



The Sunbeam
October 2020

VIRTUAL WORSHIP
9:30 A.M. VIA FACEBOOK OR
VISIT LANSINGUNITED.ORG
MUSIC STARTS 9:15

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY
LOVE FEAST
OCTOBER 4

COMMITMENT SUNDAY
OCTOBER 18

CHURCH BARBECUE
OCTOBER 10, 10:30, SOUTH LANSING

Lansing United Methodist Church
32 Brickyard Road, Lansing, NY 14882
one mile north of the stoplight on
Route 34B in South Lansing.
Church office: 607-533-4070
E-mail: office@lansingunited.org
Lonnisean Yoest,
Pastoral Administrative Assistant
www.lansingunited.org

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Please send your news to Glenn Withiam,
editor, at grw4@cornell.edu.
Deadline for the next issue is
October 15, 2020

LANSING UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
32 BRICKYARD ROAD
LANSING NY 14882

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The Sunbeam

October 2020

**LANSING UNITED
Methodist Church**

Streaming Worship 9:30 AM
• **PLEASE JOIN US!**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES VIRTUALLY AT 11:00 AM FOR CHILDREN
AND ADULTS, 12:00 NOON FOR JUNIOR HIGHS, AND 1:00 PM FOR
SENIOR HIGHS**



**World
Communion
Sunday**
October 4

Pastor: Alison Schmied
Adult Ministries Coordinator: Karen Veaner
Interim Christian Education Coordinator: Debbie Geise
Youth Ministries Coordinator: Krystal Cole

From the Pastor

A Prayer for Times of Discomfort



Floods, wildfires, hurricanes, pandemic...
systemic racism, brutality by law enforcement, gun
violence...
angry political rhetoric based in deep seated
fears...
and reliance on violence as a tool for peacekeeping...

On this beautiful fall day in upstate NY,
I remember that we are all struggling.
I pray for comfort and healing for all suffering,
and also for God to disturb our comfort with familiar sin
simply because it is the way things always have been.

May our discomfort move us toward true compassion:
action that heals and repairs what is broken,
creating systemic change,
in our environment, our society, our government,
but first within ourselves.

I thank God for those who refuse to be disheartened,
those who do not give up when faced with challenges greater than
themselves,
relying instead on a source of unconditional love far greater than
our own
to rise up and reach out
to serve all those Jesus would tell us
are our neighbors.

Lord, source of unconditional love and compassion,
God of justice and of mercy,
may I be among those whose actions are helping, not hurting.

Amen.

Blessings,

Pastor Allison



Virtual Church Calendar
lansingunited.org
lansingunited.org/events

Lansing United Methodist Church *October 2020*

Sunday church service: 9:30 a.m., via Facebook (through church website, lansingunited.org); music stream begins at 9:15; "Coffee time" follows at 10:30

World Communion Sunday, October 4

Children's Sunday School and Wired Word, 11:00 a.m.

Junior High Sunday School, 12:00 p.m.

Senior High Sunday School, 1:00 p.m.

Junior High Sunday Youth Group, 5:00 p.m.

Senior High Sunday Youth Group, 6:30 p.m.

Universal Christ Study Group, Mondays, 1:00 p.m.

Disciple Bible Study, As arranged

Story Telling Walk through the Bible, As arranged

Lansing United Book Club, Fridays, 1:00 p.m.

Women's Bible Study of Proverbs, Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m.

Virtual Choir Rehearsal, Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m., all welcome

Chicken Barbecue, Baker Pits, Town Fields, October 10, 10:30 a.m. till gone (usually before noon)

Interfaith Gathering: October 22, Myers Park, 6:00 p.m., Pavilion B

Virtual Meetings (you may join via Zoom; however, it's best to check in advance):

Safe Gathering Task Force, October 5, 12, 19, 26, 5:00 p.m.,

Stewardship, October 6, 13, 20, 27, 5:00 p.m.

Church Council, October 6, 7:00 p.m.

*Staff-Parish Relations (Personnel), October 8, 6:30 p.m.

Trustees, October 12, 7:00 p.m.

