



# Epistle

**SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

110 South Street  
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September 2013

## *The Essence of Desire*

I did not have to ask my heart what it wanted, because of all the desires I have ever known just one did I cling to for it was the essence of all desire: to hold beauty in my soul's arms.

St. John of the Cross

This has been a summer of holding beauty in my soul's arms. From the banks of Berry Pond, to the outdoor dance stage of Jacob's Pillow, to the beauty of your faces as I've stood in the pulpit on Sunday mornings, to the joyous spirit of St. Joe's Kitchen on Wednesday nights, the arms of my soul ache with delight from such a bounty of richness. To say "thank you," seems so small and kind of silly, as a response to having been given this opportunity. Yet, it is all I can say, with every fiber of my being – thank you.

Thank you for opening your hearts and homes to me. Thank you for opening your minds and spirits to me. Thank you for rolling up your sleeves and wading into all types of waters with me. Thank you for trusting me enough to share yourselves with me – perhaps that is the greatest gift of all. It is in sharing ourselves, in living more and more into what it is to be the beloved community of God that we most fan into flame the Spirit that we experience as holy.

As I pack up my office here at South Church, I know that in just a few days these boxes will be opened again and unpacked in my new office at Union Congregational Church in Montclair, New Jersey, where I begin immediately as the Assistant Minister of Youth and Young Adults. As I look around at this sweet space, I know it was cleaned, painted, and put together for me by a group of loving hands here, and I take delight in the fact that this has been my first office as a pastor. It has been a perfect container for all of the unfolding and birthing that has happened within and outside of me this summer. As I tape these boxes shut, I know that this experience will go with me into the next chapter of this ministerial journey. This, of course, means that you too, in some way also accompany me. I like to think of all of you as a cloud of witnesses that supports me in this step forward.

Likewise I hope I am leaving behind a bit of myself, and nuggets from our time together, as well. As Joel returns, and you all are reunited, I do not doubt that you all will continue to love each other and hold one another up, in all of the seasons of the life of this community. You will also continue to follow the Spirit's leading, in doing the work that South is specifically called to do in this community and in the world. I would encourage you to keep partnering with our neighboring faith communities – from everything to SNAP challenges, food justice issues, and race talks, to beginning Pittsfield's own Cathedral in the Night worship service. Keep thinking and praying outside of the box, while deepening your spiritual and communal roots. And above all, know that you are loved more than you will ever fully know, by a perfect Love, who is our eternal source, hope, and home. Personally, I have to root myself in this knowledge every day, and it is from this place that we continue to do this daring work of loving each other and this world.

Peace, Love, and Light! Barbara Rice

EPISTLE

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- Ladies Benevolent ..... Marge Demary
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The next *Epistle* deadline is September 29<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m.

**THE VITALITY OF SOUTH CHURCH**

Recently, in Worship someone referred to the "vitality" of South Church. It occurred to me that if we had to choose just one word to describe our church, it would be "vitality." It pervades all activities, from the Food pantry, to Church School, to preparations for the Harvest Fair.

And it also occurred to me that in the word "vitality" is the word "vital." The vitality of South Church has become vital to the church's mission, to the community and to us, its members.

*"Each morning we must hold out the chalice of our being, to receive, to carry, and to give back."*

Dag Hammarskjold

Submitted by Nancy deForest

**GOT BOOKS? We Need Them**

Our Food Pantry book corner is nearly empty. We are looking for children's books. Any easy readers or picture books would be particularly appreciated.

Please bring them with you to church and drop them off outside the church office in the box for them. Thanks for coming through on this as you do on so many requests.



Sandi Smith



**State Forest  
Worship Service  
Sunday,  
September 8<sup>th</sup> at  
10:30 a.m.**

On Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, we will be worshipping in the beautiful Pittsfield State Forest. Following the Service, everyone is invited to a Potluck Picnic. Worship will begin at 10:30 (note the time change) to give us extra time to get to the Ski Lodge that is located to the left just beyond the main gate of the Forest. There is a \$2 charge for parking. (Those over the age of 62 can pick up a senior citizen pass at the State Forest headquarters and park for free.) Carpooling from the Church is another option.

