

“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” Matthew 18:20

Few days ago, as I was praying and reflecting on this well-known and commonly used Bible verse, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” I grabbed my Bible and read the context from where it emerged (Matthew 18: 15-20). I went on to study the Scripture passage and reflect on Jesus’ words of advice and promise ““For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” While researching and studying it, I found an article that I want to share with you. Please, grab your Bible and read passage (Matthew 18:15-20), as well this article and reflect on the implications to our life as disciples of Jesus the Christ.

A Storytelling Commentary on Matthew 18:15-20

Thomas E. Boomershine, PhD

This is a story about the tension between the way of forgiveness and the need for justice. Elements of this tension are dealing with conflicts, church discipline, and managing the community in ways that maintain peace. The tension is around how to deal with problem people. Every community has them; sin happens in every community. In this discourse, Jesus makes clear recommendations about how to deal with wrongdoing. The structure of the discourse outlines a process for dealing with an individual who has “done you wrong”: talking with that person one on one; talking with that person with one or two others; talking with that person with the congregation. Each stage of the process is described with the same phrases. These verbal threads are “listens” and “not listened”; “if the member refuses to listen” and “if the offender refuses to listen”; “the evidence of two or three witnesses” and “where two or three are gathered in my name.”

These are all helpful in learning the story. The recommendation of this discourse is to go to the limit in order to be reconciled. Jesus describes a process of conflict resolution that pushes the limits of what most communities will do. It stands in contrast to the way that problems are usually dealt with in communities: rumor and the building up of resentment people talking to each other about something that has been done and never talking to the offender. Rather than that process, what Jesus recommends is the simple process of going to the offender, naming the problem, and by implication listening to the response. If one on one does not work, then try again taking one or two other people along; if that does not work, bring it to the congregation/community.

The story has the tone of a legal process. In the process Jesus outlines in this discourse, the goal is reconciliation and resolution of conflict. Each sentence is a description of a method that has failed. Resolution by one person confronting doesn’t work; two or three doesn’t work; congregation doesn’t work. For a recalcitrant offender who will not listen at any stage of the process, the final consequence is what the Amish call shunning: “...let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.” Jews were supposed to have nothing to do with Gentiles (non Jews). Moreover, if there was anything that Jews would have even less to do with than a Gentile, it was a tax collector. Tax collectors worked for the Romans and made a lot of money on the poverty of the people who were being taxed. They benefited directly from the system of oppression.

The tone of the discourse is tough. This is about hardheaded dealing with cases of immorality and injustice openly and directly, without violence. No physical or monetary damages or penalties are prescribed as consequence for wrongdoing, even if the wrong doing is not acknowledged by the offender. The implication of the communities’ judgment being ratified in heaven “Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven” is that whatever punishment is appropriate will happen in heaven rather than on earth. The discourse looks forward to the Last Judgment as the final course of appeal.

LECTIONARY FOR SEPTEMBER

September 7

Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 149
Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20

September 14

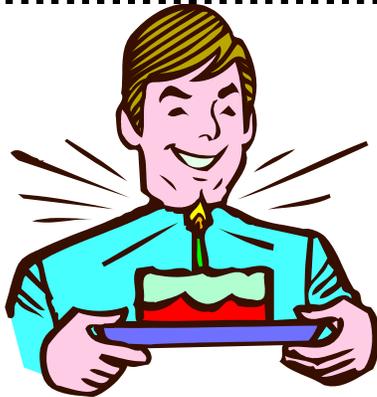
Exodus 14:19-31; Exodus 15:1b-11,20-21
Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35

September 21

Exodus 16:2-15; Psalm 105:1-6,37-45
Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16

September 28

Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 78:1-4,12-16
Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32



HAPPY SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY TO:

<i>Robert Schickel, Jr.</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Wanda Martinson</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Diane Scott Vietello</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Mickey Kiely</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Michael Modrak</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Robert Carhart</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Christopher Martinson</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Barbara Cofone</i>	<i>26</i>

.....and many, many more!!!



JUST A REMINDER!

The last Sunday of our summer worship service will be 9:30 a.m. in Aldersgate Hall August 31, 2014.

