

The Parish Visitor

February, 2016



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WHAT DO GROWING CHURCHES DO?

by Rev. Mark

I will admit it right up front- I am a geek. I geek out about ALL sorts of things. But one of the things I geek out about is church growth. I am passionate about it. AND...I read a lot about it. And I recently read an article on church growth I want to share with you. Written by Brian K. Dodd, the article focuses on what growing churches do. Dodd has a list-

1. Growing churches focus on church health more than church growth.
2. Growing churches demand excellence.
3. Growing churches are vigilant about their mission, vision and core values.
4. Growing churches are willing to stop unproductive ministries.
5. Growing churches not only embrace but also foster change.
6. Growing churches celebrate.

For my money, that is a fascinating and powerful list. Notice #1- if you want your church to grow, don't focus on growth! Focus on health! That makes good sense to me. And I see us doing that in so many ways. We are not about excluding people. We are not about different "factions" jockeying for position and power. We ARE about welcoming everyone and recognizing that we are all radically equal in the eyes of God.

Then there's #2. Again, I feel we are working really hard on that one. It's important that we refuse to settle for less than excellent- it's what God deserves. No less. We want to always try to make everything we do as good as it can possibly be.

#3 says we have to be vigilant about our mission. Can you name the mission of your church? If you have been coming here more than a few months...I'm nearly positive you can! "We exist to connect people to Jesus Christ". WE measure everything we do with that yardstick.

The hardest one of the bunch might be #4. Why? Because that means if we have a ministry that is beloved...but is unproductive and doesn't support our mission...we need to be willing to put that that one to bed. It's HARD to shut down ministries. But it's sometimes essential. And I see us more and more willing to evaluate and re-evaluate, measuring what's working and what's not.

#5 probably SEEMS like the hardest...because it has the word "change" in it! (Gasp!) Let's recognize the 400 pound gorilla in the room- change can be hard. But healthy things grow. And when they grow...they change. And if they CAN'T...or WON'T change...they don't grow. And if they don't grow...they eventually die.

(continued on page 8)

SPECIAL DATES:

- February 1 Finance Meeting 6PM
- February 1 Trustees Meeting 7PM
- February 4 Caring Hearts Food Prep 9AM
- February 7 Communion & Food Pantry Collection Sunday
- February 9 "A Happy Heart" UMW Event 6PM
- February 10 Ash Wednesday Service 6:00PM
- February 12 "Renovate" Youth Event 6-10PM
- February 13 "Renovate" Youth Event 9AM-4PM
- February 14 Lenten Breakfast 9AM
- February 15 Office closed for President's Day
- February 15 UM Men Meeting 6PM
- February 17 Preschool Screening 8:30AM-3PM
- February 18 Preschool Screening 2-7PM
- February 19 Parish Visitor Deadline 8AM
- February 19 Late Valentines Date for Younger Adults 6:30PM
- February 21 Administrative Council 7:15PM
- February 22 Relay for Life Meeting 6PM
- February 25 Caring Hearts Food Prep 1PM
- February 28 CIA Luncheon 11:30AM

PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDIES



Revelation: In Christ You Are an Overcomer

WHAT: Rev. Mark's current 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: It's NOT too late! The books are \$9

His Name is Jesus

WHAT: Rev. Mark's NEW Tuesday morning Bible Study

WHEN: Tuesdays @ 9AM

WHERE: In the Fellowship Cafe'

WHY: Get to know Jesus---and discover what it means to follow him as Savior and Lord! This back-to-basics interactive study helps you understand the Gospels chronologically; see how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy; and explore how his ministry enacted the saving reign of God.

WHAT ELSE: The books are \$10

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 10 Commandments

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

WHEN: Sundays @ 9:15AM

WHERE: In the Dining Room

WHY: God's rules do more than restrict--they give freedom. They are words of prevention and protection. They define identity--ours and God's. Each of the weeks in this study by Rob Suggs looks at one of God's commandments and a Bible passage that will help you better understand how to apply God's law. As you study these laws, you will encounter God himself.

WHAT ELSE: We would LOVE to have you join this class. Books are \$8.