For the picnic, bring your own utensils and plates along with a dish to share. Drinks will be provided. This is a great opportunity to worship in a fresh way and to experience God anew, as well as have a fun time sharing in food and fellowship. Please plan to join us! If you need additional details, please call the church office at 442-7357.

**Directions to Pittsfield State Forest:**

Proceed along on West St. (toward BCC); take a right onto Churchill Street then a left onto Cascade Street, which then takes a sharp right; proceed to the entrance hut. Going past the hut, take the road on the left, about 2/10<sup>th</sup> of a mile, and proceed to the first parking area near the Ski Lodge, the first brown building on the right with picnic tables. We'll be there!

**THANK YOU, PAULA**

My sincere thanks to Paula for her fine work on the July/August issue of the *Epistle*. In addition to all her regular office duties, she managed to format, edit, reproduce, collate, address and mail 203 copies of the newsletter, which were received in the homes right on schedule.

We are grateful to you for all you do, Paula.

Priscilla Anthony, Editor

## CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS



The summer for children and youth ministries was one of spiritual growth and fellowship. In July, the youth and I joined Barbara Rice on a trip to Northampton along with members of South Church and St. Stephen's Church. We participated in "Cathedral in the Night," a

spiritual service with a meal offered to the community afterward. A similar program is being considered by churches here in Pittsfield, in which our youth could participate as part of their mission's ministry. Afterward, we walked the lovely downtown of Northampton, visiting a candy store and frozen yogurt shop!

The children and youth joined together in late July for a pool party at my house. It was a beautiful day; the little ones loved the water and the youth enjoyed helping out and spending time with them. We had a wonderful time swimming, drinking lemonade and making our own sundaes!

Sunday school themes for the summer learning included recognizing the real treasures in life and exploring what helps us have courage to follow Jesus' way, even when it is difficult to do. Activities included constructing prayer books, creating treasure chests for the real riches in life and an introduction to molding with clay. Overall, a wonderful summer enjoyed by all!

Looking ahead, September 15th will be the opening day of Sunday school. Registration will start at 9:30 am. Classes will begin at 10 am. Registration will also be open for families after classes from 11-11:30 am for their convenience. We will be continuing on with the Whole People of God curriculum for the school year. It follows the same lectionary which Joel uses for his weekly Sunday sermons and reflections. I personally love that, as it sends the same spiritual message to each family member every Sunday.

Lastly, Alma Blafield and I have met several times over the month planning an art workshop for the children and youth titled Celebrating Autumn. We are both very excited to announce this! The workshop will be held Sunday, September 22nd from 10 am-11am during Sunday school classes .

We will be creating art using objects from nature. The project will be an expanded version of the art activity from the Whole People of God curriculum for that week's lesson. This will be a wonderful opportunity for the children and youth to be involved in, as art and creativity feeds the soul!

So... everyone get ready... it's going to be a great year!

Special thanks to Pat Hill, Sally LeBarron and Ariana Rinaldi for their help and support this summer. Also to Sarah Hill, Pat and Bob's lovely granddaughter from North Carolina, who joined us for the summer session.

Ann Roche

Children and Youth Ministries

## Walk for Diabetes

This fall is the 17th year that Roger's Team has Walked for Diabetes. The team is named after Roger Grant, my brother, who died in 1984, at age of 43, from multiple complications of Type I Diabetes.



This year the Walk will be sponsored by Berkshire Medical Center with support from Roger's Team. Proceeds will support BMC's Diabetes Patient Needs Fund. The purpose of this fund is to reduce financial barriers to care for patients with diabetes and offer support for patient education and medical care, including emergency medication.

We will walk on the Ashuwillticook Trail, starting at Farnham's Crossing, Cheshire, on Sunday, September 22 at 9:30 AM. We would love to have you walk with us to raise money. If not, your contribution is welcome.

