



Circuit Rider

St. Paul's United Methodist Church
714 Herbertsville Road
Brick, NJ 08724

March 2006

Who Is My Neighbor? Luke 10:30-37

Title and position do not mean much if we do not live outside of ourselves by helping and loving others. The priest and the Levites were highly respected leaders, possibly on their way to the temple to worship God. The priest was oblivious to the need and passed by the man who was hurt without lending any assistance. The Levite sought to avoid the need that stared him right in the face. He looked away and passed by without lending any assistance. A Samaritan man saw the half dead man and not only had compassion but put his concern into action. He bandaged up the man's wounds, probably with his own clothing. He placed the wounded man on his animal and walked himself. He paid the bill for the man's lodging and any further care. At first you might think the wounded man was also a Samaritan but we do not have that information. Most likely he was a Jew coming from Jerusalem. Most Jews hated the Samaritans because they had inter-married with Gentiles.

Who is my neighbor? Anyone in need of help. Often we know the right thing to do, but do we do it?

This story got me thinking. Have you ever noticed someone missing from worship? Do you know people who are sick or in need? We often believe someone else will take care of them, thinking "It is someone else's responsibility". Who is your neighbor? Do you care if you have not seen them? Have you called or sent a letter? Have you stopped by to see them?

When I first came to this church I recognized that Ruth Snyder has a deep love and concern for everyone. I told her: "If there is someone I should go see in the hospital or call to let me know." Jokingly yet honestly saying: "I have been working on this mind-reading thing but I'm not very good at it yet. I need your help."

As you read this, recognize we need to help each other. We are trying to broaden our care for each other. If there is someone you know who needs a call, a letter or a visit, please let us know. On March 8th thirty people who volunteered to help in this valuable ministry of tenderly caring for each other are meeting in Room 1 to talk about what we as a community can do. If you are interested in helping you can contact Colleen Neuer or Joe and Joyce Yannon or just show up at the meeting. Particularly needed are people who are available during the daytime.

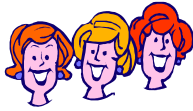
Knowing who your neighbor is and helping them are not the same thing. Jesus said "Go and do likewise"

May God help us to love each other by thought, word and deed.

See you in Church
Pastor John

HELP US MINISTER TO YOU!

If you, or anyone you know, is ill or going into the hospital please call the Church office and let us know 732-458-2080.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The UMW will meet on Tuesday, March 21st at 6:30 for a Covered Dish Dinner. All ladies are invited. The program will be:

Glorious Vessels in the Potter's Hand

This is a unique biblical presentation of the parable of the Potter and the clay. God told Jeremiah the prophet to go to the potter's house. Glorious Vessels brings the potter to you in order to unfold this incredible parable. The stage will be set with various tools of the trade and attention will be drawn to many vessels of clay in various stages on the workbench.

Bless You

Thank you United Methodist Women for all your hard work this past year. We have raised \$3470. in 2005 for Missions. And thank you, our congregation, for your support with our Rummage Sales, Holiday Shoppe, Elegant Afternoon Tea, Auction and other functions. God has Blessed Us in so many ways.

Maureen, President UMW

CHRISTMAS STORE

A great big "Thank You" to all who donated financially, knitted items and worked so hard to make our twenty-ninth Christmas Store a success. In the past twenty-nine years we, the congregations of St. Paul's and St. Thomas', have shared with approximately 1,810 families with 5,338 children distributing over \$121,185.00 in toys, food, knitted items, hygiene kits, and other miscellaneous items. The committee has disbanded until September 5, 2006 but hopefully you knitters out there will keep your fingers flying all winter long. If you need funds to purchase wool, please contact Walt. See you in September!



LENTEN LUNCHES

Our Lenten Lunches & Devotions will be starting on Wednesday, March 1st this year. The lunch will be held from 11:45-12:15 PM followed by devotions. If you are interested in providing soup, dessert or crackers for one of the weekly lunches please contact the church office.

News from Kids Alley



We will once again be making 150 Easter baskets for the children of Kids Alley. We will be making notecards to put in our Easter baskets this Thursday, March 9th at 7:00 in the Staff Lounge. Anyone wishing to come help out is welcome!