Finance, October 13, 7:00 p.m.

Worship Committee, October 20, 7:00 p.m.

Haiti Committee, October 19, 7:00 p.m.

Ten Reasons for Bible Study (concluded)

We are all children of God in this journey and our trusted adult is God who guides us through the Holy Spirit. We cannot be in better, safer, more loving hands. At Lansing United we prayerfully seek to provide Bible study opportunities where we grow in our faith together, not by having achieved a certain level of knowledge, but by welcoming every heart seeking to go deeper with God.

7. *Experience joy in the discoveries God has in store for you as your understanding grows.* Sometimes spending time with the Bible is like hiking a tree covered trail through the forest and turning a corner and finding a gorgeous scenic view—what some call “ah-ha moments” or “God moments,” designed just for you. No matter how many “hikes” we’ve been on in our journey with the Bible, the wonderful truth is that we never stop growing. . . we never get to the point where there still aren’t joy-filled discoveries to experience and share. . . our understanding never stops growing as God draws us closer with new insights.
8. *Receive comfort from poetry or an unfolding discovery of God’s compassion, from seeing how God works through people in the strangest, most unexpected ways.* There are gems of faith; promises to rely on; verses to provide context for God’s overwhelming love for each of us and to help us live in that context, which changes everything about how we treat ourselves and other people. For example, what would it be like to live in this understanding of our identity:
“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:10
9. *Build a discipline that allows you to start your day, end your day, or carve out a place in your day for special time with the Holy Spirit.* You won’t regret how you chose to spend that time!
10. *The journey is richer when you share it with others.* Not only does committing to a group help us stick with it, but more importantly hearing other people’s questions, experiences, insights and struggles as we explore the Bible together is one of the most meaningful and memorable ways God speaks to us.

LUMC Chicken Barbecue: Last One of the Season!

October 10, at Baker Memorial Pits (Town Ball Fields)

From 10:30 till gone. (Note: They sell out fairly fast.)

Selling full dinners at just \$10, to support the church programs and missions.



On October 4, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday with a Love Feast in a Zoom meeting during the latter part of our morning worship service. We offer packages of juice and homemade bread available for you to partake in your home.

Contact the church office for delivery or pickup of your Love Feast elements. Deadline October 2 for delivery or pickup October 3.

If you would like to receive a package of juice and bread from church, please contact Lonnajean at the office (office@lansingunited.org) before Friday, October 2, to reserve your package. Let her know whether you would like to pick up from the church airlock (that is, the door facing the parking lot on the new wing), or whether you would like to have a package delivered to your home. Pickup and delivery would be on Saturday, October 3, after noon (You may, of course, prepare and use your own bread and juice.)

A note about the traditional Love Feast. The Love Feast, or Agape Meal, is a Christian fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry and expressing the *koinonia* (community, sharing, fellowship) enjoyed by the family of Christ.

Although its origins in the early church are closely interconnected with the origins of the Lord’s Supper, the two services became quite distinct and should not be confused with each other.

John Wesley first experienced the Love Feast among the Moravians in the 1730s, when he was preaching in Savannah, Georgia. The Love Feast has often been held on occasions when the celebration of the Lord’s Supper would be inappropriate, including where there is no one present authorized to administer the Sacrament of Holy Communion.—*from UMCdiscipleship.org*

Youth Ministry and Activities

Happy Fall Everyone!

We are excited to be starting Sunday School and Youth Group again at Lansing United. This fall we hope to grow in our knowledge of our

Leaf Raking Is Available

October 18

Do you know someone who needs their yard raked in Lansing?

Let us know! We are planning a youth raking afternoon to help our neighbors who can't do it themselves. Contact youth@lansingunited.org

Christian faith, help our community by giving of our time and energy, and grow in fellowship with each other. We are looking forward to spending time together virtually and in person. Anyone who feels led to help us by being a second adult on Zoom calls and at our in-person gatherings would be greatly appreciated!

Sunday school and youth group schedule:

Junior High Sunday School, 12:00 noon;

Senior High Sunday School, 1:00 p.m.;

Junior High Youth Group, 5:00 p.m.;

Senior High Youth Group at 6:30 p.m.

