

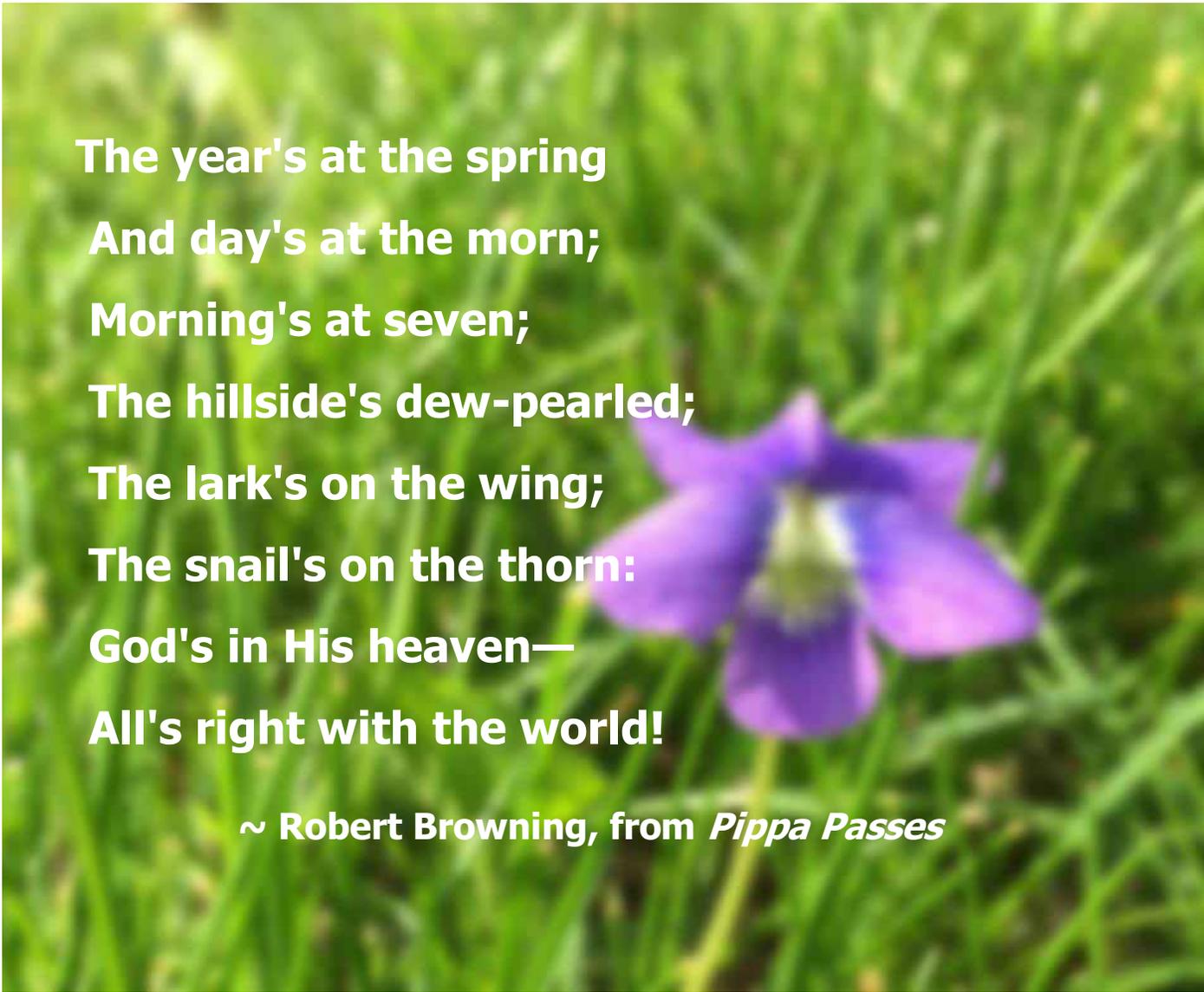
Reflections

from
the
Valley

Valley Presbyterian Church
Newsletter

Volume 35, Number 4

May 2016



The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world!