Also, some of you asked about what stores would be good for giving a gift card to your sponsored child. I asked Viv and she said Kmart, Walmart and Payless are all good choices. Simply send it to Viv making sure there is a note as to which child it's for. Lastly, Viv is working on creating a booklet of donation slips for you, but for now simply send in your contribution once a month on your own accord.

I will be putting in a list of Easter basket goodies in a couple of weeks so keep an eye out and thanks so much!

Jenifer

One Accord Inc., KIDS ALLEY
PMB 194, 283-B Egg Harbor Road,
Sewell, NJ 08080

Senior Joy

Senior Joy will be held on Thursday, March 9th at 12:30 PM. Bring a sandwich. We have a very special guest. Jennifer Sands will share her testimony at 2:00 PM in the Sanctuary. Anyone is invited to come and hear her at that time. Jennifer lost her husband on 9/11 and she travels everywhere to give her testimony. For more information call Ruth S.

ST. PAUL'S CHANCEL CHOIR

Presents

**“Let All Heaven Rejoice...The Angelic
Celebration of Easter”**

April 8 and 9th

(Palm Sunday Weekend)

7:30 PM

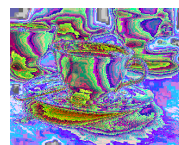
St. Paul's Chancel Choir will present its Easter cantata, **“Let All Heaven Rejoice”**, the sequel to the awe inspiring cantata that was presented this past Christmas, on **April 8th and 9th**. The music is absolutely beautiful and was written and arranged by one of the world's most famous Christian composers, David Clydesdale.

In Clydesdale's introduction, he tells about his inspiration for writing this cantata. “All I could think about was what the angels thought about the crucifixion. How did they react? Did they know this was coming or was this only known by the Father? ...Imagine the celebration that took place when Jesus had completed His mission to earth and returned to take His seat on the very throne of Heaven! (Can you imagine how excited the angels were to roll the stone away?!)”

“Let All Heaven Rejoice” presents the drama and passion of the Easter story from the perspective of the heavenly host of angels (the choir) that must have been observing the last crucial days of Christ's earthly ministry. Beginning with the temptation of Jesus and progressing through His earthly ministry that led Him to the cross, this musical is an exciting, powerful, and inspiring telling of the Easter story.

Besides our very dedicated Chancel Choir, this cantata also includes narrator, solos, duets, pageantry, and much more. We are sure that this beautiful piece of music will add much to your Easter celebration. So come hear “the rest of the story”. We hope that you will invite your family and friends and join us on Palm Sunday weekend, April 8th and 9th at 7:30PM, for an unforgettable evening.

In His Name,
Barbara



Elegant Afternoon Tea

The United Methodist Women of St. Paul's United Methodist Church of Bricktown, request the pleasure of your company for an Elegant Afternoon Tea.

On Saturday,
April 29, 2006

At 2pm - 4pm

In Eleanor Norcross Hall
at St. Paul's Church
Reservations are required
Price is \$15.00 per person
All proceeds go to UMW
Missions

Tickets go on sale April
1st

Last day to purchase
tickets is

April , 23, 2006

Only 120 tickets are
available

Please join us for a time
of true relaxation,
an inducement to gentle
conversation, music, door
prizes, scones, breads,
finger sandwiches and
desserts.

Please see Ruth S. for
tickets

Swinging on the Ladder of Faith

I appreciate the many emails you've sent since I wrote my January Memo. It has been reassuring to feel your support through your written thoughts. I know many questions were raised in your minds - and believe me I've asked all of your questions plus about a hundred more. The picture is beginning to take shape and I'm learning a lot about not being able to paint in all the details ahead of time! I will continue as a missionary with World Gospel Mission working in partnership with Samaritan's Purse. SP has partnered in the ministry of Tenwek Hospital for years. Now WGM is able to partner with SP, through me, in one of their ministries.

Samaritan's Purse has many years of experience working in Sudan and they have asked me to work at Lui Hospital - a church based hospital located in south Sudan - near Juba, if you're looking at a map. My job will be to give oversight to the hospital and other related ministries. Last weekend I was able to meet with staff from Samaritan's Purse and I learned a lot about the ministries in Sudan and my future role.

