

# The Parish Visitor

## August, 2015



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### Shepherds and Ranchers

by Rev. Mark

In the New Testament Book of Acts, the fledgling Church was growing rapidly. At one point, Peter called the Disciples together and shared a vision that they needed to make some leadership changes to accommodate that growth. The key, according to Peter, was that they needed to bring in more “specialized” leadership to enable the Disciples to keep doing what they were doing that was helping the Church grow.

I find this model to be absolutely “dead on” in its scope. There are two types of church- I call them Shepherd Churches and Rancher Churches. (Church leadership gurus call them Program Churches and Corporate Churches. Same diff!) A Shepherd Church is one that has a small enough congregation that the pastor can pretty much do everything. A Shepherd Church tends to focus on maintenance- taking care of the needs of the folks who are already in the building. They do as much as the pastor is capable of doing by themselves. The Shepherd tends his or her flock.

A Rancher Church is one where the leader- the rancher- has ranch hands that enable him or her to have a larger flock. Because of the presence of more leaders in specialized positions, the Church is able to reach more and more people. It is able to reach beyond its own walls and connect more people to Jesus Christ. And as the “Ranch” grows, more ranch hands can be added to accommodate the growth.

The hardest thing a church can do is transition from a Shepherd Church to a Rancher Church. THE. HARDEST. THING. That usually happens when a church tries to transition from less than 200 in attendance on a Sunday to more than 200. Thus, as I have shared before, the “200 barrier” is the hardest hurdle to get over. We have CLEARLY conquered that hurdle.

Over the weeks, months and years ahead, God has made it clear to me that He is calling us to move deeper and deeper into the Rancher Church model. If we heed His call and do that, I believe with all my heart that our potential for ministry is nearly limitless. We can be a regional church that reaches out to folks across Mercer County and beyond. We can develop ministries that are currently beyond our capacity to even imagine. We can partner with smaller churches in a mentoring role that helps continue to “grow the kingdom”.

I just entered my third year here. And the past three years have told me that this is where God wants me to be. And you have probably figured me out enough thus far to know that I don’t sit still well! So my plan is simple- I am going to let God lead me where He wants me to go. I am going to continue to lead our church into new territory and new ministries. I am going to not back down when the devil tries to cause us to stumble. (continued on page 2)

### SPECIAL DATES:

- August 2 Communion & Food Pantry Collection Sunday
- August 3 Finance Meeting 6PM
- August 3 Trustees Meeting 7PM
- August 6 Caring Hearts Food Prep 9AM
- August 8 UMW Mission Study Day @ AUMC 9am-noon
- August 13 Concert in Central Park featuring our praise band “Connection” 5:30PM
- August 15 UMW Pork Chops @ Mercer Market 11AM-1PM
- August 16 Administrative Council Meeting 7:15PM
- August 17 UM Men’s Meeting 6PM
- August 20 Naomi Wesleyan Circle @ T&C 11:30AM
- August 21 Parish Visitor Deadline 8AM
- August 23 CIA Luncheon 11:30AM
- August 24 Caring Hearts Food Prep 5:30PM
- August 27 UMW Exec Meeting 4PM

## PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDIES

**New Wednesday Evening Study** (See accompanying article)

**Revelation: In Christ You Are an Overcomer**

**WHAT:** Rev. Mark's current Tuesday morning Bible Study

**WHEN:** Tuesdays @ 9AM

**WHERE:** In the Fellowship Cafe'

**WHY:** The Book of Revelation is one of the most intriguing books of the Bible. It's also one of the most mysterious. Filled with vivid imagery, rich themes, and deep spiritual insights, it can be challenging to read and understand. Yet woven throughout Revelation's sweeping tapestry is a unifying message: The victory found in Jesus Christ. This Bible study takes an in-depth, yet practical, look at the book of Revelation, and shares how we can experience a victorious life.

**WHAT ELSE:** It's NOT too late! The books are \$9

**The Twelve: The Lives of the Apostles After Calvary**

**WHAT:** Rev. Mark's current Wednesday morning MEN'S Bible Study

**WHEN:** Wednesdays @ 6:30AM

**WHERE:** In the Fellowship Cafe' next to the sanctuary

**WHY:** What did the twelve apostles do after Calvary? Where did they go? Author C. Bernard Ruffin has woven Scripture, tradition, and historical documents to re-create and outline the lives of each of Christ's closest followers.