YOUNG ADULT/FAMILY MINISTRY EVENT

February has become the month of the "Late Valentine's Dinner" at AUMC. And well...it's that time again! On **Friday, February 19th from 6:30PM-8PM**, we will host the **3rd Annual Young Adult/Family Late Valentine's Day Dinner!** The evening will start off with a GREAT dinner, served in courses and followed up with a marvelous dessert! Some "entertainment" will happen after dinner, as well as some conversation as to where this group heads in 2016. The evening will wrap up at 8PM. Nursery WILL be provided. Watch for the sign-up sheet on Sundays or simply make your reservation through the office. The cost of this event is...ready?...ZERO! Please plan on attending!

NEW SERMON SERIES(S)!

by Rev. Mark

On January 10, we started a 7-week journey that will not only lead us partway into Lent- the season leading up to Easter- but also cause us to ask some challenging questions and look at some challenging guidelines for life as we walk through **3 Simple Questions, 3 Simple Rules**. The remaining weeks of that series are:

- **Sunday, February 7- Do Good** (Colossians 3:12-17)
What's the MOST you do? (3John 1:11, Luke 6:27-31)
- **Sunday, February 14- Stay In Love With God** (Psalm 31:21-24)
What does "in love" actually mean? (Deuteronomy 6:5-9, John 3:16-17)
- **Sunday, February 21- Praying It, Living It** (Philippians 4:4-8)
How do we wrap this all up together? (Psalm 40:1-2, 4a, Isaiah 41:9-10)

Then, On February 28th, we begin a new morning series that will take us to Easter morning- **In the Shadow of the Cross**. We will look at the events that immediately precede the events of Easter week and how they impact that week. The weeks of that series look like this:

Sunday, February 28- Before Death...Life (John 11:17-44)

Just before Jesus willing heads to His death, He restores life to someone else.

Sunday, March 6- The Plot (John 11:45-54)

Selfishness and insecurity lead to drastic decisions.

Sunday, March 13- Extravagant Worship (John 12:1-8)

Mary puts things in perspective.

Sunday, March 20 (Palm Sunday)- Riding on a Donkey (John 12:12-19)

Jesus even uses His mode of transportation as a teachable moment.

Sunday, March 27 (Easter Sunday)- Why Are You Crying? (John 20:1-18)

Jesus' story is cause for joyous celebration.

At The Point, our 6PM Sunday worship service, we have spent some time looking at plans for the New Year that can actually make a difference as we navigate **Resolutions**. The last week of this series is:

February 7- Enjoy the Ride (Matthew 11:27-30)

A lot of people don't appreciate the moment...until it's passed.

Then, on February 14, we begin a new Sunday evening series that will bring us to Palm Sunday- **Emotions**. We will consider a WIDE variety of human emotions and how they impact our relationships with each and with God. The weeks of that series look like this:

February 14- Love (1Corinthians 13:1-13)

Love isn't something you find- it's something that finds you.

February 21- Hate (1John 4:16b-21)

It's as easy to hate as it is difficult to love.

February 28- Curiosity (Proverbs 25:2-3)

Curiosity can conquer fear even more than bravery can.

March 6- Fear (1John 4:18)

To him who is in fear, everything rustles.

March 13- Hopelessness (Matthew 11:25-30)

The secret is to never give up hope.

March 20 (Palm Sunday)- Satisfaction (Proverbs 19:20-24)

Success is finding satisfaction in giving more than you take.

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



Thank You!

Dear Church members,

Thank you very much for the delicious Christmas gift of fruit, cookies, candy, and chicken noodle soup. I enjoyed everything SO MUCH! It is so wonderful to be remembered during the Holiday Season. Your thoughtfulness and generosity are VERY MUCH appreciated. You really brightened my Holiday Season. God bless all of you!

Love,
Rita Haizlip

Thank you very much for the delicious cookies and soup you left on my porch.

Love,
Ed Nesbitt

I want to sincerely thank my Methodist Church family for the really nice tray of Christmas goodies. It made my Christmas a lot merrier. All items were delightful, and I felt very blessed. Thanks again.