We welcome all youth! Check with the church office or youth leaders for your Zoom invitation if you haven't received one.

We are planning to pick apples at Bakers Acres on Sunday, October 11, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., together with our Junior High youth!

Parents will pick up and drop off youth at Bakers Acres, and we will be picking apples for use in pies given to folks new to our church! Dress for the weather, wear a mask, and feel free to bring a friend!

For Sunday School this year, we are utilizing resources from The Bible Project for our Senior High group. These animated videos dig into topics ranging from faith, to Ecclesiastes, to the Holy Spirit. I've learned a lot myself from the videos and am excited to be studying them with our youth! Our Junior High class will be using a youth curriculum called "Connecting Faith and Justice." It goes along with the lectionary (which is what we use in worship each week) and was written by the General Board of Church and Society.—

Krystal Cole

Ten Reasons for Bible Study (continued)

what living in relationship with Him looks like and means through the gifts of Jesus, grace and the Holy Spirit. It's a beautiful journey: despite the difficulties that the human condition brings upon itself, the story of God's unchanging love unfolds and prevails. My words could never adequately express the gift of sharing in Jesus' walk on earth through words that have been preserved over the centuries or of sharing what God has done for us through Jesus. Our understanding of, and response to, that gift is magnified by a walk through the Bible.

4. *Ask for God to speak to you through your reading of the Scriptures, and He will.* You can ask God questions about the hard stuff, and over time, God will answer as you understand more and more about who He is and what He is doing over an eternity. Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7:7
5. *It's not as scary as you think!* I know I tried several times to follow a plan to read the Bible in a year, and I got bogged down very quickly, within weeks. What I didn't know was that I needed was a group to explore it with, a "study" that helped me see the overarching themes, to see that it was all the connected story of how God is reaching out to and through humanity, and to see that it didn't need to be a tedious experience.
6. *It's not just for kids!* So you've never really been to Sunday School, as a child or adult. . . So you don't know much about the Bible . . . So you think other people know so much and you won't have anything to offer if you join a Bible study group. You've missed your chance, right? Absolutely not!!

You haven't missed your opportunity and you don't need to "know" anything to do this. You bring a lifetime of living and experience to this journey. God brings the Holy Spirit to this journey. It's not about knowing stuff, it's about experiencing what God has to say to you. There's never been a better time to try Bible study than now, when you're willing to give it a try.

It's a wonderful blessing to spend time in the Bible with kids and help them to become familiar with the Bible in a way that they know they don't need to be afraid of it. That's one of the great things about kids—they don't have preconceived notions about fear. When they experience something with trusted adults, they don't fear it—learning to ski is so much easier when you're young because you aren't as afraid to fall.

Concluded on next page

Women's Bible Study: Proverbs

—with Dianne Walter

Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. —12:00 p.m., via Zoom

Please join us as we delve into Proverbs and a selection of Psalms. No background knowledge is required, as we are all learning and searching together!

Biblical Wisdom literature, Proverbs is a “collection of collections” relating to values, moral behavior, the meaning of human life, and right conduct. Its theological foundation is that “reverence of God is the beginning of wisdom.

Ten Reasons to Engage in Bible Study this Fall

by Bonnie Blair

As you see on the preceding pages, we have lots of different opportunities at LUMC to explore the Bible with others, but one big question is, Why should I commit my time to something like that? Here are ten reasons that I hope will start a conversation, although the truth is that God has His own answer for you personally. Determine your own reasons and send them to me for a future article or Facebook post: theblairs@twcny.rr.com. Please also share with our Adult Ministries Coordinator, Karen Veener, what type of group would work best for you: adultministries@lansingunited.org.