**WHAT ELSE:** The books are \$12

**The Letters of John and Jude**

**WHAT:** Rev. Mark's current Sunday Morning Bible Study

**WHEN:** Sundays @ 9:15AM

**WHERE:** In the Chapel next to the sanctuary

**WHY:** New Testament scholar William Barclay walks us through the letters of John and Jude. These books deal with dissenting teachings within the early Church.

**WHAT ELSE:** We would LOVE to have you join this class.



## WORSHIP TECH OPPORTUNITIES

Do you like electronics? Then your church needs YOU! We need people to help operate the sound system and/or the computer during Sunday worship services. What do you need in order to run these things? The list is LONG- a willingness to serve, and...that would be about it! The systems, designed specifically for churches, are quite simple to operate. (Don't let all the knobs and switches intimidate you!) The great part about this ministry is that it happens during worship, when you're in church anyway! Do you feel God calling you to step up and help? Talk to Rev. Mark or Ruth Dulaney.

(Continued from page 1)

It won't be easy. It won't be without some blood, sweat and tears. But I refuse to waste one day of ministry that God has given me! Life's too short and too precious! How about you? Are you willing to come alongside? United Methodist founder John Wesley said, "If your heart is right, take my hand." In other words, if you are passionate about Jesus Christ and want to be all that He wants you to be...let's do this together. And along the way, we'll worry about the small stuff. And nearly everything beyond "Jesus is Lord" is the small stuff!

## CURRENT AND NEW SERMON SERIES(S)!

On Sunday, June 28, we began not one but two new sermon series! At both 8AM and 10:15AM on Sundays, we have focused squarely on prayer as we ask the question How Do I Pray? The last week of the series is:

**Sunday, August 2- The Prayer of Intercession** (1 Timothy 2:1-3)

We are told to make intercession “for everyone”. (1 Samuel 12:22a-23, 2 Thessalonians 3:1-3)

On that same Sunday, we started a new Sunday evening sermon series- Healing Rain. This series has looked at 5 different types of healing as found in the Gospels and how they can impact our lives. The last week of the series is:

**Sunday, August 2- Death** (Matthew 9:18-19, 23-26) We can heal the world by healing one heart at a time.

Then, on Sunday, August 9th, we begin two NEW series! At both 8AM and 10:15AM on Sundays, we have a follow-up to a series from last summer- **The Psizzlin’ Psummer Psalm Psermon Pseries Psequel**. Psalms are religious poems or songs, designed to be set to music. Some are hymns to be sung by a congregation. Some are private prayers. Some are lyrical devices for remembering major events in Israel’s history. The Book contains 150 psalms, making it the longest book in the Bible, based on number of chapters. Every human emotion, every circumstance of daily life are captured in these 150 chapters.

This 5-week series will carry us through the rest of the summer...AND through the trials and tribulations, the highs and lows of life. The weeks of the series look like this:

**Sunday, August 9- Quietness Amid Troubles** (Psalm 3)

Even in difficult times, we can be confident in deliverance by God.

(Genesis 15:1, Ephesians 2:8-10)

**Sunday, August 16- The Goodness of God** (Psalm 23)

God’s comfort is always available.

(Exodus 34:5-7a, John 10:11-14)

**Sunday, August 23- Walking in Darkness With God’s Light** (Psalm 56)

Don’t feed your fear- look to God.

(Isaiah 40:6-8, John 8:12)

**Sunday, August 30- “If My People Would Listen to Me...”** (Psalm 81)

God wants us to conform to His likeness.

(Exodus 19:16-19, Hebrews 4:12-13)

**Sunday, September 6- God is Good, All the Time** (Psalm 108)

We are encouraged to sing praises to our God at all times and in all places.