Our winter schedule will start after Labor Day on Sunday, September 7, 2014 in the church sanctuary at 10:30 a.m. The choir will resume their practice at 9:30 a.m. each Sunday in the choir room.

We look forward to seeing the return of some of our members who have been vacationing over the summer. Let's have a good turn-out on September 7th!



We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Olga Lawson who died on May 20, 2014. The funeral service was held at the Werson Funeral Home in Linden. Interment was at Hollywood Memorial Park, Union, N. J.

Olga was a lifelong resident of Linden, graduating from Linden High in 1942 (in the same class as Doris Henel) and employed by the Linden Board of Education as a head bookkeeper for 25 years, retiring in 1989. Olga was predeceased by her husband, Frederick H. Lawson (a longtime member of our church) who died in 1978. She is survived by a step-daughter, Priscilla Kay Murphy, a granddaughter, 3 great grandchildren, one great-great granddaughter, nieces and nephews and their families. Olga joined our church when she married Fred. When he died she returned to her former church but continued to support and retain her membership in our church, in memory of her husband, who always loved our church. She was a kind, caring person and we will miss her.

BITS AND PIECES "OVER THE SUMMER"

Congratulation to Louise Forster who celebrated her 100th birthday in June. A party for her was held at the Gregorio Center with many senior citizens attending, along with family and friends. We all remember her late husband, Bill Forster, and we are always happy to see their daughter, MaryLou, whenever she can join us when visiting her mother. A reminder, MaryLou requested when her father died that in lieu of flowers a donation to the United Methodist Church of Linden. A handicapped ramp would be appreciated. She is still working on that! You are welcome to contribute to this fund.

Mildred Ebert enjoyed attending a picnic for Master Gardeners in June. She took a course in that a number of years ago and we all know she is very knowledgeable about the subject. They all ate some of the vegetables that they are grown and served.

Beatrice Bradford spent about two weeks in Ohio visiting with her daughter and husband and their brand new son. It was a very happy occasion but the time passed too quickly! Best wishes to the whole family!

Norman Carhart wasn't too lucky this summer – he fell and broke his hip and had to be operated on. He spent a lot of time in therapy and we all hope he will be better soon, and back in his favorite pew in our church sanctuary. We miss him!

Bill and Sue Henel had their annual family backyard picnic and pool basketball game – young against the older bunch on June 28th. They were pleased to have Jayne Cocco surprise them and show up for this special

event. Jayne has sold her large house and is enjoying the new condo she bought. She brought us up-to-date about her father, Charles Lamont, who is not doing too well. It was also wonderful to have Bobbie Bogard and her daughter, Robin, join us. Bobbie took a very bad fall this spring and has been recuperating and having therapy for a few months. It was also the first time in months that Doris Henel was driven over an hour away from her home – and she did fine! She spent three weeks in the hospital this spring with pneumonia and therapy.

Jeanne and Rob Moore spent July 9th through July 14th visiting their son Zachary and his girlfriend Kc in Ann Arbor, Michigan. They have a lovely apartment and both work close by. They lived in the Los Angeles area in California for a while but didn't like all the traffic and are very happy in Ann Arbor with lots of friends nearby. On July 24th they flew to San Francisco and spent some time with brother John and his wife Julie and then did some sight-seeing through-out the state of California, returning home on August 4th.

Doris Stamer spent most of the spring and some of the summer recuperating from a fall at church and a broken wrist. We extend our best wishes to her and hope she is feeling better by the time this Messenger arrives.

Not long after Carolyn Franz' sister, Barbara died, she also lost another sister, Frances, who had been ill for a long time. The loss of one sister is very difficult and another going such a short time later is heart-breaking. You have our deepest sympathy, Carolyn, and please also extend it to your sister's families from your friends here at the church.

MORE BITS AND PIECES

78 years ago, Myrt Morrison (Marshall) Bobbie Hammer (Bogard) and Doris Mellor (Henel) met in 7th grade and they became inseparable at that time and ever since! All 3 of them will celebrate their 90th birthdays this year. While Myrt had a big party, Bobbie was in the hospital from a bad fall, Doris also was in the hospital with pneumonia – and what was Myrt doing?? She was jumping out of an airplane to celebrate her special occasion on June 9th. Hundreds came to watch her and when the TV reporters asked what her secret was she said “keep working and dye your hair!”