~ Robert Browning, from *Pippa Passes*

May Worship Notes

May 1st – Sixth Sunday of Easter - Communion

Acts 16:9-15

Revelation 21:10; 21:22-25

Psalm 67

John 14:23-29 or John 5:1-9

May 8th – Seventh Sunday of Easter – Mother’s Day

- Rev. Susan Olson, Guest Preacher

Acts 16:16-34

Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21

Psalm 97

John 17:20-26

May 15th – Pentecost – Confirmation

Acts 2:1-21 or Genesis 11:1-9

Romans 8:14-17

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

John 14:8-17 (25-27)

May 22nd – Trinity Sunday

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Romans 5:1-5

Psalm 8

John 16:12-15

May 29th – Second Sunday after Pentecost – “Doing Sunday”

I Kings 18:20-21 (22-29) 30-39

Galatians 1:1-12

Psalm 96

Luke 7:1-10

Rev. Adele will be on Study Leave from May 8th to May 14th attending a worship conference at Zephyr Pointe Presbyterian Conference Center, Lake Tahoe, NV. If you should have a pastoral emergency during that time, please contact Terri Flanagan at either the office during regular hours (Tuesday thru Thursday from 9 to 3) or on her cell at any other time. Terri will put you in touch with the clergy on call.

On May 8th we'll welcome back to our pulpit the Rev. Susan Olson. Rev. Susan has led worship for us several times over the years, so it feels like we're welcoming back a good friend! Currently, she serves as Director of Career Services at Yale Divinity School. Her prior calls have included chaplaincies at Wilson, Wesley and Connecticut Colleges as well as at Yale University. She lives in New Haven, CT with her daughter, Selam.

Notes from the Choir Room

During May, our Choir and Handbell Ensemble will offer the following:

- May 1 – “God Loved the World So Much” – Patricia Owens / Buryl Red
- May 8– “Immortal Love, Forever Full – Eugene Butler
- May 15 – Handbells: “Our Great Savior” – HYFRODOL, arr. Patricia S. Cota
- Choir: “Come, Holy Ghost” – Orlando Gibbons
- May 22 – “Hymn to the Trinity” – Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
- May 29 – “In All Things” – Patrick O’Shea

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

Worship the LORD with gladness;

come into his presence with singing. (Psalm 100:1-2)



Deacon News



One of the more “fun” activities that the Deacons engage in is the preparation of “College Care Packages” for Valley students who are facing exams. At our last meeting, we put together six goodie boxes to send off filled with yummy (although not necessarily healthy) treats and containers of colorful modeling clay to help reduce the stress of cramming.

Here’s a photo of Sarah Attanasio getting ready for a study session -- with her stash from the Valley Care Package.

Along with the “brain” food, we send our love and good wishes to Sarah and all of our students preparing for finals. We can’t wait to see them during summer break.

Sabbath Saturday Worship

-- Rev. Adele Crawford

A few months ago, Judy and Dan Cunningham casually suggested to me that, every now and then, we try worshipping on Saturday evening instead of Sunday morning. “Oh no!” I said. “That would never work.” Mere weeks later I read a blog post from NEXT Church written by a Presbyterian pastor in Idaho who is doing just that, once a month. “Huh,” I thought. The following Sunday was Daylight Savings Time/Spring Forward/Lose-an-hour-of-sleep weekend, and I jokingly said in the Words of Welcome that maybe next year we should try a Saturday night worship on this weekend and not worry about getting to church on time. A few days later there was an article on Facebook about a Presbyterian church in Minnesota who was doing it, twice a month no less, and they loved it. I was intrigued.

A couple years ago in the fall I taught a class on Sabbath keeping (looking around Valley it seemed like a subject we could study). There were a lot of people who said they wanted to take the class, but they were...wait for it...too busy. Too busy, so busy, crazy busy...I hear these phrases from lots of folks here at Valley, and of all ages. Super busy with work and kids and sports and school. So busy with doctors appointments and family obligations. Busy busy busy. I get it. I’m as guilty of it as anyone. I’ve preached on it, led quiet day retreats, weekend retreats, special worship services that seek to undo some of the busy. But we wear “Busy” as a badge of honor, a label that says we are important to someone or something or both. Indispensable even.