(Deuteronomy 10:20-21, Hebrews 13:15-16)

On that same Sunday, we also begin a new Sunday evening series- **I Didn’t Know That!** We will spend 5 weeks looking at things we didn’t even know were IN the Bible! The weeks of the series are:

**Sunday, August 9- There Are TWO Creation Stories!** (Genesis 1 & 2)

He created the world...TWICE?!

**Sunday, August 16- Delilah DIDN’T Cut Samson’s Hair!** (Judges 16)

I was SURE that was how the story went!

**Sunday, August 23- Unicorns are IN the Bible!** (Psalm 2:20-22)

Mythical creatures are mentioned in the Old Testament.

**Sunday, August 30- There IS No Holy Grail!** (Matthew 27:45-50)

How could there NOT be a Holy Grail?

**Sunday, September 6- The Disciples DIDN’T Know About the Virgin Birth!** (Matthew 16:13-16)

Not ONCE do they mention it in the 3 years they spend with Him.

Come each week expecting God to speak to you in powerful ways!

## SCHEDULING EVENTS

The Aledo United Methodist Church is a BUSY place! (Our custodian tells us that he struggles to find time to CLEAN the church because there is always something GOING ON in the church!) And since we are busy connecting people with Jesus Christ, then it is a VERY good thing that we are busy! But BECAUSE we are so busy, it makes scheduling a bit more of a challenge. Events that never had to be concerned with the calendar before now...have to!

We continue to find creative, collaborative ways to enable multiple events to happen at the same time- which IS our goal- but we can't do that if we don't know an event is scheduled. With that in mind, please contact the Church Office as soon as possible to make sure your date/time/area of the church is available and to get your event on the church calendar. Is your church a busy place? Yes! Is it busy connecting people to Jesus Christ? Yes! Therefore, we want to do EVERYTHING we can to make sure as many ministries as possible that help further our mission are able to happen!

## SPECIAL OBSERVANCES IN AUGUST

Did you know that August is Admit You're Happy Month? How about Catfish Month? Golf Month? Romance Awareness Month? Picnic Month? In addition, here are some of the special "days" in August: the 1st- Mustard Day, the 2nd- Ice Cream Sandwich Day, the 3rd- Watermelon Day, the 4th- Coast Guard Day, the 5th- Work Like a Dog Day, the 6th- Wiggle Your Toes Day, the 7th- Lighthouse Day, the 8th- Sneak Some Zucchini on Your Neighbor's Porch Day, the 9th- Book Lover's Day, the 10th- S'mores Day, the 11th- Son and Daughter Day, the 12th- Middle Child Day, the 13th- Left-Handers Day, the 14th- Creamsicle Day, the 15th- V-J Day, the 16th- Tell a Joke Day, the 17th- Thriftshop Day, the 18th- Bad Poetry Day, the 19th- Aviation Day, the 20th- Radio Day, 21st- Senior Citizen's Day, the 22nd- Be an Angel Day, the 23rd- Ride the Wind Day, the 24th- Vesuvius Day, the 25th- Kiss and Make Up Day, the 26th- Dog Day, the 27th- Just Because Day, the 28th- Race Your Mouse Day, the 29th- More Herbs Less Salt Day, the 30th- Toasted Marshmallow Day, and the 31st- Trail Mix Day.

Take time to celebrate the wonderful, weird and wacky in August!

## YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND THE 2ND ANNUAL ALEDOWOOD GAME NIGHT!

by Rev. Mark

**What:** The next step in our new Younger Adults/Families Ministry

**When:** Friday, August 21st, 6PM to 8PM

**Where:** In the AUMC Dining Room

**Specifics:** The definition of who is in this group is intentionally...vague! We've had people in their 20's and people in their 50's! We've had folks with kids and folks with no kids! We've had married folks and unmarried folks! And we've had...a GREAT time!

It is now time for the 2nd Annual Aledowood Game Night. This year (like last), we will be offering dinner- homemade pizza (GOOD pizza!), salad and dessert- and FUN. The men will take on the women in a series of "team games" like Take a Hint, Cereal Killer, How Do You Do?, TV I.D., Timeline and I Love a Charade. We will have a MARVELOUS time AND...be home by 8:15PM! All we need is...YOU! You can sign up during Sunday morning worship. You can sign up in the church office. You can contact me through Facebook, email, text...whatever! Just make sure you sign up so we know you are coming! Child-care will be provided for children through 4<sup>th</sup> Grade and there is NO COST for the evening!