Frazier Hunt

One evening during the Christmas holidays I received a phone call from my Doctor asking if I would be home. My thought was "Why was Dr Palmer calling me?" I was not sick (or planned to be sick). Right away he told me he would be bringing a food basket from Aledo Methodist Church. Of course, I said I would be here. Everyone is so busy during the Holiday season, looking forward to seeing family from far and near. Also many events at church and school. How do they find time to do so much, to bring joy to others? To all of you who took time from your busy days to spread happiness and joy to others, you have my heart-felt thank you. I enjoyed it so much. To you all- Thank You. As Rev Mark often says- "God is Good! All the time!"

Sincerely,
Gladys Johnson

To my loving Church Family,

Thank you so much for the Christmas basket! It was so thoughtful! Like I have said for years...I don't know what I would do without all of you!

Love,
Julie & Maggie

Aledo United Methodist Church,

Thank you so much for the gift of money you gave us. It is an honor and pleasure serving at your church. Thank you also for the fruit and cookies tray. Everything was delicious. We appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity.

In Christ,
Kent & Colleen Hessman

Thanks to a loving congregation for the monetary gift presented to me. I feel very blessed to be able to help the Bell Choir share such beautiful music during Worship Services. Your kindness is appreciated.

Blessings upon you,
Ila



VALENTINE'S DAY

Love is an amazing thing. It breaks all the rules. It has a mind of its own. And it cannot be stopped. Think about it- there are people you love, and you can't even begin to explain why...you just do. Likewise, there are people who love you, and sometimes you can't imagine for the life of you why they do. Another truth about love is that it is so much more than simply an emotion. Love is a conscious choice that takes dedication, perseverance, and some good, old-fashioned hard work.

We all know that February 14th is Valentine's Day- the day we send cards, flowers, and candy to loved ones. (Hallmark and Hershey's have made several fortunes based on that fact.) This Valentine's Day, I hope you do that again (if it is your habit). But along with the conventions, I have a challenge for you...2 challenges, to be exact.

1 Your first challenge is to make a list of the people you love the most. Write down the 5 things you love the most about them. And then...TELL THEM! Share with them what you love about them. Leave out ANY negatives (we all have them), and focus on the positive aspects of the person. It will make them feel so good, and, surprise, surprise, it will make you feel good, too!

2. Your second challenge is to spend a total of 15 minutes every day this month in prayer, letting God know how much you love Him.

You may be saying, "15 minutes?!" I said total. Split it up- 5 minutes at a time. You may be saying, "EVERY day for a MONTH?!" Remember, February is the shortest month of the year! You may be saying, "How much I love God?! Yes, we are called to love God, above all else. God loves us SO much that He sent His only Son to live among us, teach us, die for our sins, and rise for our eternal lives. When you look at it that way, how could we NOT love God? Make sure you tell those around you they are loved. Also, make sure you tell God how much you love Him.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP!

Wednesday Night Fellowship is going full speed! The dinners have been spectacular, the rest of the evening has been great and the fellowship has been outstanding!

The evening starts with dinner from 5:15-6PM. Then, everything else starts!! At 6PM, your choices include:

- Nursery for birth-3 years old
- FUEL for kids through 6th Grade
- Junior/Senior High Bible Study
- Rev. Mark's class, **Revelation** (see accompanying article)
- Bell Choir
- Choir

See you on Wednesday evenings!

FUEL- OUR WEDNESDAY NIGHT CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

by Rev. Mark

Our Wednesday Night Children's ministry- **FUEL**- is off and running. And the leadership couldn't be more excited! The emphasis is built around "Hands-On Bible". The kids have fun while they learn more about the great stories of the Bible...AND how those stories impact their lives! We are SO excited about the positive impact this ministry has on our children! If you have children or grandchildren, please consider helping them be a part of this exciting new program. If you have friends or neighbors who have kids, please invite them. Let them know that they are welcome to come for dinner at 5:15PM, stay for an adult Bible study while their kids are ministered to from 6PM to 7PM and be home, working on homework and getting everybody ready for bed, by 7:15PM!