You know what God says about all that? “P’shaw. I made the Sabbath for you! A day of rest from work for you to enjoy the good creation I have made—also for you!” (Mark 2:27, my, uh, translation). Gone are the days when regular worship attendance meant coming every Sunday. Nowadays, regular for most people means 2-3 times a month, and then we race off for other tasks. So the Session decided that this summer, just for the summer, we would try something different. We would try to be something different. We would try Saturday Sabbath Worship.

On the fourth weekend in June and in August, instead of worshipping on Sunday at 10 AM, we will gather on Saturday at 5 PM. Our service will be much like our Sunday morning pattern, though perhaps a bit more casual. We may even hang out a bit afterward and enjoy supper together. Then on Sunday, we will spend the day in Sabbath, together in intention, but in our own separate ways and places. We’ll commit to purposely *stopping*. There are no rules, but some guidelines to give ourselves might be: try to do nothing from obligation; pay attention to the struggle to stop and offer even that as a gift of gratitude; get outdoors some, play some, do something that gives you delight; be with others if we are alone a lot; be alone if our lives are crowded. Mostly, we should make the day different than our ordinary days, pay attention to what our souls need, and rest. And we’ll have a blessing we can say at home at the end of our day.

I know this will sound a little scary to some of you. Frankly, it's a little scary to me. All my life my week has been patterned around church on Sunday morning. Weeks when I am on vacation and don't attend church always feel odd to me; I have trouble knowing what day it is without traditional worship as a marker. And while I recognize the way patterns comfort me, I also see how they bind me and inhibit my growth. And that is not what God desires for me, or for any of us.

We will do several things to help us explore this idea:

- An opportunity for us to read and reflect together about Sabbath using Wayne Mueller's book, [Sabbath: Find Rest, Renewal and Delight in our Busy Lives](#)
- Reminder calls from your deacons the day or two before
- A sign for visitors who come on Sundays telling them what we are doing
- And we will publicize this as much as we can!

The Rev. Kara Root, pastor of Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church in Minnesota, wrote this about their experiment-turned-pattern:

*Sabbath, we discovered, is a revolutionary, counter-cultural practice that reorients us to God's presence and prominence in our lives and the world. It helps us notice and remember **whose we are**—that we belong to a living God for whom resting is part of creating, and whose Spirit is moving in our lives and the world, even when we are too distracted or busy to notice. And Sabbath reminds us **who we are**—individually and communally. We are created in God's image, set free to live out our particularity instead of being enslaved and defined by production or consumption.*

We will talk more about this in the coming weeks, but please note Sabbath Saturday Worship in your calendar for **Saturday, June 25 and Saturday, August 27 at 5 PM**, and no Sunday service on June 26 or August 28. And maybe, invite a friend?

Grace and peace,

Rev. Adele

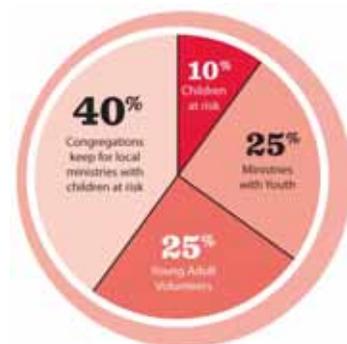




The Pentecost Offering

For a long time Valley has participated in *One Great Hour of Sharing*, a denominational offering we collect around Easter benefiting disaster assistance, hunger programs, and self-development of people. There are three other offerings taken by the PC(USA): *Christmas Joy*, benefitting retired pastors in financial need; *Peace and Global Witness*, taken on World Communion Sunday for mission around the world; and the *Pentecost* offering. This year, the Session has decided also to participate in the *Pentecost* offering.