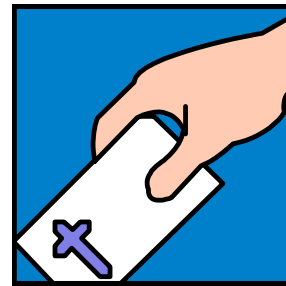
I'm planning on flying up to southern Sudan on March 1st to spend two weeks at Lui Hospital before I leave for the U.S. at the end of March. I hope to get a feel for the scope of ministries there and begin building relationships with the people of this community. I will be available to share with you about my past and future ministry in May, June and July then I'll head up to Sudan in August to begin work. I'll return to the U.S. with two of my colleagues from Tenwek Community Health & Development from mid-October to mid-November for more home ministry assignment.

I look forward to introducing as many of you as possible to Andrew and Monica. And in case that's not enough to keep me occupied several staff and I will be traveling to Zambia this week to visit another project that has integrated development activities and the church. While growing up, Ken Enright was a household name in our family. His missionary work in the Congo was well known throughout my stomping ground in New Jersey. It is his son, John, and his wife Kendra who we will be visiting. Pray that we will learn a lot from seeing the work of the Enrights and by sharing together.

And my desk at the office is not exactly cleared off yet. There's still a lot to do as I turn over my responsibilities. That will get done between trips. Please pray that I'll be able to prioritize my tasks,

pace myself, stay close to Jesus and that I'll remain in good health and have safe travel throughout. The people of Sudan have suffered immensely over the past several decades. An author shares about her travels among Sudanese Christians, Why is this priest laughing? I asked myself. Then I remembered the joy and energy available to those who share the suffering of God's children. Thank you for your faithful support in my ministry and for joining me in this new journey to share in and hopefully alleviate some of the suffering of God's children in Sudan. Praying for peace,

Joy



Year End Contribution Statements

2005 Contribution statements (for those families and individuals who use envelopes) were recently mailed out. (If you did not receive your statement and you used the envelopes contact the office to get a replacement statement.) Please check your statement to make sure all contributions you made were included on the statement. This would be all tithes, 2nd mile mission offerings, communion, expansion, flowers etc. If you need to have corrections made please contact Janet for those whose last names begin with A-L or Madeline for those whose last names begin with M-Z. If you need a more detailed breakdown please contact the church office at 732-458-2080.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all who gave in 2005 and those who continue to give to the missions and ministries of St. Paul's. Your generosity is truly appreciated.



Manasquan River Group of Artists
March 25th 2006
10am-4pm
Display and Sale of Original Art
Food will be available for sale

Lexington House Thank You

Eight years down and many more to come (we hope). Last December we completed our 8th year of mission work at the Lexington Boarding Home in Lakewood.

It is such a good feeling being able to help the poor and needy and disabled, especially when it's so close to home. When we went to our first Christmas party at Lexington we had a grand total of 92 people who attended. In 2005 we had 186, a difference of 94, double the amount.

There are so many people to thank for the success of this mission. Many thanks to Donna K and the Christian School teachers, the students and their parents for filling so many mission bags. Thanks to the congregation for their willingness to do baking and whatever else they are asked to do. Last of all to the volunteers that go on a regular basis to put a smile on the faces of the residents each month. Thank you all so much and may God bless you all.

Suzanne

Come for a Visit...

On Wednesday, March 8th, there will be a meeting for anyone who is interested in joining the TenderHearts and hospital visitation ministry. TenderHearts is a group who visit shut-ins, send cards to those who are suffering either through a loss or illness and generally help members during difficult times. If you would be interested in helping by visiting, sending cards or giving communion please come to Room 1 at 7pm. We are particularly in need of individuals who can do visitation during the day but everyone is welcome. If you have any questions please contact Joe or Joyce or Colleen at 732-458-2080.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MISSION WALK

This year the Sunday School will be holding their annual walk for missions on Sunday June 4th. The walk originated several years ago as a means to help the church meet the apportionments to the conference. For the 2004 year the church had met its obligation so the moneys collected during the 2005 walk went towards providing scholarships for students attending Christian summer camps. The balance of the funds collected last year have now been assigned to help the church again meet it's apportionments to the conference for the year 2005.