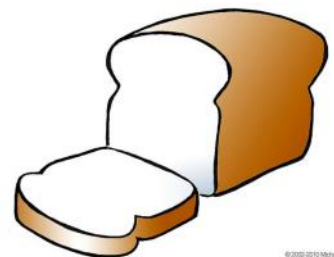


CONNECTION COINS FOR FEBRUARY

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 (February 8th), the Connection Coin offering will go toward another important ministry. Every Saturday, a van pulls up at the church- FULL of bakery goods from HyVee. A rotating group of people are there to unload the van, transport the bakery goods into the church, sort them based on need and then putting them where they need to go. It is a powerful ministry that reaches LOTS of people.

As a way of saying "thank you" to the gentleman who delivers the baked goods, we give him \$10 every week for gas. We recently used that last of the money we collected several months ago for that purpose. Therefore, 100% of the money that is collected in the cans on the 8th of February will be used to help replenish the funds needed to cover the costs of this powerful ministry. What a GREAT way to help connect people to Jesus Christ. So bring your change on February 8th!



God's Box of Chocolates



Everywhere I look near Valentine's Day, there's chocolate: boxes of chocolate in all the stores, chocolate on TV promising to be the only love you need, chocolate girl scout cookies--CHOCOLATE! I even saw chocolate Altoid breath mints in the grocery checkout aisle the other day! I think that's what led me to remember the famous quote from Forrest Gump: "Life is like a box of chocolates...you never know what you're gonna get." (I even remembered it with his accent.)

In reality, that phrase can be true in many ways. We wake up every morning completely unsure of what the day may hold for us. We've made our plans. Sometimes they even happen the way we make them. But we never know for sure, do we?

The days that come with caramel in the middle are my favorite. The ones with the strawberry goo are just so so--but the ones with coconut--YUCK! I'd rather go back to bed. Then there's the days where tragedy or difficult times come out of nowhere, and the chocolate sits in the pantry untouched...there's no sweetness to be had in those moments, it seems.

God knows that life as it pertains to circumstances is uncertain for us. That's why He comforts us and reminds us so many times that He is our constant companion, our steadfast friend, our consistently loving God and Savior. He doesn't keep promises the way we do:

"When people make promises, they guarantee them by appealing to some authority above them so that if there is any question that they'll make good on the promise, the authority will back them up. When God wanted to guarantee His promises, He gave His word, a rock-solid guarantee--God can't break His word. And because His word can't change, the promise is likewise unchangeable." (Heb. 6:16-18)

You see, no matter what chocolate we are "in the middle of" right now, He is there--with the certainty of His promise today as well as His hope of heaven in the future. Listen to how the verse above continues to encourage us: (vs.19-20)

"We who have run for our very lives to God have every reason to grab the promised hope with both hands and never let go. It's an unbreakable spiritual lifeline, reaching past all appearances right to the very presence of God where Jesus, running on ahead of us, has taken up His permanent post as high priest for us, in the order of Melchizedek."

I love the visual picture of grabbing on to Him with both hands as He runs ahead of me to the Father. That makes me able to get up today and praise Him for whatever comes my way. This faith, this confidence, this hope is our unbreakable spiritual lifeline--HIS love for us no matter what, when, how or why. Let's binge on His priceless box of chocolates today...the sweetest and most satisfying of them all.

"Taste and see that the Lord is good;
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him." Psalm 34:8

*Melissa Farrell
Director of Youth and
Children's
Ministries*

What's Coming Up, TAG:

2/3rds of God--

Feb 20th,

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

Youth Bible Study--Wednesdays,

6-7pm

TAG FACT: Did You Know?

At the close of 2015, Aledo UMC welcomed 45 Members for the Teens Among God. The roster has already gained two new members at the start of 2016.

God is Good...ALL THE TIME!

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

02/03/2007– Jesse & Connie Midkiff
 02/07/1954– Richard & Beverly Norton
 02/13/2011– Ron & Diane Engstrom
 02/14/1971– Bruce & Linda Hall
 02/20/1993– Larry & Clara McCreight
 02/21/1954– David & Beverly Haney
 02/26/1977– William & Kathryn Newswander



UM Women Golden Age Birthdays

02/01– Connie Shaw
 02/14– Molly Paulsgrove
 02/20– Sheila Spencer
 02/21– Dora Mae Howlett
 02/29– JeAnne Balmer



SAVE THE DATE!!