Ten Reasons

1. *Your relationship with God will deepen.* You may be in a place where you're not sure you want that. Don't let that stop you!! I know I lived most of my adult life holding onto control, not really wanting God to intervene in my life. It was my experience with Disciple Bible Study that transformed my faith from being in my head to in my heart and I am deeply grateful for that beautiful transformation.
2. *God is calling you closer!* God chose to inspire this set of writings to help us understand who He is, not just for the whole world, but for each of us. God brings the Holy Spirit to work within each of us to allow us to hear and feel His call to know Him. We bring open hearts and minds.
3. *A walk through the Bible brings a much deeper appreciation of the precious gift of Emmanuel—God with Us.* The Old Testament helps us acknowledge our need for Jesus; the New Testament reveals how God chose to show us

Continued on next page

Throw Kindness Like Confetti

During the Sundays of this fall, the PreK-6th graders are learning about kindness. Throwing confetti is a wonderful image for how our world would look if there was kindness that swirled around and enveloped and covered everything.

Colossians 3:12 gives us direction on how to carry out kindness to others. It says, “Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.” In the same way that we don't take our clothes off after we have put them on and someone sees them, kindness should be something we put on, wrap all around us, and wear all day long. This fall, our Children's Sunday School classes are going to learn how to think of kindness as more than just an action, but instead, as a lifestyle that we carry out all the time.

Each week, the children have different kindness challenges to carry out. Each child has a Post-It note pad to write down the specific times that they practice or show the component of kindness that we are working on each week. The filled out Post-It notes are brought back to Sunday School and added to the “Throw Kindness Like Confetti” door (the Fellowship Hall door facing outward to the back lawn so the children can see it). The Post-It notes are the pieces of confetti. Each week we see our kindness confetti grow! The Children's Sunday School classes are following the words of Paul in Ephesians 4:32, to “Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.—Debbie Geise”

Kinship Ministries

“In the same way, though there are many of us, we are one body in Christ, and individually we belong to each other.”—*Romans 12:5*

You are called and invited to be a part of the movement to nurture existing relationships in our Lansing United Family, and build connections to people who may be new to our church community. During these challenging times, it is imperative that we work together to insure that no one “falls through the cracks.”

Be the light. Share the light. One hour, one phone call, one email or hand written card can make all the difference.

Contact Karen Veaner to join this ministry partnership: AdultMinistries@LansingUnited.org or (607)592-1386.

Children’s Sunday School Classes Meeting Outside on Church Lawn

With the approval from the Trustees and the Safe Gathering Committee, the PreK-6th grade classes are meeting for Sunday School on the back church lawn. There are 3 classes with between 4-7 students maximum in each class. On our first Sunday meeting (September 27), the PreK/K/1st grade class had 3 children, the 2nd/3rd/4th grade class had 6 children, and the 5th/6th grade class had 4 children.

Prior to the first class meeting, a safety plan was created (please see below), teachers were prepared to carry it out, and families were notified of its procedures. All involved did a fantastic job of following through on safety precautions. What a blessing it is to be able to gather in this small group in an expansive space outside, to grow our faith and relationship with Jesus, and to give the kids a break from being on their computers so they can connect with one another face-to-face. Thank you, Sunday School teachers and families for your commitment to and support of safe faith formation!

Note to parents: Check the church policy for specifics on how the outside meetings will work. Late cancellations due to inclement weather are possible.

Baking and Breaking Bread Together (Even though We’re Dispersed)

Ibake bread. And early in these COVID times, I wanted to return to the tradition of baking with a sourdough starter so I reached out (on FaceBook, naturally) to see if someone would share with me. And indeed, a friend had a friend who was willing. So Glenn trekked over to an address in the wilds of West Hill and fetched a jar of sourdough starter from that friend of a friend. Ever since, I’ve been baking with it. (Our grandchildren call this “grandma bread.”)

Yeast is a micro-organism, living all around us. If you set a bowl of flour and water out on the counter, you can capture your local wild yeast and make your own sourdough starter. (Pro tip: it’s easier to share with a friend.) Yeast transforms what it is mixed into, consuming the carbohydrates and emitting alcohol and gas. Those little bubbles of gas make the bread rise.