Prayer Booklets

Thank you to the people who helped put the prayer booklets together: Cathy, Jenifer, Vicki, Denise and Hal. Every effort was made to include the names of all those who attend St. Paul's in the booklet. If your name was not included it is because you are not in our database. Call the office and we will add your name. Please make the following corrections:

March 5 - Pastor D will preach on the 40 days wrap-up

March 12 - Pastor D will preach on Solomon's prayer

April 2 - Pastor D will preach on Daniel's prayer

April 9 - Pastor D will preach on Jonah's prayer

St. Paul's Christian School

COME SEE WHAT OUR FAMILIES HAVE DISCOVERED

NURSERY SCHOOL
THRU 8TH GRADE



NURTURING CHRISTIAN
ENVIRONMENT
SMALL CLASSES
CERTIFIED TEACHERS
COMPETITIVE SCHOLASTIC AND
SPORTS TEAMS

ENROLL NOW

Visitation is always welcomed and encouraged.

714 Herbertsville Road Brick, NJ 08724
(732)458-2004

Serving our community for 27 years.

IN FAITH WE GROW STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

FINANCIAL UPDATE REGARDING THE 20 YEAR MORTGAGE

Monthly Mortgage Payment.....\$9,637.03

Expansion Givings For January.....\$11,727

Current Balance of Mortgage (Interest Rate = 5.75%).....\$1,330,184.05

Today's Reading

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 8:10-12, 1 Chronicles 29:9-17

Key Thought: Wise stewards joyfully choose to support God's work and do God's will.

Today's Reflection

In stewardship, choice is a never-ending concern, for we must constantly decide how to manage everything that God puts in our care. Most important of all is that we decide with true purpose, joyfully choosing to support God's work and do God's will. Paul commended the Christians at Corinth for having this attitude: You were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have. (2 Corinthians 8:10-12)

Stewardship Speakers: Laura and Diane on family bible study

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

There has been a growing interest among couples in our church, especially those with young children, to have a bible study group available to them. A few of us couples have felt led to start a family bible study at St. Paul's to fill that need. Topics we plan to focus on include strengthening your marriage, raising your children in the Lord and simplifying our hectic lives from a biblical perspective. As Christian families living in a fallen world it is very important that we are there to support each other and lift each other up in Christ's love. Our prayers are that this group will fulfill that purpose.

We plan on meeting here at the church in Room 1 on March 5th at 4:30 p.m. to discuss what time and day would be best for everyone involved to conduct the bible study on. If you are interested in attending the bible studies we encourage you to make it to this meeting since it is when we will be making decisions about the study. We will be starting the group with the Fisherman Bible Study Guide, Building Your House on the Lord. It is comprised of 13 studies based on marriage and parenthood from a biblical perspective. The study offers penetrating questions that generate deep discussion, a flexible format for individual needs and an emphasis on daily application of Bible truth. It is also our desire to work out the issue of childcare. It will be essential given the intended nature of the class! If there are any youth or other members in the church that feel led to help out please contact the numbers below.

Possible Study Sessions for the future include:

-How to Make Children Mind (Without Losing Yours) - A great book / video series by Kevin Leman

-Song of Solomon - A fabulous study on biblical love in marriage by Tommy Nelson

-Bible studies based on popular films. The bonus of these studies is a built in excuse to have a date with your spouse; rent the film, put the kids to bed, make some popcorn and snuggle on the couch. With films from all genres, from sci-fi / action to romantic comedy, you'll be surprised at the directions the discussions take when framed by biblical subject matter!

Anyone interested in further information please contact Laura and Scott, or Brian and Diane.

Sr. High to Host March Dinner

You heard right! Our Sr. High youth will be hosting the monthly fellowship dinner for March. The dinner is March 18th, at 6 PM in Norcross Hall. The menu is as follows....



Corned Beef & Cabbage

New Potatoes

Salad

Bread

Chicken Parmesan

And for the kids...