**“THE JOURNEY” WOMEN’S EVENT
 WILL BE HELD APRIL 9TH AT
 ALEDO UMC.**

**INVITE
 SOMEONE!**

THOSE WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

Scott Balmer	Kelsey Huston
Linda Bierbaum	Judy Inman
Patty Bruner	Craig Kelly
John & Bev Carlin	Aubrey King
Hurley Crossman	Mary Kistler
Jim Earl	Vickie Korn
Ron/Diane Engstrom	Alison Kuk
Melissa Farrell	Nadine Liby
Lyn & Don Franks	Sandy Matthews
Lavern Fuller	Jerry McAlister
Bill Glenn	Roger McIntyre
Larry Griffith	Linda Patsche
Beverly Haney	Chad Peterson
Jim Hanson	Evelyn Pittman
Rev Harris & family	Bryce Rathje
Katie Hermanson	Bob & Nancy Reid
Amy Hess	Paul Riley
Linda Hoy	Alyce Robinson

Pastor Toni Ross
 Pam Russell
 Sheri Sackville
 Janet Smith family
 Hanna Summers
 Teresa Thomas
 Robin Vaughn
 Marilyn Wagler
 Eric Zimmerman
 Shut Ins/ Nursing Homes
 Military & families
 All ill/in hospitals
 Our nation & world
 NGL Mission Trip
 The Journey
 Those who take their
 own life
 All affected by weather

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



(Continued from page 1)

And then there's #6. We like to celebrate, don't we? We celebrate the big things, to be sure. But we also celebrate the small things. (We sing "happy birthday nearly every Sunday!) We have a lot to celebrate and we should be ready and willing to regularly do just that!

At the end of the article, Dodd says, "While your church may have grown numerically, is Jesus happy with the church that has been built?" That's a VERY good thing to consider...always. And when I'm honest in regard to that question...I think that the answer is "Yes!" I am confident that Jesus is happy with who we are and where we're headed. I also am convinced that He has a LOT more for us to do!

CANDLE...WHAT?

On February 2nd, we recognize a little-noticed day in the church calendar- Candlemas. Described in the Gospel of Luke (2:22-40), it's the day Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem forty days after his birth to both complete Mary's required post-childbirth purification and perform the redemption of the firstborn.

When they arrived at the temple, they met Simeon, who had been promised by God that "he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord." He took Jesus in his arms and prayed the prayer that would become known as the Canticle of Simeon, which prophesied the redemption of the world by Jesus. This was baby Jesus' introduction to God's house, as well as the church's 1st "formal" meeting with the Messiah.

God chose to come down in the form of a newborn- that fact never ceases to amaze! Churches often talk about "Christmas and Easter People" (those who only come to church on special holidays), but we ARE Christmas and Easter people. We worship a God who chose to do the miraculous- a birth in a manger and a death on a cross- FOR us, so that we might be redeemed. We should keep the miracle of those seasons in our hearts all year long.

WORSHIP TECH OPPORTUNITIES

Do you like electronics? Then your church needs YOU! We need people to help operate the sound system and computer during Sunday morning 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.

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) 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?



Did You Miss Sunday's Sermon?

If you miss church on Sunday, you can STILL experience the sermon. Simply go to 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. Please share these links with your friends and family.



Cooking For Wednesday Night Fellowship

We all LOVE to eat! But maybe you also love to cook! We could use your help. Ruth Dulaney is scheduling groups to provide Wednesday Night meals for the "Spring semester". We need individuals, groups, or families to sign up for those 2016 WNFs. There IS a budget, so if covering the cost of the food is a problem...don't let it be! It is a true joy to be able to provide dinner for others. The sign-up board has empty spots just waiting for YOU to be the hands and feet of Jesus!