October begins with World Communion Sunday, and I had the honor to put together a children’s story about yeast and bread for that day. When I searched the online Bible for “yeast,” I was a bit surprised that yeast is most often a metaphor for something infectious and bad. Over and over, bread made without yeast pops up in the Old Testament, in the remembrance that when the Israelites fled Egypt, they left without enough time for the yeast to work in the bread. Rarely, as in Leviticus and Amos, bread made with yeast is listed as good for sacrifice to God. Jesus and later Paul used the metaphor of yeast to warn against the insidious nature of evil.

And then, Jesus turned the metaphor upside down when he said (as recorded in Matthew and Luke): “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.” Jesus would know that yeast is a small but mighty force. It works from the inside and changes whatever it touches. Yeast needs nourishment, it needs to rest, and it needs company.

In our singing, in our speaking, in our actions, we have the opportunity to be some small part of the yeast that changes all it touches and brings forth the kingdom of heaven. —*Diane Withiam*

Stewardship moment (concluded)

We are blessed to have so many active and willing participants who are spiritually led, resulting in a church that glorifies God by impacting lives throughout our community. Let’s continue to grow spiritually, strengthen our church and serve God together!

May God bless every one of you!—*Ed LaVigne*

Three 'C's to Consider

Hello, everyone:

My name is Ed LaVigne, and I am honored to be asked to chair the Stewardship Campaign this year. My role in this campaign is to assist you in strengthening your relationship with God through the spiritual practice of giving.

In August, we introduced a Minute for Meaning in weekly worship, which presents various members of the congregation talking about what LUMC means to them. In the first of these, I mentioned that my faith has helped me to transition from the many concerns of daily life to comfort and trust in God, and eventually to clarity about what God is calling me to do. Moments of spiritual clarity allow obstacles and challenges to be revealed as glorious moments of opportunity.

Through stewardship, these opportunities occur daily and appear in many forms. Stewardship is not about dollars and cents. Stewardship is offering participants opportunities to strengthen our church. Stewardship is using your talents to teach a Sunday school class, lead a youth group, assist with the maintenance of our church building, help lead worship, serve during coffee hour (someday it will be back), wash dishes, or anything else that strengthens our church and builds the kingdom of God, not just physically but—most important—spiritually, both inside and outside of our church.

You will soon be receiving a packet in the mail from LUMC. This is an opportunity to see the words with your heart and ask God to allow them to speak to you. There will also be a form to fill out to pledge a yearly financial commitment to LUMC. These financial commitments allow our church to continue to have an impact in our community and around the world.

Depending on your situation, you may decide to remain at the same level as previous years or choose to increase your pledge because you are moved by your blessings or in honor of someone who is not as fortunate. We know that not everyone will be able to contribute at the financial level they would like. Regardless of your decision, we ask that you return your pledge card by October 18, so we know your plans.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please send them to me at elavlumc@aol.com, call me at 607-592-6542, or personal message me on Facebook. You can also contact Pastor Alison directly at pastor@lansingunit-ed.org or 607-533-4070 or speak with any other member of the stewardship committee (Peg Stoyell, Kay Moore, Sandy and Sid Cleveland, and Dennis Read).

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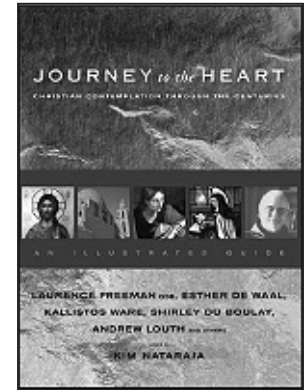
Adult Ministries

Universal Christ Group Conversations Continue

Christian Contemplation

You are invited to join the Universal Christ Study Group, which began its current reading and conversation series on September 14. The group is reading *Journey to the Heart: Christian Contemplation through the Centuries*, edited by Kim Nataraja. Because the book's chapters are independent of each other, people can jump in or out of the group. So, consider jumping in if you haven't done so!

The book reveals the life and teachings of thirty great Christian mystics, starting with Jesus, each of whom is featured in a book chapter. The chapters are written by a variety of well-known Christian writers. Each chapter gives a sense of the person or tradition and some excerpts from their teaching.



The group meets via Zoom at 1:00 p.m. on Mondays. We invite anyone who is interested to join us. Call Daisy Kirkpatrick 733-7143 for more information or to join the group. Check with church office for connection info.