Join us or send a check with Roger's Team noted in the memo section, to BMC Diabetic Education, 725 North Street, Pittsfield, or call (413) 395-7942 with any questions - ask for Tammy or Jan. All contributions are tax deductible and will be acknowledged.

Our goal for this year is \$2500. Sign-up sheet is in the Parlor at South Congregational Church.

Audra J Kinner, Captain of Roger's Team  
3 Smith Road, New Ashford, MA 01237  
(413) 458-0971 [audrajkinner@aol.com](mailto:audrajkinner@aol.com)

## LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Well, here we are again heading into fall. The Harvest Craft Fair is just around the corner. Since the quilt for the Fair is completely finished, we are concentrating on making some table runners, pot holders, dolls, and even some pocketbooks. New ideas keep coming up and we would welcome anyone who would like to join us.

Lisa Stuart has been coming quite regularly. If you would like to stop in and visit with her she would love to see you.

We are coming up with ideas for the Miniature Christmas Trees and hope to get started on them soon.

*Speaking of that....if any of you gentlemen have ties, regular or bow ties that you would like to recycle, please bring them to the church office. I am making a Christmas tree for Steven Valenti's window and for personal use, and need more ties, tie tacks, and cuff links. Thank you!*

Marge Demary

## FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry has had a very busy summer with many guests participating, over 300 families a week. Thank you to Lynn Reynolds, her grandchildren, Sato, Heather, Helen and all the faithful workers – for bringing the food smoothly from stores and warehouses to the tables in Barrett Hall and to the people. The workers all did a fantastic job!

South Church, with the help of the other food pantries, is once again hosting the Thanksgiving Turkey giveaway. Our share consists of some turkeys and 800 pies. If you are willing to donate either turkeys or pies, you can bring them to the church and put them in our freezer.

As I write, the new walk-in cooler and freezer should be coming soon to our pantry. Thank you, church members for a wonderful gift to all the people of the community!

Mary Wheat



## Church Mailboxes

Attention:

All Boards and Committees

Please remember to check your mailboxes near the red carpet area. We noticed some of them are getting quite full over the summer months. Thank you.

## SOUTH CHURCH BOOK CLUB

Our next Book Club meeting is Sunday, September 1<sup>st</sup>. Hope you can be there to discuss **Breakfast With Buddha**, which I loved. I have also attached our reading through the month of February. Please take a minute and look over the list and if you are having second thoughts about any of the books, let us know. We can always make changes to our list. Hope all are well.

October: ***Change in selection!***

Sacred Journey by Frederick Buechner

November:

The Memory of Skin by Russell Banks

December:

The Forgotten Waltz by Anne Enright

January:

Night Road by Kristin Hannah

February:

The Lower River by Paul Throux  
Pam Kueppers



## MINIATURE CHRISTMAS TREES

Once again we will be auctioning off miniature Christmas Trees at our November 9<sup>th</sup> Craft Fair. We need your help in creating the trees. They will be on display beginning October 9<sup>th</sup> in Steven Valenti's store window on North Street as well as at the Fair. Bids will be taken at Valenti's and the day of the Fair.

On Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup> and Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, trees will be available for us to work on together or separately. So come join the fun and create masterpieces! The October 9<sup>th</sup> display date will be here before we know it. Hope to see you there!

Mary Wheat



**SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
Through 8/1/2013

**FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

The Trustees have been very busy this summer implementing and coordinating the following facility projects:

Nearly fifty windows have been replaced with energy efficient units. Not only will there be a reduction in heating costs, but also a savings on maintenance since all painting will be eliminated. Unlike the old knuckle breaker windows, the new windows can be operated with ease.

The parking area and driveway have been repaved. Line striping will be done in September.

The old split rail fence around the perimeter of parking lot has been replaced.

Restoration has started in the back room of the Barrett Hall kitchen. Plans are in the works to upgrade the rest of the kitchen, later this year.