**GAMES**

## Hey, You with the Fluorescent Orange Hair!

**God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never forsake you." Hebrews 13:5**

You wouldn't like walking down a crowded hallway in school in any of those conditions. You would hear whispers and worse. You definitely wouldn't feel confidence oozing out of your pores.

When you wonder whether you are going to feel accepted or not, you feel insecure. When you look at yourself and all you see is shortcomings, you start wondering why anyone would ever want to spend time with you.

But you don't have to feel that way. Why? You are accepted by the One who matters most, Jesus Christ. He takes you just as you are, fluorescent orange hair, pimples, ripped pants, mismatched socks and all. He's promised never to ditch you, because He wants to be with you no matter how you feel about yourself.

If Jesus Christ, Creator of the universe, accepts you, what does it matter if nobody else accepts you? You don't stop needing people. But you do stop needing their acceptance to make you feel okay. If valuing yourself depended on being accepted, Jesus Himself and most of the disciples wouldn't have done very well. They weren't exactly popular among their peers.

When you realize that Christ accepts you unconditionally, you don't have to focus on yourself. You can shift your attention to others. Most all of your friends feel insecure, whether they act that way or not. They need someone to help meet their needs by reaching out to them and pointing them to Jesus. Knowing that Christ accepts you cuts you loose from insecurity and lets you be a confident, accepting friend.



### **What's Coming Up, TAG:**

**2/3rds of God—Aug 15th,  
10-12pm**

**ATTN, 6-8th graders, Join us on  
every Tuesday, 5-6:15pm**

**Senior High (9-12th), come learn and  
fellowship with us every Sunday,  
6:00-7:15pm**

**Summer Bible Study—Wednesdays,  
3-4pm**

## PLEDGING AND TITHING

### WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

At Aledo United Methodist Church, we know that financial stewardship is an important component of a balanced spiritual life. We emphasize the giver's need to give rather than the church's need to receive. Maintaining a healthy relationship with our possessions keeps them from getting in the way of our relationships with God, our neighbors, and our own inner being. Returning to God from that which God has given us is a tangible way to express our faith. When each of us gives as we are able, together we can fund our various ministries in Aledo and around the world.

### WHAT IS A PLEDGE?

A pledge is an estimate of giving; some call it a statement of intent. Pledge amounts may be changed, increased or decreased during the year, at any time as financial circumstances change.

### WHY SHOULD I PLEDGE?

Pledging allows us to make intentional decisions about our financial giving. It is all about priorities! When we plan ahead for our giving, we make conscious choices about spending our money in ways that reflect our faith and values. The church sets a budget based largely on the amount of total pledges received. While regular giving that is not pledged is important to the church, our pledges let the church plan more accurately.

### HOW DO I PLEDGE?

Our annual stewardship campaign is held each January but pledges may be made at any time. Pledge forms are available in the church office.

### HOW DO I PAY MY PLEDGE?

Paying your pledge is a matter of personal preference. You may pay weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly via cash, check, paypal, or through your financial institution's bill pay feature.

### HOW MUCH SHOULD I PLEDGE?

Determining the amount of your annual pledge is between you and God. Only you know what you can give. The dollar amount is not the most important detail of your pledge. We want you to participate. We want you to do the best you can.

### WHAT IS A TITHE?

A tithe is 10% of your income. A tithe may sound like an unattainable goal to begin with, but if you start with a certain proportion of your income and increase the percentage each year, you will be tithing in a short time. You could start with 2 ½%, which is equivalent to pledging the first hour's pay of a 40-hour week.

### HOW WILL I KNOW HOW MUCH I HAVE GIVEN TO THE CHURCH?

The church prepares quarterly statements of giving for everyone that gives to the church.

### GET STARTED!

The amount of your pledge is not as important as is getting started.

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### Thank You!!