The *Pentecost* offering is special for two reasons. First, it supports ministries geared to children, youth and young adults, helping to give people in their first third of life a strong faith foundation on which to build. Second, while 60% of this offering goes to the denomination, 40% stays right here at Valley to be used for the benefit of children, youth and young adults in our midst or in our area. Denominational funds support the Young Adult Volunteer program, where college graduates may spend a year or two working for Christ's church in the US or abroad in various mission settings; it supports youth gatherings, such as Presbyterian Youth Triennium, when 5,000+ young people gather for a week of faith formation, service and fun, building them up as future leaders in the body of Christ; it supports ministries with at-risk children and advocacy on their behalf.



Here at home, the 40% that remains at Valley will be used in several ways. This year, for the first time, we have a young man—Walter Manuel—attending Presbyterian Youth Triennium at Purdue University in July. Walter will be the only delegate to attend from the Presbytery of Southern New England, and one of only seven young people going from the greater New England region. Expenses for Triennium are customarily shared between the youth/family, the church and the presbytery, so this year a portion of our Pentecost offering will help Walter attend PYT. The remaining money collected will be used to support our burgeoning youth program here at Valley.

As we celebrate the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the exciting if somewhat terrifying force of God compelling us to go and *be* the Church, let us also celebrate our children, youth and young adults. They are not the future of the church; they are the church *now*. Please give as generously as you are able (make checks payable to Valley and write "Pentecost" in the memo). We will dedicate the offering on Pentecost/Confirmation Sunday, May 15.

FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP

The results for the first quarter of 2016 are encouraging, and show an operating surplus, thanks primarily to early payment of pledges by a few large donors. Income to date for April shows a drop in receipts from pledges and plate cash, so we will have a deficit for the month.

Operating expenses are close to budget, with higher than expected electrical costs being a cause for concern. B&G is looking at options to help in this area.

Receipts for One Great Hour of Sharing are just under \$1,700, which is approximately \$100 more than last year.

Feel free to contact me or Terri Flanagan if you have any questions about our budget or projections for the year.

Jeff Henriques, Treasurer

MISSIONS

MISSION COMMITTEE met twice in April. We reviewed, as we do routinely, some of the organizations we support. It was decided not to continue the sponsorship of the two children through World Vision and redirect those funds to our IRIS co-sponsorship with the Congregational Church of Brookfield. The rationale was that the annual reports we received did not reflect that the sponsorships were benefitting the children enough.



NOROC: (New Opportunities for Romanian Orphaned Children) We will continue to contribute funds to NOROC with the designation that it is for the "BIG HEARTED GRANNIES" fund. The way this program works is NOROC engages women who have retired to go to the orphanages where the infants are and rock them and socialize with them. The grannies receive small funds for this, and the babies do better with the socialization. A check for the bread made by Georgiann Sutor (some \$104 to date) was also sent.

TAG SALE: The Tag Sale will be held on Saturday, July 30th. This year, we will accept gently used clothing as there appears to be a renewed interest in purchasing. We will not, however, take shoes. If the way be clear, we will start collecting items in the big room downstairs after our Sunday School finishes. We will then be able to do the pricing over a longer period of time. We will also need racks and hangers to the display the clothes. If you have any, or know where we can borrow some for the sale, let Judy Cunningham know.

ANN'S PLACE-FESTIVAL OF THE TREES: It was decided we would again donate a tree. Tentatively the theme is "HOPE IS ALIVE". This is to showcase all the good works/deeds that people and organizations do every day, and to counter the news that reports only disasters and the bad things people do. If this is something that interests you, speak with Georgiann Sutor.

VETERANS' SUNDAY HONOR BOARD: The committee is in the process of putting together an honor board for veterans. You will not need a picture, but if you have one, that's great. You are invited to honor all veterans, not just in your family, and they do not have to be members of Valley. We just need the name, when they served or what branch of the service they were in.