A Story Telling Walk Through the Bible

—with Bonnie Blair

Looking to begin or refresh your connection to scripture? Listen to Bible stories and verses in a context which will help us better understand what God has been doing throughout human history to bring us into relationship.

- Connect with well-known Bible verses and Biblical references in popular culture that we don't always know came from the Bible.
- Develop some big picture concepts, like how the Old Testament relates to the New Testament. Our understanding of the New Testament and Jesus is much more meaningful after walking through the Old Testament.
- Participants can prepare as much, or as little, as they are able for this experience.
- As with any type of Bible study, your questions will enrich the journey for all participants.

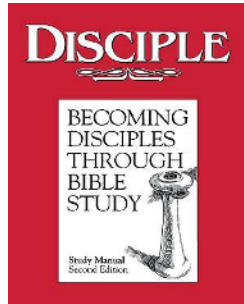
Meeting times will be determined by the participants.

Disciple

An overview of the entire Bible aimed at developing strong Christian leaders.

—with Bonnie Blair and Pastor Alison

Disciple gives the Old and New Testaments equal time, emphasizing the wholeness of the Bible as a revelation of God. Disciple draws upon the work of scholars, the personal Bible reading and study of the participant, and dynamic group discussion to aid understanding of the Bible.



Commitment and Time Involved

Commitment: 34 weekly group gatherings, 1 ½ to 2 hrs in length, and

30 minutes per day guided reading and course prep.

Two sections will be offered, starting October 18.

Available dates and times selected by participants:

Meeting options: Sunday 4:00 p.m.–6pm; Sunday 7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.; Monday 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.; or Wednesday 7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.

Sunday Adult Forum

The Wired Word with Judy Hinderliter

Sundays, 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.; Via Zoom

Confront world news with scripture and hope. The Wired Word pulls topics straight from the headlines and offers thought provoking questions to encourage us to dig deeper. Join in a rich discussion of current events in relation to scripture and everyday life.

Your presence will enrich the experience for everyone!

Classes with Ken

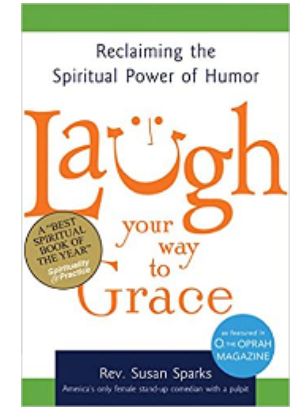
Long-time friend of Lansing United, and much sought after speaker, Ken Hover, will join us for Adult Forum this Fall. Dates TBA. Stay tuned!

Lansing United Book Club

Laugh Your Way to Grace

In this personal look at humor as a spiritual practice, Rev. Susan Sparks, an ex-lawyer turned comedian and Baptist minister, presents a convincing case that the power of humor radiates far beyond punch lines. Laughter can help you:

- Remove the fearful mask of a God who doesn't laugh
- Debunk the myths that you don't deserve joy
- Find perspective when faced with adversity
- Exercise forgiveness for yourself and others
- Reclaim play as a spiritual practice
- Heal—emotionally, physically, and spiritually
- Keep your faith when God is silent
- Live with elegance, beauty, and generosity of spirit



Rev. Susan Sparks is senior pastor of the historic Madison Avenue Baptist Church in New York City (the first woman pastor in its 160-year history). She has been featured on TV, the New York Times and in numerous comedy clubs. She is the recipient of an award from Intersections International for her interfaith work to promote justice, reconciliation and peace among diverse communities. — Amazon.com

For more info, or to get a book: AdultMinistries@LansingUnited.org

Interfaith Community October Gathering

October 22, from 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m., Myers Park. Pavilion B

Please wear a mask.

Our greater Lansing/Ithaca community partners invite you to gather for outdoor conversation. No food will be served; we offer a “Fellowship Feast.” We ask that everyone wear a mask, and honor social distancing protocols.

If, for some reason, local infection numbers increase, the gathering will move to Zoom. Please watch your weekly email and church calendar for updates.