Enjoy the pictures on this page!!!!

Remember, it is never too late to enjoy life to its fullest!



.....AND STILL MORE BITS AND PIECES

Congratulations to Megan Stamer. She has been substituting this last year and has been hired as of September 2014 through 2015 by St. John's school in Linden-Clark. She will be teaching 4th and 5th grade science. We are all so happy for her and know she will be an excellent teacher - and it is so close to home!

MaryJane Koslosky will be taking another vacation – but this will be a longer one! She will be visiting her friend in Maryland and hopes to leave towards the end of August, returning sometime in November. Good for her!! She always enjoys that visit and is looking forward to good times with her friend.

Before she makes this trip, she and her sister, Kathy Curtin, will be traveling to Virginia for their mother's family (Hatton) reunion. This has been going on for many years and it is something they always look forward to.

Once again the Linden Housing Authority has opened its waiting list for the Senior Citizen housing in Linden. If you are interested, please stop in at the original housing building at 1601 Dill Avenue and pick up an application.



Although, Charles Lamont has not been well for a while, it was still difficult to hear from his daughter, Jayne Cocco, that he had died on July 13, 2014. He was 88 years old, living at Morning Rainbow assisted Living in Pasadena, Md.

The funeral was held on Friday, July 18th in our church at 10:00 a.m. with Rev. Ramos presiding. Interment was in Rosedale Memorial Park, Linden. Visiting hours were held on Thursday, July 17th at Werson Funeral Home from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. with a Masonic Service at 8:00 p.m.

Charles was born in Linden on October 10, 1925. He was a journeyman carpenter with Local 715 Elizabeth, N.J. for 43 years and served as an instructor for apprentice carpenters for 27 years at the Thomas Edison Vocational School.

He was a member of Cornerstone-Tyrian Masonic Lodge #229 F&AM Linden since 1960, a member of the Linden Church Bowling League for many years and an active member of the UMC of Linden since 1954. He served as President of the Board of Trustees, chairman of the Endowment Fund and President of the UM Men.

Charles served 3 years in the Navy during World War II in the Pacific aboard the destroyer USS Halsey Powell and survived a dive bomber attack by a Japanese airplane. Charles is predeceased by his beloved wife, Betty (Mellor) Lamont (2008), his mother, Gertrude Lamont (2009) and brother, Harold R. Lamont. He is survived by his loving daughter, Jayne Cocco, 3 cherished grandchildren, Christopher, Joseph and Brian Cocco, 5 great-grandchildren and his sister-in-law, Doris (Mellor) Henel.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Charles H. Lamont Memorial Fund of the U.M.C. Church in his memory would be appreciated.

So many memories we all have – trips, cruises, parties, church meetings, picnics, celebrations, anniversaries, birthdays, holidays gatherings and wonderful friends (some still here and many gone). Now Charles will join those gone – but we will never forget him and the wonderful years of the past!

Sebastopol UCC sends volunteers to rebuild in wake of Hurricane Sandy

Hurricane Sandy recovery is what recently sent 12 adults from the Community Church of Sebastopol UCC to Bergen County, New Jersey.

Nine feet of water surged up the Passaic and Hackensack rivers 30 miles inland and flooded the basement floors of hundreds of homes in October 2012. Three men and nine women, ranging in ages 55 to 73 made up the team of volunteers that worked with the volunteer center and Rebuilding Together programs in Moonachie, New Jersey, for a week last month.

A team from the Community Church has been helping for one week in each of the last eight years to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, floods in Nashville, Tenn., Terre Haute, Ind., Birmingham, Ala., and a tornado in Henryville, Ind.

The group worked on five homes to help get families back in their living spaces, and

one storage shed, which needed a new foundation and floor.

Jobs included tile and sheetrock demolition, hanging sheetrock, repairing stairs, painting, moving furniture and tools into storage and general clean up. The toughest job was donning Tyvek suits head-to-toe, and wearing masks and goggles to hang insulation in 92-degree weather.