Special Observances in February

February is American Heart Month, Black History Month, Cherry Month, Embroidery Month, Grapefruit Month and Responsible Pet Owners' Month. Some special days include: 1st- Freedom Day, 2nd- Groundhog's Day, 3rd- The Day the Music Died, 4th- Create a Vacuum Day, 5th- Western Monarch Butterfly Day, 6th- Lame Duck Day, 7th- Olive Oil Day, 8th- Clean Out Your Computer Day, 9th- Toothache Day, 10th- Umbrella Day, 11th- Don't Cry Over Spilled Milk Day, 12th- Plum Pudding Day, 13th- Get a Different Name Day, 14th- Valentine's Day, 15th- Gumdrops Day, 16th- Mashed Potato Day, 17th- Random Acts of Kindness Day, 18th- Battery Day, 19th- Chocolate Mint Day, 20th- Hoodie-Hoo Day, 21st- Love your Pet Day, 22nd- Be Humble Day, 23rd- Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day, 24th- Tennis Day, 25th- Quiet Day, 26th- Carnival Day, 27th- No-Brainer Day, and 28th- Public Sleeping Day. Celebrate the best, the worst, the sweetest and the oddest in February!

LENTEN BREAKFAST

A wonderful tradition in our church will continue on Sunday, Feb. 14th. It is the annual Lenten Breakfast sponsored by the United Methodist Women. This is a FREE breakfast (egg casserole, fruit, sweets, and drink) that is held on the first Sunday of Lent, the season leading up to Easter. It will be held in between our two morning church services from 9:15-10:00 a.m. in the church dining room. It is for EVERYONE OF ALL AGES. Rev. Mark will lead us in Communion and give a short message. There will be no Sunday School that day.

Lenten Invitation

By Rev. Mark

The season leading up to Easter- a time for reflection, preparation, sacrifice...Lent. Its beginning is signaled by, of all things, Shrove Tuesday (we know it better as Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras and it is February 9th this year.) and is immediately followed by Ash Wednesday (February 10th this year). We receive the ashes of Ash Wednesday on our foreheads, representing our need and desire for repentance. And then we begin a long and challenging journey that will lead us all the way to Easter Sunday.

Easter is, without a doubt, one of the best, easiest, least threatening days of the entire year to invite someone to church. Do you like what's happening at your church? Are you being fed spiritually here? If so, share that fact with someone! Chose a relative, neighbor, co-worker...whoever...and tell them what God is doing in your life. Then...invite them to come with you to church on Easter and see what it's all about!

The deadline for the next
Parish Visitor is

**Friday,
February 19th
at 8am.**

Please have all
articles
submitted
by this date!

FAT TUESDAY DINNER/ ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

On Wednesday, February 10th at 5:15 PM, we will have a special Wednesday Night Fellowship dinner of pancakes to commemorate Fat Tuesday (technically the day before!)- the day to empty your pantry of fatty food in anticipation of Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent. (see accompanying article) **It will be followed at 6:30PM** by a special Ash Wednesday worship service to commemorate the beginning of Lent. We will look at the reason for the season and more specifically the significance of the ashes. Communion will be served.



ALEDO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

EMERGENCY FIRST AID Q & A

From Your AUMC Safety Team



- NEED A BAND-AID?**

Where are standard first aid kits located in the church? Answer: One on the education wing shelf, one in the nursery, one in the kitchen and one by the dining room serving window.

- NEED MORE EXTENSIVE FIRST AID?**

Did you know that there are expanded deluxe First Aid kits located on the coat racks in the Fellowship Room and the Dining Room?

Were you aware that these expanded First Aid Kits could assist you in all of these situations?

In case of an accidental burn? We have skin wipes, antiseptic ointment/burn cream packets, gauze pads, cold packs.

Help stop a nosebleed? Yes, a quick seal nosebleed kit!

Treat a larger cut? Use the vinyl gloves, skin wipes, multi-antibiotic cream, large non-stick bandages, trauma pads or stretch gauze, paper tape, scissors, and hand sanitizer.

Aid a diabetic with these supplies? Glucose Monitor Meter, Glucose Test Strips, Lancets, Glucose Tablets, Glucose Gel.