I cannot express enough how thankful I am to my church family for all the care and concern I received after falling and breaking my shoulder. Thanks so much for the wonderful meals, the cards, the phone calls, and especially the prayers! I think they were instrumental in my not having to have surgery. A big thank you to Joanne Harris, Melissa Farrell, Mike Millar, and Rev Mark for filling in for me in the office until I could return. In addition, thanks for being so patient with me. I am still pretty slow!!

Love to you all!

Debbie Swank



# Happy Anniversary

## AUGUST

08/06/1999– Scott & Dianna Spencer  
 08/07/1999– Steve & Tammie Trout  
 08/12/2000– David & Kim Lloyd  
 08/13/1966– Louis & Susan Sutton  
 08/17/1984– Garry & Debra Toops  
 08/23– Dudley & Rachel Fowler  
 08/26/1972– Steve & Rhonda Brown  
 08/28/2011– Jacob & Hannah Robinson  
 08/29/1965– Stanley & Debra Swank  
 08/31/1969– Bill & Deborah Breeden



## UM Women Golden Age Birthdays

08/10– Erma Dobbins  
 08/28– Audrey Anderson  
 08/31– Betty Allan



## You Are Invited!

*Join us on August 29th, our 50th Anniversary, for a renewal of vows at 4PM in the Sanctuary, and a reception and meal following in the Dining Room. We would love to have everyone in our Church family join us for this joyous occasion!*

*Stan & Debbie Swank  
 (No gifts, please! Just your presence!)*



## THOSE WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

Don Abel	Fred Kernan
Hank Allan	Kevin & family
Aileen Address	Vickie Korn
Roger/Jodie Address	Karen Lawson
Phyllis Batson	Nadine Liby
Lenny Bowlyou	Marsha/ hospice
John & Bev Carlin	Walter Marshall
Charlie Coulter	Jerry McAlister
Adam Douglas	Edna McCreight
Ron Engstrom	Joe Miller
Earl Etheridge	Ron Moffitt
Melissa Farrell	Ed & Marion Nesbitt
Jayne Fitzsimmons	Steven Oaks, Jr
Rev Harris & family	Brad Ottoson's dad
Katie Hermanson	Cole Peterson
Noah Huston	Donna Pinger
Ron Hutchins	Frank Prouant
Connor Jochim	Bryce Rathje

Annette Reid  
 Curt Richardson  
 Martha Rittenhouse  
 Norma Slawinski  
 Janet Smith  
 Tanya  
 Carmen Techau  
 Jeff Wells  
 Ashley White  
 Shut Ins/ Nursing Homes  
 Military & families  
 All ill/in hospitals  
 Those seeking work  
 Families & marriages  
 Our nation & world  
 Summer travel  
 Life changing decisions  
 People in Cameron

Mercer County Schools  
 Administration, Teachers, Students  
 and Staff  
 National and Local Governmental  
 Leaders

**JEREMIAH** 29:11 **FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU DECLARES THE LORD PLANS TO PROSPER YOU AND NOT HARM YOU PLANS TO GIVE YOU HOPE AND A FUTURE**

## WEDNESDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP IS ALMOST HERE!

We are currently planning for the kick-off of Wednesday Night Fellowship! Beginning on Wednesday, September 9th, Wednesday Night Fellowship will be offered EVERY Wednesday night! The evening begins with dinner at 5:15PM, with FUEL Children's Ministries (for kids Pre-School through 6<sup>th</sup> Grade), a Youth Bible study (for grades 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>), an Adult Bible Study (see accompanying article) and Bell Choir rehearsal from 6:PM-7PM. The Chancel Choir rehearses from 7PM-8PM. The nursery will also be available. Pray about your commitment to Wednesday Night ministries. If you or your group would be willing to provide a Wednesday Night Fellowship meal, please contact Ruth Dulaney (309-738-6151 or [ruthdulaney@gmail.com](mailto:ruthdulaney@gmail.com)) We would love to have you for dinner...and more!



## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

As you are shopping for your children's "back-to-school" supplies for their classrooms, why not pick up a few extra items (at SUPER CHEAP PRICES!) to put in your Operation Christmas Child shoe-box? The prices can't be beat! Collection of the boxes will start around the beginning of October! There will be more information in the near future.