The work was made easier by maintaining a great esprit de corps and sense of humor while sleeping on cots in the un-air conditioned sanctuary and fellowship room of the Rutherford UCC Congregational Church.

Showers were taken at the nearby high school. These rugged conditions were mitigated by the outpouring of welcome, gratitude and delicious meals encountered throughout their stay. They also took in a Broadway show and had a Saturday to take in local sites in New Jersey and Manhattan.

The Community Church High School Pilgrim Fellowship group has been going on similar trips for the past 25 years. Adults had heard about how much fun the youths had while accomplishing so much good that they wanted to try it.

Joyce Cox works hard every year to find the place in need that can offer organized work projects, accommodations to suit the team and affordable plane flights. Individuals pay over half the cost with the church Memorial and Endowment funds and fundraisers making up the rest.

Homeowners are encouraged to keep going when they see the hard work and caring of the Community Church team. Most volunteers come back for more trips and camaraderie when they see the positive impact that is made in communities that are trying to rebuild after disaster.



Photo provided
REACHING OUT — Disaster Recovery team members pictured in their new shirts donated by Rebuilding Together. Front: Bobbie Johanson. Second row (l-r): Jane Huneke, Judy Peterson, Joyce Cox. Back row (l-r): Kathy Matthies, Donna Tappan, Liz Arnold, Keith Blackstone, Nancy Shimetz, John Henel, Linda Roa and Scott Carlson.

John Henel spent a few weeks in New Jersey – one week working with members of his church, rebuilding and repairing homes damaged by Hurricane Sandy. The rest of the time, he and his wife Julie visited with family and friends, which ended with a wonderful gathering at Bill & Sue Henel's home in Brick, joined by the rest of the family and friends. Some of them flew in from California and Washington State and some arriving from New York State, Pennsylvania and the balance from New Jersey. How good it was to be all together again, but we missed Tessa and Vince and Zachary and Kc.

united Methodist women

Although the United Methodist Women do not meet during the summer they decided to go out for lunch on the day they would usually meet. On July 1st about 10 of them met at perk[ns]. On August 12 they met at Famous Dave's and had their fill of Dave's delicious food. Both times they were pleased to have the Carhart's join them.

Rev. Ramos vacationing

Rev. Ramos has announced that he will be on vacation from Monday, August 11th through August 31st. If you have an emergency, please call Lorraine Carhart, lay leader, 908-925-4865, or Kathy Curtin, pastor/parish chairperson, 908-472-8492.

SEXTON ON VACATION

Luis will take his vacation the month of September to have an operation. We wish him good luck and ask if anyone can volunteer to do some of his work for that month, it is a very busy month for us. Please call Kathy Curtin, 908-472-8492 if you can take care of garbage twice weekly and set up tables and chairs for events.

MISSION AND MINISTRY

Rev. Dr. Ricardo Ramos-Diaz

As July 1st, Bishop John Schol renewed my appointment to serve as the Pastor of UMC of Linden and “El Redentor” UMC. The appointment was set as $\frac{3}{4}$ UMC of Linden and $\frac{1}{4}$ “El Redentor” UMC. As you are all aware, I have been UMC of Linden appointed pastor for the last 6 years. As I start my 7th year, I want to inform that I am excited about the new opportunities that God is providing our congregation to continue growing in vitality and sustainability, as we strive to make disciples of Jesus Christ in our community.

Few months ago, God blessed our congregation with a significant donation from the Robert J. Bauer Foundation. Their contribution is providing us with the very much-needed financial resources to be in better position and condition to grow in mission and ministry. I am committed to exercise along with the congregation a good stewardship over God’s blessings. We need to be bold and creative in our approach to mission and ministry initiatives. We need to make sure that we invest God’s given resources to enhance, uplift and develop mission and ministry initiatives.