A new walk-in freezer and a cooler for the food pantry have been installed. The capacity of these units will at least double that of the existing freezers and refrigerators.

Other projects in the works are: Replacing the sign on our front lawn, coating all the flat roof surfaces of the brick addition, and installing a new roof for the steeple including painting of the bell tower.

Without the funds from the estates of Edna Dunbar and Gran Pruyne, these projects could not have gone forward. Also, a grant from the Food Bank and a memorial gift from the Lyon family added to the funds for these projects.

Thanks to Board members, Dave Boyce, Bruce Collingwood, Chet Gallup, Don Roche, and Bob Hill for their tireless effort to implement these projects.

=====  
"Do what you can, with what you have,  
where you are."  
Theodore Roosevelt

		YTD	ANNUAL
Income		Actual	Budget
	Operating	\$107,436	\$174,502
		YTD	ANNUAL
Expenses		Actual	Budget
	Salaries	\$78,229	\$ 146,230
	Operating	<u>\$45,603</u>	<u>\$ 80,200</u>
	Total	\$123,832	\$ 226,430
Net Surplus (Deficit)		\$(16,396)	\$ (51,928)

This statement is a condensed version of the Treasurer's report using YTD data for the first seven months of 2013.

**SPECIAL NOTICE ON PARKING**

A parking Agreement between South Church and the Pittsfield Masonic Association (PMA) was signed on August 24, 2013.

The following are highlights of the Agreement: Fourteen (14) spaces along the western edge of the PMA lot have been allocated to South Church for exclusive use. Signs will be installed to identify these spaces.

Parking in the PMA lot in excess of the allocated spaces is prohibited Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 AM and 5 PM; violators will be towed at the owner's expense.

The entire PMA lot, except for the two Handicapped spaces, will be open for South Church parishioners attending Sunday morning service.

Parking in the PMA lot beyond the allocated spaces may be allowed for special events held by South Church. Advance notice must be given to PMA for their review and approval.

This Agreement is in effect until October 1st, 2014.

Dale Prindle, Board of Trustees

**Lord & Tailor Gift and Thrift Shop at South Church  
TAG SALE on Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.**



In order to have a successful sale, we need assistance with the following ...

**Your Donations:** Furniture, Bookcases, Housewares, Clothes,  
Collectibles, and “What Have You”

**Time:** Volunteers are needed to set up on the Friday (Sept. 13,  
from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.)- and to help out at the Sale and/or with clean-up on  
Saturday (Sept. 14)

**Shop & Spread the Word:** Come check out the sale for treasures and  
tell all your friends!

**Also Needed:** Any spare, sturdy clothes racks to display clothing

Thanks for your support of South Church.

### **LORD & TAILOR NEWS**

Fall is approaching, and our summer clothes will soon be put away. We still have a good assortment of summer items, however, and great bargains on our dollar rack as well as our skirt sale.

This month we will be able to give \$600 to the church, for a total of \$3600 so far this year. You can help us help the church by donating items to our upcoming tag sale on **September 14 from 9 to 3.** Hope to see you there! Thanks for all you do to help us,

Audra Kinner and Nancy deforest

**MODERATOR'S MUSINGS**

This *Epistle* is filled with news of upcoming events, projects, services, and the people who are part of our church community.

I invite all who are in the Berkshires on September 1<sup>st</sup> to come to our worship hour and join in the tribute and thanks to Barbara Rice, our Peirson summer intern. Joel will be back to lead the service. We will bid Barbara a fond farewell, knowing that she has the skills to be a truly wonderful pastor. Barbara has led our church this summer with kindness, intellect, insight into scripture, and a deep, abiding compassion for all of the people of God's world. Thank you, Barbara.

Please read what Dale Prindle and the amazing Trustees have been doing and planning this summer. John Robertson explains the process for the capital campaign feasibility study and why your input is so important. Thank them all for their caring stewardship of this place.