We also are making the following contributions:

- * AMERICARES: \$500 specifically for their free clinics, particularly the one in Danbury;
- * CHASEFU/ZAMBIA: \$500 to build the school on the Seminary campus;
- * CONN. FOOD BANK: \$150 specifically for the school backpack program;
- * INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE: \$500 - a good organization that helps refugees;
- * LIVING WATERS FOR THE WORLD: \$300
- * MENAUL SCHOOL, Albuquerque, NM-\$300 (We also collect box tops and labels that they use to purchase computer supplies and programs. This program provided \$5,000 for the program last year.) Don't know about the box top/label program? Look for information near the mission bulletin board.

* PIM (Presbyterian Immigrant Ministry)- \$500. This program is in the process of becoming a supported mission of Presbytery, but funds are needed for support during this period of transition.

DOROTHY DAY SANDWICH SUNDAY will be May 22nd. We are now making 50 ham and cheese and 50 turkey and cheese sandwiches for lunches. Thanks to all who help with the sandwiches and provide the meal pans. Don't know about the meal pans? Speak with Judy Cunningham for the schedule and the recipe. Pans are due back the same day as we make the sandwiches.

"As you have done it unto the least, you have done it unto me".

Judy Cunningham, chair



Date/Time	Event
Fri-Sat: May 6-7	Art, Faith & Worship – Presbytery of Southern New England Opportunities for Retreat, Presbytery Worship and Workshop
Sat, May 7 9:30 am	Presbytery Meeting – Wallingford, CT
Sun, May 8 10 am	Rev. Susan Olson, Guest Preacher
Sat, May 14 9 am	Men's Breakfast, "My Place", Newtown
	5 pm
Sun, May 15 10 am	Pentecost / Confirmation Sunday
	11:30 am
	GAP – Hike
	11:30 am
	CHASM
	1 pm
	Single Senior's Brunch – 189 Federal Road
Sat, May 21 9 – Noon	Lovin' Our Church a Waffle Lot
Sun, May 22 11:15 am	Dorothy Day Sandwich Preparation
	11:30 am
	Session Meeting
Sun, May 29 10 am	"Doing Sunday"
Tue, May 31	Church Office Closed – Memorial Day Holiday



Notes from The Director of Family Ministries

Our April Service Auction was so much fun!! It was an evening full of sharing gifts, laughing, competing, and making memories. We took a biblical quiz prior to bidding to determine how much "Valley Money" we had to spend. I believe some of our participants had over \$600 to spend. It was a tough quiz that sent several scrambling for their Google app to check their answers! Once points were converted into "Valley Bucks," we made our way into the sanctuary for some serious bidding paddle action! Many things were split or shared because the interest was so intense! I even heard someone say..."I wish we could do that more often!" I agree! Enjoy cashing in on all those fabulous prizes you won and spending time with your church family.



We love our Church a WAFFLE lot!!!

Mark your calendars!!! Get ready for a delicious **Saturday morning, May 21** from **9am-12pm**. This is a chance for us to give back to our beloved church. We will start the morning with a **Waffle Bar**, fill our bellies, and then give some **love** to the lower level of our church.

There are **SEVERAL** tasks to be completed to make the lower level a more welcoming and cohesive space. If you accept the challenge...you will be assigned a task.

Children will be given assignments as well. Let's have some fun doing Mission for our own church! Sign up in the narthex as soon as possible.



Director of Family Ministries

Megan Christian



Revised Building Use Policy: Valley is now a gun-free zone

For some months now, the Session has been working to revise our Building Use Policy. With the Montessori School gone, it seemed like a good opportunity to evaluate our spaces and revise our suggested donation list for outside groups using our property. We also needed to simplify the application process for space usage so that we could respond within a few days to requests, instead of a month or more. A working group was appointed by Session last fall, comprised of Judy Cunningham (Ruling Elder), Terri Flanagan (Church Administrator), Colin Harrison (Chair of the Dream Team, which last spring envisioned new uses for our Lower Level) and Granville Reed (Chair, Building & Grounds).