*Joan Reynolds & Scott Spencer*



## ONLINE GIVING

by Rev. Mark

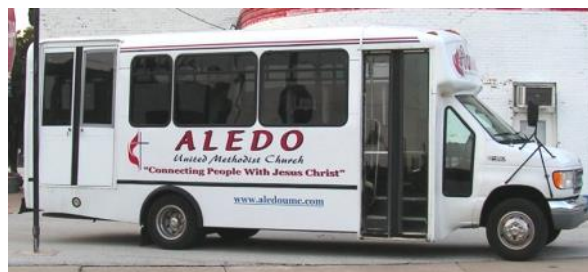
More people are now making their weekly/monthly/yearly offering to your church online! If you go to our home page ([www.myaledoumc.com](http://www.myaledoumc.com)) and choose "giving" from the Navigation Bar near the top, it will take you to a page that will provide the opportunity for your to give electronically. You can either do a one-time gift or a recurring monthly gift.

"Pastor, why would that be good for the church?" Thanks for asking! It's SO easy to forget your checkbook at home one week. It's also so easy to forget to give your offering when you are out of town. But the truth of the matter is that the financial commitments of the church...the bills, if you will...don't decrease on those weeks when people forget to tithe. Our financial commitments are steady all year long. Therefore, having a steady, dependable stream of giving helps us better plan for next week, next month and next year!

In addition to through our website, MANY banks now offer online "bill pay". With that service you can set up your church giving for whenever and however much you want it to be. Either way, it's simple, easy and dependable. Won't you consider electronic giving?

## ALEDO UMC BUS MINISTRY

We'd love to come pick you up and bring you to any of our services. Just make arrangements with **Greg Cobert** in advance by **calling (309) 737-5621** and we'll put you on our "Pick Up" list.



## Connection Coins For August

The Connection Coins (or as Rev. Mark calls them, the “thinly-veiled Pringles cans”!) are doing great things in the life of the Aledo UMC! On the 2nd Sunday of each month, during the Children’s Moment, the ushers pass around those cans. You are encouraged to drop your change in- although we WILL accept “folding money”! And that change goes toward helping fund a ministry within the church.

This month (August 9th), the Connection Coin offering will go toward an often-used ministry. As you probably know, we get a van full of FREE, day-old bakery products from the Milan HyVee every Saturday...EVERY Saturday. (Rev. Mark calls THAT “manna from Heaven”!) That weekly gift provides food for LOTS of things- Youth and Children’s ministries, the Fellowship Cafe’, Wednesday Night Fellowship meals, other special meals and events as well as providing a great windfall for anybody and everybody who wants it on Sunday morning. Further, any food still not used by Monday morning goes to either the Churches of Mercer County Food Pantry or Vashti Village, depending on the week.

The gentleman who delivers the food every week does so out of the goodness of his heart. Therefore, we give him \$10/week to help cover his fuel costs. So any money put in the Connection Coin cans on the 9th of August will be used to help pay for that weekly cost, which totals \$520/year. What a GREAT way to help connect people to Jesus Christ. So bring your change on August 9th!

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### C.I.A. (Caring Individual Adults)

#### Luncheon August 23rd

by Joanne Harris



CIA continues to flourish! This group is aimed at folks who often find themselves eating alone. This includes (but is NOT limited to) anyone who has lost their spouse, divorced or separated, or whose loved one is in the nursing home. The CIA luncheon happens once each month. This month, the luncheon will be on Sunday, August 23rd, immediately following the 10:15AM worship service. You don't have to bring anything except yourself. Feel free to invite a friend to share the meal and fellowship. I will look forward to seeing you on the 23rd of August at 11:30AM!

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## Are YOU a Member?

Have you seen the influx of new members lately? Through the end of July, we have brought in 14 new members. To give you some perspective, for the entire calendar year of 2014, we brought in 15 new members- a pretty good year. By comparison, more than half of the United Methodist churches in our Illinois Great Rivers Conference will not bring in one new member this year. Not one. Over 50%.