What two other items are in the expanded First Aid kits? Blood Pressure kits and flashlights.

Have you noticed the blankets located by the deluxe First Aid kits to use in emergency?

And what is in the green "sport bag looking" cases on top of the coat racks? A folding cot to use when needed.

- NEED THE AED (AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR) FOR A CARDIAC ARREST?**

Do you know where the AED is located? On the wall in the Fellowship Room by the TV.

What is the flipchart located on the AED? Guidelines for first aid in emergency situations.

Do you know who to contact in a medical emergency? Be familiar with those in congregation with medical training. There is a list in the church office.

Be Prepared, Be Smart, Be Safe at AUMC!

A Happy Heart UMW Fellowship Event Tuesday, February 9 6 pm-8 pm

This is the first of four social events open to all of the ladies of AUMC. It is an opportunity for all ladies to gather for an evening of food, fun and fellowship. We will be decorating Valentine cookies and making up trays of goodies to take to shut-ins and people who are in need of some cheer. Plates or trays of treats will be delivered to church mem-



bers residing in each of the nursing homes, Brookstone Assisted Living, and to the elderly who still reside in their own homes.

As Proverbs 15:13 says, "A happy heart makes the face cheerful." Our mission is to lift the spirits of those needing it most on Valentine's Day. There will be a sign up poster for items to donate, or simply to sign up to join in on the food, fun and fellowship. Please join us in bringing some happiness to others.

If you know of someone who may not be on our list and would benefit from one of these trays, please call the AUMC office with information by February 2.

Thank You

Many thanks too all who remembered us with prayers, cards, and acts of kindness during the illness and loss of my brother, Fred Kernan.

Ella and Chuck Luallen

Thank you so much! The Christmas tray was so nice, and the little visit that went with it. I also thank all who have been so thoughtful of me this past year. A special big thanks to my sisters and brothers of our church, Caring Hearts, cards, and calls. I am blessed with a wonderful church family. God is faithful.

Nadine Liby



American Red Cross Blood Drive

Our church will be hosting the monthly American Red Cross Blood Drive on **March 15th from 11:30-5:30**. We will need sandwich makers, canteen helpers, and MOST IMPORTANTLY, many blood donors. Please mark your calendars for that day. Contact Mary Flint to help, donate, or with questions.

C.I.A. (Caring Individual Adults) Luncheon February 28th 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, February 28th, 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 look forward to seeing you on the 28th of February at 11:30AM!

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



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

WHERE WE FINISHED 2015 AND WHERE WE GO IN 2016

2015 was an exciting financial year for the Aledo United Methodist Church. We finished the year with a small cash flow surplus of around \$150.00 and we paid all our bills. In addition to that, we successfully completely financed a brand new bus for the church, which cost over \$58,000.00, and also helped raise funds (over \$19,000.00) for the purchase of a dog for Noah. We were fortunate that our budgeted expenditures were under budget by over \$14,000.00. Last year's budget was \$303,325.00 and for 2016 we are budgeting ministry programs at \$316,244.00, for an increase of 4.2 per cent. This is a doable increase as we all work to connect others with Jesus Christ. Last year we had 90 pledge commitments and for 2016 we are hoping and praying that over 125 giving units will make a pledge commitment to God through the Aledo United Methodist Church. When we consider that we have approximately 223 identifiable giving units connected to our church, this should be an easy increase to meet. Out of love, God gave each of us His only Son and all that we have, so it is reasonable for us to give back to Him a portion of our time, talents and material blessings. If you were unable to make a pledge commitment on January 17th, you can still drop your commitment letter in the offering plate or send it to the church office. Only the church treasurer and office administrator will see your pledge commitment. It is never too late to commit to the Lord.

Your brother in Christ,

Ron Engstrom

Finance and Stewardship Committee Chairperson

FINANCIAL MATTERS (WEEKLY NEED \$6,082)

Date	01/03/2016	01/10/2016	01/17/2016	01/24/2016
Attendance	229	211	218	233
Receipts				
(Toward Budget)	\$6,962.00	\$3,917.00	\$4,423.25	\$5,556.00

SHARING
GOD'S
GIFTS