleagues in the student movement was going to come by our house to give me a ride, I could tell there was a bit of unease, even fear, in him because his black grandson was going to be riding with a white person, particularly when that white person was female. He knew what had sometimes happened to black persons who were in cars with white persons.

All of the above came to a dramatic conclusion for me when my application to Duke Divinity School was rejected in 1954 because at that time Duke's policy denied admission to Negroes, as we called ourselves. The rejection letter read: "We hope you will find a Seminary to meet your needs." That seminary became Boston University School of Theology.

I share the less-than-positives of Methodist history along with my personal history, not to "accentuate the negative," but in my belief that we cannot celebrate racial progress if we remain silent about the attitudes and actions that precipitated the need for progress.

I contend that our Methodist/United Methodist history — debates about slavery, division because of those debates, a race-compromised Methodist unification through the creation of a segregated all-black Central Jurisdiction in 1939, the emergence of a racially integrated United

Methodist Church in 1968 — make for a United Methodist story worth "telling the nation."

We have a story to tell

"We've a story to tell to the nations, that shall turn their hearts to the right, a story of truth and mercy, a story of peace and light, a story of peace and light." — United Methodist Hymnal, #569

What is it about race in 2013 that cries out for a "word" from The United Methodist Church?

Donald E. Collins concludes his book — "When the Church Bell Rang Racist, The Methodist Church and the Civil Rights Movement in Alabama," Mercer University Press, 1998 — with these words from a written interview with the Rev. Tom Butts, now pastor emeritus of First United Methodist Church of Monroeville, Ala.

Butts says, "We are about as racist as we have ever been, but we are more sophisticated about it, which makes the whole thing more insidious."

The election of our first African-American president has been celebrated as an historic first, but some of the responses to him and his family have gone beyond the traditional political disagreements and critiques that are part and parcel of American politics. As we read, hear and see, some of the racist-tinged expressions that claim to depict President Obama, I resort to the oft-used cliché, "The more things change, the more they remain the same."

The rapidly changing racial demographics of our nation are to be celebrated, not regretted.

America has never been "white America" as some wanted it to be. Today, more than ever, we are "rainbow America" and we know we are better when we rejoice in that reality.

—Rev. Gilbert Caldwell, UMNS

Celebrate your life! Witness for your faith!



**The United Methodist Church of
Patchogue**
10 Church Street, Patchogue, NY 11772

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Still A Methodist After All These Years

I was born and reared a Methodist; was in Sunday worship from before I was born; was baptized after I came into the world; went to kindergarten and Sunday school in childhood, UMYF and choir as a youth. My family never pushed church or religion. It was just a part of our lives; a part of who we were. We prayed at meals, we talked about life and faith, and sat together in the pew on Sundays. Quietly and without fanfare we grew in our relationship with God, with each other and with those beyond our family circle. It was all a part of being family, of being Christian, of being Methodist.

But there is more. And, it is simply this. The United Methodist Church has provided a place for me to continue to grow in the love of God. It has given

me a place in the world to engage my faith and to serve others. In our day and age, we often take the “institutional church” for granted and often belittle it for lack of relevance, its slowness to change or the cumbersome way it goes about being church. But, for me, it has provided a structure, a place, a people, a continued “way of being” and the opportunity to serve without which my life would be much diminished. To be able to worship in a church where all are welcome and where at the bottom line, it is all about God’s love, feeds my soul. To be able to serve in professional ministry that is accountable to others through the annual conference, the fellowship of elders and the people with whom I serve, inspires me to the intentionality of following Christ. To participate in the rich history of our tradition equips

me to be open to the new things God is doing in my life, in the church and in the world. Yes, I am still a United Methodist after all these years; thankful that God isn’t done with me, or our church, just yet!

—Rev. Dr. Beverly Jones, UMNS

Rev. Dr. Beverly Jones is the university chaplain at United Methodist related Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. An active member of the New Mexico Conference, Beverly has held appointments in the local church and as district superintendent. She serves on the Conference Envisioning Team, Ministry Leadership Team and is a member of the 2012 General and Jurisdictional Conference delegation.