Is membership essential to being a part of this congregation? Absolutely not. You can't serve on a committee if you're not a member, but there are NO other restrictions. Other than the “committee thing”, you can fully participate in the life of The Aledo United Methodist Church- membership or not.

So why join the church? Membership is a public declaration- it's you standing before God AND your church family and saying, “I love being here with these people and I want to deepen my connection with them by becoming a full member.”

How do you DO that, you ask? Pretty simple. Let Rev. Mark know- you can check the box on the Sunday morning attendance sheet, or email him, or call him, or text him, or Facebook him...you get the idea! From there, you will set up a time to meet (about 30 minutes) with him- to get to know him better and vice versa. Then you will set a date to join! Take the plunge...you will be so blessed!

## New Wednesday Evening Bible Study

Due to the response to offering a study on the Book of Revelation, Rev. Mark will be offering the study on Wednesday evenings beginning in September.

**WHAT: Revelation: In Christ You Are an Overcomer**

**Rev. Mark's new Wednesday evening Bible Study**

**WHEN: Wednesdays @ 6PM**

**WHERE: In the Fellowship Cafe'**

**WHY:** The Book of Revelation is one of the most intriguing books of the Bible. It's also one of the most mysterious. Filled with vivid imagery, rich themes, and deep spiritual insights, it can be challenging to read and understand. Yet woven throughout Revelation's sweeping tapestry is a unifying message: The victory found in Jesus Christ. This Bible study takes an in-depth, yet practical, look at the book of Revelation, and shares how we can experience a victorious life.

**WHAT ELSE:** The books are \$9

## Update on The Point

by Rev. Mark

On Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014, at 6PM, a new ministry started- **The Point**. A new worship service, this ministry was geared to be an alternative worship experience for folks IN our congregation who are gone for a weekend, work on Sunday morning or are simply looking for more opportunities to be involved in worship, as well as folks within Mercer County who don't have a church home. We spent the first year regularly exploring the question, "What's the point?" What's the point of faith, what's the point of a relationship with God, what's the point of life.

The service features:

- a sermon that is DIFFERENT from Sunday morning- complete with group discussion
- weekly Communion
- shared leadership between myself and others who attend
- prayer time, include "thankful moments" and testimonies
- weekly video clips

During its first 10 months of existence, the service has developed a good foothold. What it now needs is a larger audience. SO- what I invite YOU to do is this- spend August praying about The Point. Pray that it will help us connect more people to Jesus Christ. Also pray about YOUR involvement in the service. Is God calling you to be a part? Who is He calling you to invite...and bring? Churches ONLY grow through one person inviting one person...over and over again. God is doing GREAT things- how will you be a part of it?



**Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/MyAledoUMC](http://www.facebook.com/MyAledoUMC)

**Twitter: @Aledo\_UMC**

**Pinterest: @Aledoumc1**

**Instagram: Aledoumc1**



## Did You Miss Sunday's Sermon?

If you miss church on Sunday, you can STILL experience the sermon. Simply go to [www.stickwithjesus.com](http://www.stickwithjesus.com). Scroll down the main page until you find the date you missed- that day's blog will be a transcript of the sermon! If you would like to subscribe and receive a daily email link, email Rev. Mark at [revmark@stickwithjesus.com](mailto:revmark@stickwithjesus.com). Please share these links with your friends and family.

## BUS UPDATE

As you probably know by now, our current church bus has breathed its last! In early June, 2015, it failed its State Inspection. And while we are currently addressing short-term solutions to the challenge, the Administrative Council and the Trustees both feel it's time to invest in a new bus. The Administrative Council has authorized the Trustees to purchase a new bus at a maximum purchase price of \$65,000, subject to the Finance Committee finding COMPLETE funding for the project.

To that goal, a short-term, all-cash campaign has been designed to raise the needed funds- we simply don't have the luxury of collecting pledges over several years. Not everyone has the same financial capabilities. And while we need some very generous gifts, ALL gifts are important. We ask for your participation.

Church Treasurer and member Dwight Reynolds said, "I have been blessed to have driven the bus for youth events, No Greater Love men's ministry, Rhubarb Fest, taking our ladies to circle meetings and helping Greg (Cobert) with the normal Sunday trips. I have seen firsthand how this ministry is connecting people to Jesus Christ and I am in total support of this ministry and the plan to sustain it."