In all our conversations and decisions, we must ask ourselves “how this conversation and/or decision will open new doors of opportunities for us to grow in vitality and sustainability? For example, if we are talking about repairing the building (roof, windows, floors, etc), having a new organ, running a Day Care Center and enhancing our Sanctuary, among others, we must ask ourselves, “what are we doing and how do we do it in a way that new doors of opportunities for mission and ministry initiatives could take place? In other words, would this decision open new doors for people to learn about Gods’ love?

I/we just do not want to repair the church building, have a Day Care, a new organ, a nice sign or an enhanced audio and visual Sanctuary, among others, just for the sake of having a nice and in good shape facility or to feel good and proud about ourselves and what we accomplished. I/We just do not want to go about all these things just to be able to “survive”. We want to go about all these things to open new doors for new people to learn about God’s love through our mission and ministry initiatives. I have said more than once, “I don’t want to have a nice-looking fish bowl without fish”.

I am committed, with the ongoing support and work of our Board of Trustees and Church Council, to lead the congregation in a way that all necessary building repairs and enhancement of our facilities, Church Day Care Center, children and youth ministries, worship, stewardship, mission and ministry initiatives and small groups, will be further developed and implemented.

I want to report that before the end of August we will have the new organ installed and ready to be used. I want to thank the leadership and support received from a team created for this purpose of church leaders and choir members that were part of the process of researching and deciding on this matter. In this process, we also had the very important contribution of Mr. Mark Miller as our consultant. Please, join us on Sunday September 21st,

2 pm, for a recital and to dedicate the organ as a gift of the Robert J. Bauer Foundation to the glory of God. As Sept. 1, we are blessed with the presence and ministry of Mr. Bill Jensen as our organist and choir director. Mr. Jensen served as minister of music and liturgy in the former “Epworth” UMC in Elizabeth, NJ. We are grateful to God for his willingness and expressed commitment to come onboard to serve. Let us welcome Mr. Jensen and make him feel home.

I also want you to join us in prayer as we continue the process of getting the required license and certificates to operate a Day Care Center. As Sept. 1st, Candy Mountain Day Care will no longer be our tenant. The Church Council decided, following a recommendation from our Board of Trustees, to pursue the licensing of our church facilities for our Day Care Center. Alleluia!

I want to ask you to pray and make yourself available to God. Please, prayerfully ask yourself “How can I be part of what God’s is doing in the UMC of Linden? Is it with time, talents and/or treasures? God calls and invites you to be part of this awesome enterprise of making disciples of Jesus Christ in Linden.

Finally, I want to remind you that we/you were all baptized and welcomed into Christ’s Holy Church. As you professed your faith and was received as a member of the UMC you vowed before God and the gathered community to “be loyal and uphold the United Methodist Church by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service, and your witness.” I invite and challenge you to live by that vow. By God’s grace, we will.

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MUSICAL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

10:30 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE

12:00 NOON LUNCHEON

2:00 P. M. ORGAN DEDICATING RECITAL
MR. MARK MILLER, GUEST ORGANIST

WE WILL BE PLEASED TO WELCOME MR. AND MRS. ROBERT J. BAUER WHO HAVE
MADE ALL THIS POSSIBLE. THE ORGAN IS GIVEN IN HONOR
OF
ROBERT J. BAUER AND DOROTHY FEDOR

**PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND OUR 10:30 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE , THE
LUNCHEON THAT FOLLOWS AND THE SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION AT 2:00 P.M. WITH MARK MILLER, GUEST ORGANIST.
ALL ARE WELCOME – BRING YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS.**

OUR 148TH CHURCH ANNIVERSARY
SUNDAY – SEPTEMBER 28, 2014
10:30 am worship service
Coffee Hour to follow in Aldersgate Hall

This year it will be 148 years since the incorporation of our church here in the City of Linden. We do not have any members that have reached 25 or 50 years of membership in 2014. If Bill and Theresa Heinaman had not moved when they retired, Bill would have received his 50 year membership pin this year. We are listing below those who have already reached the 50 year and over goal.