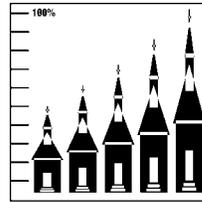
Take a moment to read Ann Roche's plans, whether you have children or not. Do you know a family with children or youth who might benefit from the loving and creative nurture in faith that Ann's team will be providing? Invite them to South Church!

Our fearless ladies are doing another tag sale. Here's your chance to get rid of that old eyesore. Decorate a miniature tree to benefit the food pantry, or work on the food distribution team. Perhaps you would enjoy the retired men's Tuesday noon discussion group, crafts, quilting, or the monthly May Mattoon Class. Come try out our groups as the new season begins. You will find groups listed by time and place on our new website: [southchurchpittsfield.org](http://southchurchpittsfield.org).

Renew yourself this autumn. Worship regularly at South. Engage with us. Share in our faith community. We'll look forward to seeing you again!  
Mary Rentz, Moderator

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“Promise me you'll always remember:  
You're braver than you believe,  
stronger than you seem,  
and smarter than you think.”  
Winnie the Pooh



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

**CAPITAL FUND STUDY UPDATE**

This summer has been a very active summer for the Trustees. Reading Dale Prindle's Trustees report will tell you how active they have been.

These improvements funded with memorial gifts are the first phase of capital upgrades the Board of Trustees has been working on for the last few years.

The second phase of upgrades referred to in Dale's report involves other projects that will need more than present memorial funds to finance them.

The Capital Fund Study Committee with help from our UCC consultant have put together a wish list of capital improvements to be considered. Other improvements include; new pew cushions, painting of the outside front of the sanctuary, a new sanctuary roof and a reserve fund to support future repairs. A Capital Drive provides 10% of the monies raised to go to church mission. Much of that 10% will remain in-house to support our church Food Pantry mission. The sum of these projects, plus mission, plus administration costs lead the committee to recommend a goal of \$250,000 to be raised over a three-year period. Yes, that's a big number. Is it realistic??

The weekend of Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, the 29<sup>th</sup>, UCC consultant Jennifer Davis and Rev. Jay Terbush will be at South Church to interview members of the church to ascertain their vision and level of support for South. Through these interviews, the consultant will be able to determine if we, as a church, can accomplish our goal. They will report to the Church Council within two weeks, whereas the council will ask for a congregational meeting in October to vote on proceeding ahead with a Capital Drive, and at what financial level.

Within the next two weeks, many of you will be receiving a letter of invitation to be interviewed on the weekend of September 27-29. Someone from the Capital Committee will be calling you to set up a 30-minute confidential interview with our consultant. You will not be asked for a gift at that time, but will be asked about your interest and willingness to support the effort. When the call comes, be open and receptive to the needs and future of the South Church mission. John Robertson, Chair

## **MISSION BOARD**

The Mission Board is exploring and learning about The Berkshire Organizing Sponsoring Committee. This committee “seeks to build a broad-based, multi-issue organization rooted in our faith and democratic values, that can help us gain an increased voice in the decisions that shape our lives and communities, increase our participation in democracy, and help us create a more just community.”

Wendy Krom, whom some of you may have met when she was at a South Church service, is the lead organizer. She will be present at our mission board meeting this coming month in order to help us understand what this encompasses.

For those who wish to learn more, there will be a meeting on Monday, September 16, at 6-8:30 pm at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church. I will leave some fliers with Paula in the office for anyone who would like to read about and/or get involved in this endeavor.

Jean Robertson

### ***SYMPTOMS OF INNER PEACE***

Tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than from fear based on past experience; and an unmistakable ability to enjoy every moment.

Loss of interest in:  
judging other people;  
interpreting the actions of others;  
conflict and loss of ability to worry.

Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.  
Contented feelings of connectedness with others and with nature.  
Frequent attacks of smiling through the eyes of the heart.

Increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.  
Increasing susceptibility to love extended by others, as well as the urge to love.

If you have exhibited any of the above symptoms please infect someone you love!

## **WE CAN PROJECT**

Following is an email received from Russell Moody at the Pittsfield Church of Christ. The Food



Pantry is purchasing 15 cases, which will be returned filled with tomatoes and carrots.