You can give several ways- drop a check in the Offering Plate, drop it by the office or go to the church website ([myaledoumc.com](http://myaledoumc.com)) and click on the link to give electronically. Simply make any checks out to the church and put "bus" in the memo. Thank you for your consideration and your prayers.




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## YMCA Christian Concert in the Park

The YMCA Christian Concert will be held on Thursday, August 13 at 5:30 pm at Aledo Central Park. Connection, Aledo UMC's praise band, will be putting on the concert. The "Y" will be serving walking tacos for a donation. Plan to attend and enjoy an evening of praise in the park.

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## 6 SIGNS YOUR CHURCH ENCOURAGES SERVING

1. **Gift-based service is a frequent topic in worship messages.** Your church has a weekly opportunity to cast the vision for equipping. Does the lead pastor promote the biblical message of the giftedness of all believers? Do people understand that the call to discipleship involves serving?
2. **Lay people are regularly and visibly lifted up for their service in the church and community.** For equipping church values to permeate the culture, you have to do more than talk about them. Stories about and by people involved in serving are key to building an equipping culture.
3. **Paid staff are evaluated more by how they equip others than by program goals.** Is staff challenged to increase the number of people involved in their ministry each year?
4. **The church is known for being involved with ministry in the community.** The natural outcome of healthy equipping churches includes involvement in community-transforming ministry.
5. **Workplace and community involvement are seen as ministry.** There is not a large division between sacred and secular service. Equipping is about people using their gifts in all that they do to glorify and serve God. That is part of the vision to cast in order to move toward whole life ministry.
6. **When people are sick or need pastoral care, they are more likely to be ministered to (and expect to be ministered to) by other lay people rather than pastoral staff.** A hospital visit from a lay person is seen as real ministry. The senior pastor is not expected to make every hospital call, shut-in visit, or worship guest follow-up.

**PRAYER WALK  
THROUGH THE  
CHURCH EVERY  
SUNDAY MORNING  
AT 7AM.**



**WORSHIP TIMES:**  
Sundays 8AM &  
10:15AM  
Sunday School 9:15AM  
"The Point" 6PM



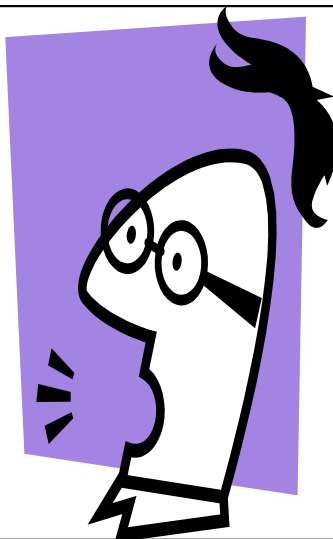
## **2015 *Follow the Star* Holiday Bazaar Initial Meeting** **Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM**

Calling all who have been involved in Holiday Bazaar preparations in the past and anyone who would like to be a part of planning and assisting with this year's event! Come to our first meeting and bring your thoughts and ideas. We need to brainstorm and come up with some fresh, new ideas. We may change some of our booths and add new ones. Join us in the Seeker's Room.

The deadline for the  
next Parish Visitor is

**Friday  
August 21st  
at 8am.**

Please have all  
articles  
submitted  
by this date!



## **Church Website**

Have you looked at your church's website? If not, go to [www.myaledoumc.com](http://www.myaledoumc.com) and see what's going on! Not only can you see the "basics" about the Aledo United Methodist Church, you can find the most church current calendar. In addition, the 2-minute "call to worship" videos that start our 8AM service every week are available. Also, the monthly newsletter AND the weekly bulletin (complete with the current version of the Prayer List) can be found on our website. Stop by and check it out!

## **FINANCIAL MATTERS** (WEEKLY NEED \$5,833)

Date	07/05	07/12	07/19	07/26
Attendance	200	210	225	234
Receipts	\$7,731.82	\$3,769.00	\$4,982.51	\$3,642.00