The final proposal came before Session at the new year, and included a recommendation that Valley become a gun-free zone. We are already an alcohol-free, drug-free and smoke-free building. After exploring recommendations from the denomination, hearing from advocates both for and against such a policy, prayerful consideration and lengthy discussion, the Session voted at its April meeting to adopt the policy as recommended. Except for qualified law enforcement officers, no person is allowed to carry a gun on our campus. Thank you to Judy, Terri, Colin and Granville for their diligent work over these last six months. If you have questions or concerns, please speak with a member of Session.

Welcome Audrey & Julia

We're so pleased to welcome Audrey and Julia Garcia who joined Valley by Reaffirmation of Faith on April 24th. The sisters have lived in Bethel for 14 years and were confirmed at St. Mary's Catholic Church. Julia is graduating from Bethel High School this year and is looking forward to attending UCONN in the fall. Audrey is a freshmen at Bethel High. They attended Youth Conference at Montreat Presbyterian Center with their cousins last summer and upon return, they began worshiping with us here at Valley.



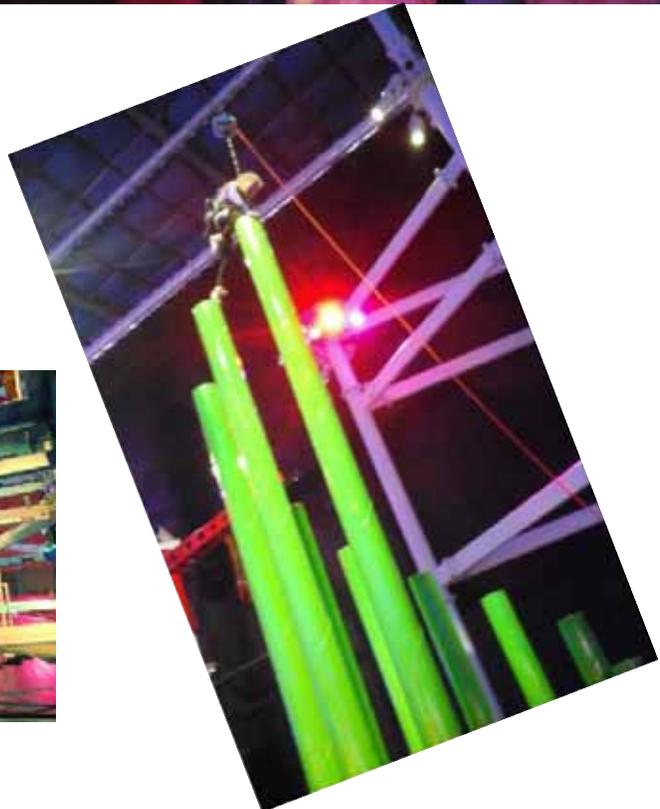
Rony meets with our newest members, Audrey (l) and Julia (r) Garcia

Valley Scrapbook



At our first Women's Retreat weekend, at Hallelujah Farm in New Hampshire (left)

Our CHASM and GAP kids at IT Adventure Ropes Course in New Haven (below).



Single Seniors Brunch

Sunday, May 15 – 1 p.m.

It was a long winter ... and our Single Seniors have been looking for a new venue since the surprise closure of The Inn at Newtown. Well, the search is finally over!! We're looking forward to meeting at --"189" on Federal Road in Brookfield, across from Costco, --on Sunday, May 15th. Join us for good food and, best of all, great companionship! All single seniors are welcome. What constitutes a "senior?" If you've received a greeting from AARP, you are "in" and cordially invited to join us.



June

Newsletter

DEADLINE

Friday, May 20th

Email articles to: valleypresct@gmail.com

**Valley Presbyterian Church
21 West Whisconier Road
Brookfield, CT 06804**

VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**21 West Whisconier Road
Brookfield, CT 06804
Telephone: (203) 775-2624**

**Pastor: The Rev. Adele Crawford
Director of Music: Max Vladimiroff
Director of Family Ministries: Megan Christian
Church Office Admin: Terri Flanagan
Pastor Emerita: The Rev. Ann Beams**

**WORSHIP SERVICE
SUNDAY, 10:00 A.M.**

**ADULT STUDY, 9:00 A.M.
and
CHURCH SCHOOL 10:20 AM**