Ethel Steiniger	4/5/36 (78 years)
Gertude Baldwin	4/9/39 (75 years)
Leona Parker	4/20/42 (72 years)
Caroline Long	4/21/46 (68 years)
Thomas Long	9/29/46 (68 years)
Doris Henel	3/25/48 (66 Years)
Norman Carhart	4/2/50 (64 years)
Wanda Martinson	4/10/52 (62 years)
Lois Burns	11/2/52 (62 years)
Doris Stamer	2/22/53 (61 years)
Nancy Martinson	3/29/53)(61 years)
MaryJane Koslosky	12/3/53 (61 years)
Marie Dziamba	2/17/57 (57 years)
Christian Hanns	7/22/59 (55 years)
Kathryn Gmitter	10/8/61 (53 years)
Thomas Henel	6/2/62 (51 years)
Kathy Curtin	6/2/62 (51 years)
NancyJane Baldwin	6/2/62 (51 Years)

Please join us at the reception following the service. We will also present a \$500. scholarship to Chris Beyer from the Dianne Long, Gregg Carhart & Bill Steiniger Funds.

SUNDAY SCHOOL'S MATTHEW 9:14
MINISTRY

Welcome back to UMC Linden's Sunday School. Our 2014-2015 school year will begin on Sunday, September 7, 2014. We

have a lot of great things planned. We hope our ministry will continue to grow throughout the year. Everyone is welcome to visit our Facebook page by searching for "UMC LINDEN SUNDAY SCHOOL" on Facebook. You may also text @umclinden to the number 908-583-0468 for text message updates. This is a one way communication, so you cannot respond to updates. Here are just a few of the events we are planning for this school year.

1. 9/7/14 – Start of Sunday School; Rally Day; Beginning of the Amazing Bible Race
2. 10/5/14 – Completion of International Spy Academy VBS program
3. 11/23/14 – Completion of 1st leg of Amazing Bible Race

Join us as we begin the Amazing Bible Race with our older students. We will read through the entire bible in 6 legs of 12 weeks. They will read several chapters a day for 5 days a week. We will be beginning with Genesis-Deuteronomy. Contact Megan Stamer for more information on specific readings.

*Teachers - Megan Stamer & Jackie Lu Valdez
 732-407-9302–megan a.stamer@gmail.com*

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LUNCHEON RESERVATION – SEPT. 21

Please make a luncheon reservation for the Musical Anniversary Celebration on Sept. 21 and put in the offering plate on any Sunday or call Gertrude Baldwin, 908-862-9473.

#_____Adults #_____Children

 Signed

WE MUST HAVE RESERVATIONS SO
WE KNOW WHAT FOOD TO ORDER.

Can you help set-up on Saturday and put the food out on Sunday, September 21?

SEPTEMBER 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 LABOR DAY	2 12-United Methodist Women – bring sandwich 4:30 -9:30 Fencing Sch	3 4:30-9:30 – Fencing School	4 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	5 5:30-8:30 Champion Youth	6 9:30- 1:30 Fencing School
7 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Worship Service	8 7-Trustees (Holiday on 1 st Monday) 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	9 10:30 Bible Study 4:30 -9:30 Fencing Sch.	10 10:30 Administration Council 4:30-9:30 – Fencing School	11 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	12 5:30-8:30 Champion Youth	13 9:30-1:30 – Fencing School in gym
14 9:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Worship Service	15 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	16 10:30 Bible Study 4:30-9:30-Fencing School	17 4:30-9:30 Fencing School	18 4:30-9:30 Fencing School	19 5:30-8:30 Champion Youth	20 9:30-1:30- Fencing School
21 <u>9:30 Choir Rehearsal</u> <u>10:30-Worship</u> <u>12:00-Luncheon</u> <u>2:00-Organ</u> <u>Dedication Recital</u> <u>ALL WELCOME</u>	22 4:30 – 9:30 Fencing School	23 10:30 Bible Study 4:30-9:30-Fencing School	24 4:30-9:30 Fencing School	25 4:30-9:30-Fencing School	26 5:30-8:30 Champion Youth	27 9:30-1:30 Fencing School in Gym
28 9:30-Choir 10:30-Worship Ser. Anniversary Sunday 1866-2014: 148 years Coffee hour to follow All invited.	29 4:30 – 9:30 Fencing School	30 Bible Study – 10:30 4:30 – 9:30 Fencing School				