Hot Dogs

Chicken Nuggets

Macaroni & Cheese

****An assortment of desserts will be available for all****

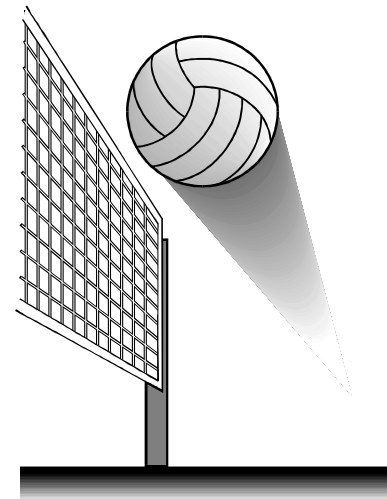
Our Young Adult group will be in charge of cooking this fabulous meal and after dinner we will all play our version of Jeopardy.....Irish style! Sign up sheets will be posted outside Norcross Hall, so be sure to sign up soon! We look forward to seeing you there! - Colleen

Disciple I Class

Are you interested in taking a Disciple I class, but didn't want to commit to 36 straight weeks? Then this may be the class for you. We will be splitting the classes into 3 sessions with the first one to start this Spring and then take a break over the Summer. We will be meeting on Wednesday, March 29th, at 7:00pm in the Staff Lounge (Old Kitchen) for an initial meeting to determine the day and time we will meet for the first session. If you have any questions please call Bill or Leigh.

Creation Festival

If you are a person who is Jr. High age or older and are interested in attending the Creation Festival this year please contact Colleen. Creation is June 28th to July 2nd this year.



Summer Volleyball Tournament

Summer volleyball tourney / festival 1st planning meeting at 12:30 pm on Sunday, March 5th, in the Staff Lounge (old Kitchen). Anyone who is interested in helping or playing is invited to attend. We need lots of willing hands. Contact Tim for more information or visit SPVL.org.

From Pastor James:

Grace and Peace be to you all from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! I pray that all of you are well today in body and soul. I'm writing you today to express my great thanks to God for the time I have shared with all of you over the past several years. To borrow from the Apostle Paul, "I thank God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:3-6).

I do give thanks and praise to God for the privilege of being co-workers in the gospel of Christ with all of you. I thank God for the many opportunities I have had to share the grace of Jesus Christ with you and to build up the Kingdom of God together. And I am very thankful that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church and the Lord of all existence...and that He will be with all of you, and will help you to continue to grow in love and grace.

And yes, dear friends, I feel the call of God to move on from our fellowship and to pursue pastoral ministry in the United Methodist Church. Our last month with you, our brothers and sisters of St. Paul's, will be June of 2006. We are not yet certain where our new call will be, but we are trusting God and praying that God's will be done in our lives and in the Church. Our hearts are open to the Spirit's guidance and direction.

I want you all to know that Meredith and I feel very blessed to have been here with all of you these past four years. As a pastor, I have grown in faith and wisdom (both spiritual and practical), and in love for God and neighbor. And Meredith and I have both felt your love, support, and prayers.

We love you all, and we will miss you very much. I will especially miss the youth and children of St. Paul's. It will be terribly sad and difficult for me to let them go. But I know that they are in the best of hands (God's hands). My greatest joy at St. Paul's has been the opportunity to witness the spiritual growth of our youth and children. It's been so wonderful to see them growing in grace and making the right choices. It's been such a blessing

to see them choosing love...choosing Christ...choosing God's way. I know that we all agree with the thought expressed in 1 John 3, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth." I pray that Meredith and I will always hear this wonderful truth about our children (the children and youth of St. Paul's).

Meredith and I would like to thank you again, dear friends, for your love and kindness toward us. We pray that we have been as great a blessing to you as you have been to us.

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor James

YOUTH GROUP NEWS!!!

Greetings friends! Well, only a few more days until Ash Wednesday arrives and we enter into the Lenten season. Do you happen to know where we get our word "Lent"? It's from the Middle English word "lente", referring to the "lengthening" of days that we experience in the springtime (Most of us won't be too depressed to see the springtime arrive). Isn't that an interesting fact? Hmmm.

Ironically, the first day of Lent (Ash Wednesday) reminds us that our days on earth will not be prolonged forever, but that each of us will die ("Hear this mortal: From dust you were made, and to dust you will return"). May God grant each of us the wisdom and humility to know our place before the Almighty and Eternal LORD (Like our father Abraham prayed to God while pleading for Sodom, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the LORD, I who am but dust and ashes", Gen. 18:27) and to daily surrender our hearts and lives to Him. May God also give each of us the strength, courage, and most of all the love to follow Jesus on the "Via Dolorosa" (The sorrowful road) during this holy season of Lent. May we willingly take up our crosses daily, deny ourselves, and follow Jesus.