*Dear Friends,*

*We are moving ahead with the "We Can Project": canning stew tomatoes and carrots for our meal sites for the fall and winter months. Friends of the Giving Garden have invested \$900 and purchased two commercial canners and 27 cases of wide-mouth quart mason jars to begin. Working in conjunction with the Unitarian church, 1000 tomato plants have been planted and a 30x30 plot of carrots as well. What we need now are wide mouth quart mason jars. Our goal is to fill 2000 jars this year.*

*If there are individuals in our churches and synagogues that would like to purchase a case for the effort that would be greatly appreciated. Bart Raser and Carr Hardware are offering a special price for a case of jars for this project. His deal comes out to less than \$1 a jar. If people would like to designate purchases for a specific meal site, we will do our best to fill those jars for that specific effort. This is exciting stuff and we need to get the word out. Purchases can be made at Carr Hardware any day of the week. In the future we think we will need two more canners which will allow us to can 80 jars every 3 hours – a very doable project, indeed. Call 443-5611 and tell Bart Raser and Carr Hardware "WE CAN!"*

*In other news, the Giving Garden doubled its size this year. Next year we are going to quadruple the size of our garden. We have big plans to put a hurtin' on hunger in Pittsfield.*

*Sincerely,*

*Russell Moody*

*Giving Garden, We Can Project  
Pittsfield Church of Christ*

# September

# 2013

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
1 Sunday Worship With Communion 10 am Women's Book Club 11:30 am	2 <b>LABOR DAY</b>	3 Men's Forum 12 noon	4 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am UCC Clergy Meeting 12 noon St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	5 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Chancel Choir 7 pm	6 Lord & Tailor 10 am – 4 pm AA 6:15 pm	7 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12-4 pm
8 Sunday Worship at Pittsfield State Forest 10:30 am with Potluck Picnic to follow	9 May Mattoon Covered Dish Supper 6 pm	10 Men's Forum 12 noon Diaconate 7 pm Mission Board 7:15 pm Pittsfield Squares 7 pm	11 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm Trustees 6 pm	12 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am Berk Emergency Food Meeting 1 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm	13 Set up for Lord & Tailor Tag Sale 9 am- 2 pm	14 Lord & Tailor TAG SALE 9 am-3pm AA 10:15 am (Parlor)
15 Sunday Worship 10 am Sunday School Opening  "House Church" In the Parlor 7 pm	16 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	17 Men's Forum 12 noon Pittsfield Squares 7 pm	18 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am Berkshire Place Worship 10:45 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	19 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class (TBA) Chancel Choir 7 pm	20 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 p.m. AA 6:15 pm	21 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12 noon-4 pm Pittsfield Squares 7pm
22 Sunday Worship 10 am Children/Youth Art Workshop "Celebrating Autumn" 10-11 am  Berkshire Diabetic Walk "Roger's Team"	23 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	24 Men's Forum 12 noon Church Council 7 pm Pittsfield Squares 7 pm	25 Food Pantry 8-11 am Church & Ministry 4 pm St. Joe's Dinner 5:00 pm	26 Food Pantry 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class (TBA) Chancel Choir 7pm	27 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm Capital Campaign Feasibility Study	28 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12 noon-4 pm Capital Campaign Feasibility Study
29 Sunday Worship 10 am Capital Campaign Feasibility Study  <i>Epistle Deadline 11 am`</i>	30 Yarn Spinners 7 pm	OCT 1 May Mattoon Noon Men's Forum 12 noon Pittsfield Squares 7 pm	OCT 2 Food Pantry 8 – 11 am St. Joe's Dinner 5 pm	OCT 3 8:30-11:30 am Ladies Benevolent 9:30 am 12-Step Class (TBA) Chancel Choir 7pm	OCT 4 Lord & Tailor 10 am-4 pm AA 6:15 pm	OCT 5 AA 10:15 am Lord & Tailor 12 noon-4 pm