Well, our Junior- and Senior-High youth certainly do have an active month this February (Don't worry Angels...you'll catch up this March!) We had the **Senior-High Youth and leaders vs. the Adults Basketball Game on February 4th**, and what an "action-packed" sixty minutes of play that was! Whoa! It was awesome! The adults won 44 to

40, but a good time was had by all (and lots of calories were burned by all), and the youth budget gained about \$400 (Thanks for all your support!).

We also had our **Junior- and Senior-High Ski Retreat at Spruce Lake Christian Retreat Center and Alpine Mountain** on the weekend of **February 10th-12th**. Both of our groups were well represented with six Junior-High and seven Senior-High youth, along with four adult leaders. We had some great recreation time in the gymnasium (with one major collision between Pastor James and Will ...Ouch!), daily devotional time, some great fellowship time (with a really intense game of Taboo!), and two days on the slopes (with no injuries...Rah!) Anyway, we had a great time this year and we appreciate all your prayers on our behalf (especially on the ride home which was a little tricky in the snow).

The Junior-High youth also just finished with their **“Progressive Dinner”** on **February 18th**. The Progressive Dinner is a fellowship event in which we “progress” from house to house and build a meal together. Special thanks to the families for opening their homes up to us (Special thanks also to Meredith who was “on call” to make a meal if need be). We ended-up back at Norcross Hall for some ice cream sundaes and a rousing game of basketball (Special thanks for providing our dessert).

Did you know that **29,000 little children die every day from hunger and hunger-related diseases?** Did you know that **you** can do something to help these precious little ones? Yes you can. **You can be a sponsor in the 30-Hour Famine!**

The 30-Hour Famine is an extremely important annual event for our both our Junior- and senior-High Youth (**Our 30-Hour Famine date is set for Friday, February 24th-25th**). The idea is that we go on a 30-Hour fast (or famine) in order to gain some empathy and understanding for poor and starving children of the world...and we gain sponsors for our fast and send the proceeds to World Vision, a wonderful organization completely dedicated to helping the poorest children of the world.

Sound like a good idea? Sound like something that Jesus Christ would want us to do? Sound like something that you can support as a Christian? I

hope so. Please talk to myself (James) or to one of our Junior- or Senior-High Youth about how you can partner with us (and with World Vision) in the fight against poverty, death and disease. And please pray for our youth, our leaders, and myself; Please pray that as we help lift these beautiful children (who are so beloved of God) out of physical poverty, God will lift us up out of our spiritual poverty (“rich in things yet poor in soul”) and help us to trust less in things and more in God.

Coming soon for the **Junior-High Youth** we have our first annual **St. Patrick’s Day Party on Tuesday, March (from 7 PM to 8:30 PM)**, our Youth Group **“Spring Clean-up/Rent-a-Kid Day” on March 25th** (Let me know if you need your yard or house cleaned-up), our **“Spring Clean-up/Rent-a-Kid Day, Round 2” on April 1st** (no seriously...we are having the Clean-up Day), our Youth Group **“Game Night” on April 25th**, and the **“Walk for Life” (to support the Open Door Pregnancy Center on April 29th**.

Coming soon for our **Angels Youth** will be our **“Movie and Ice Cream”** outing on **March 4th**, our **St. Patrick’s Day Party on March 18th**, a **regular meeting on April 8th** (a **Palm Sunday theme...with a possible visit from “Herbie, the Fickle Pickle”**), and the **“Walk for Life” (to support the “Open Door”)** on **April 29th**.

Just to let all the parents of our 7th-grade (and older) youth know, our **Confirmation process** begins on **March 5th** (Which is our first meeting scheduled for **12:45 PM in Norcross Hall**), and continues for nine sessions throughout the month of May. Confirmation Sunday is scheduled for June 4th (which is also Pentecost Sunday). May the fire of the Holy Spirit fall on us again as we seek to know and trust Jesus more and more during our time together.

Please continue to keep all of our youth and youth leaders in your daily prayers as we strive love both God and neighbor, and to be reflections of the Lord Jesus Christ. May the love of Jesus Christ both strengthen and guide us. Glory to God!

Your Servant in Christ Jesus, Pastor James