

The Parish Visitor

February, 2015



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LOVE IS...WHAT?

by Rev. Mark

A young man finds the woman of his dreams. He asks her to marry him...and she says yes! He wants her to meet his mom. Mom agrees, but wants him to bring not just the one...but THREE women- mom wants to see if she can guess which one it is. He thinks that's a bit odd, but wants to please his mom, so he agrees. That night, he shows up at mom's house with 3 beautiful women. They all sit on the couch all evening long...and they have a simply wonderful evening. Near the end of the night, the son takes his mom into the kitchen, "Well? Which one do you think it is?" His mom quickly answers, "The one sitting in the middle" The son says, "You are absolutely right! That's uncanny. How did you know?" His mom says, "Easy! I don't like her!"

In English, there is one word for love: we love our pets, our chocolate, our family, Christmas and pizza...all with the same word. Anything that makes us feel good...we love. But in the Greek, there is a multitude of words for love, with 4 main types:

1. Eros- this is the passionate, romantic love that centers around desire and longing.
2. Philia- this is the "friendship" kind of love- a virtuous love focusing on loyalty to friends and community.
3. Storge- this is a natural affection- think "family relationships"
4. Agapē- this is a more general, all-encompassing affection, when you hold others in high regard. It encourages us to be self-sacrificing and giving to all.

The 1st 3 types of love are based on what the OTHER person does for you and what you receive- the benefits of the relationship. But it is agape alone that exists for the sole benefit of the one receiving the love.

1John 3:16 This is how we know what real love is: Jesus gave His life for us. So we should give our lives for our brothers and sisters.

We have become a nation of strangers, swept up in an epidemic of loneliness. But underneath it all, we all want to be loved. In fact, we are starved for love. We hunger for fellowship. We search for meaning. We long for community. We crave a sense of family. And ultimately, it's all about effort. Love takes effort. What does it require? I would argue that it requires 4 things: 1. commitment, 2. sacrifice, 3. compassion and 4. action. This month, I challenge you to reach out. It's time to risk. It's time to dare to love. It's time to change your life. Are you ready?

SPECIAL DATES:

- February 1 Communion & Food Pantry Collection Sunday
- February 2 Finance Meeting 6PM
- February 2 Trustees Meeting 7PM
- February 4 Caring Hearts Food Prep 9AM
- February 10 Miriam Circle 6PM
- February 15 CIA Luncheon 11:30AM
- February 15 Administrative Council 7:15PM
- February 16 Office Closed for President's Day
- February 16 UMM Meeting 6PM
- February 18 Pre-School Screening 9AM-2PM
- February 18 Ash Wednesday Service 6:30PM
- February 19 Pre-School Screening noon-6PM
- February 20 Younger Adults Late Valentine's Date 6:30PM
- February 22 Lenten Breakfast 9AM
- February 23 Caring Hearts Food Prep 5:30PM
- February 23 Relay for Life Meeting 6PM
- February 28 "Hoovey the Movie" 7PM

Save the Date!!
"The Journey"
Saturday, April 11,
2015

CURRENT AND NEW SERMON SERIES

On Sunday, January 4th, we began two new sermon series. At both morning services, we are looking at **What the Bible Isn't**. We spend a lot of time focusing on what it IS, but it's just as important to understand what it ISN'T. The remaining weeks of the series look like this:

- **Sunday, February 1- The Bible Isn't "One Size Fits All"** (Matthew 15:21-28) The Bible offers room for interpretation. (Psalm 33:3-6, John 16:13)
- **Sunday, February 8- The Bible Isn't Our Offer to Speak For God** (Matthew 7:15-20) God speaks for Himself - we are to be His eyes and ears...not His mouth. (Deuteronomy 18:21-22, 1Corinthians 2:10-13)
- **Sunday, February 15- The Bible Isn't the Core of Our Faith** (Matthew 7:7-8) The Bible doesn't draw attention to itself, but to God. (Isaiah 40:21-22, 1John 1:8-9)

At The Point (6PM), we are spending 7 weeks looking at 7 gifts that God gives us, as found in Isaiah 11:1-3, and the impact they can have on us...and those around us as we look at **A Branch From the Tree of Jesse**. The remaining weeks of this series look like this:

- **Sunday, February 1- Knowledge** (Isaiah 11:1-3) Real knowledge is to recognize the extent of what we don't know. (Proverbs 18:15, 2Peter 1:3-5)
- **Sunday, February 8- Reverence** (Isaiah 11:1-3) Pursue the path that allows you to walk in love and reverence. (Exodus 3:4-5, Ephesians 5:19-21)
- **Sunday, February 15- Discernment** (Isaiah 11:1-3) Discernment is God's call to intercession, not faultfinding. (1Kings 3:7-9a, Philippians 1:9-11)

Then, on Sunday, February 22, we begin 2 new series, aimed at the Lenten season- the 7 weeks leading up to Easter. At both the 8AM and 10:15AM Sunday services, we will look at **Jesus of Nazareth**. Over the weeks leading up to Easter, we will consider 7 descriptions of Jesus. The weeks of that series look like this:

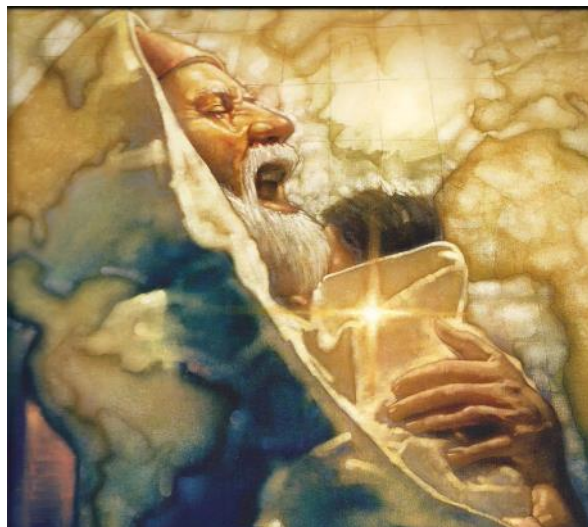
- **Sunday, February 22, The Creator** (John 1:1-5) In the beginning was the Word. (Psalm 33:6-7, Colossians 1:15-16)
- **Sunday, March 1, The Advocate** (1 John 2:1) Where there is no vision, the people perish. (Proverbs 31:8-9, 1Timothy 2:5-6)
- **Sunday, March 8, The Light** (John 1:6-9) Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness. (Psalm 119:104-105, Matthew 4:16)
- **Sunday, March 15, The Deliverer** (Romans 11:25-27) Don't despair- deliverance is coming. (Exodus 14:13-14, Philippians 1:18-19)
- **Sunday, March 22, The Capstone** (Acts 4:11-12) The very pinnacle of existence is found in a relationship with Jesus. (Psalm 118:22-23, 1Peter 2:7-10)
- **Sunday, March 29, The Gate** (John 10:7b-10) Around the corner waits a new way. (Psalm 18:30-32, John 14:6-7)
- **Sunday, April 5, The Resurrection and the Life** (John 11:25-26) The grave could not hold Him. (Luke 24:1-12)

At The Point, 6PM on Sunday evenings, we will go on a journey- The Journey to the Cross. Each week, we will look at a seminal event in the life of Jesus and how it points to the events surrounding Easter. The weeks of that series look like this:

- **Sunday, February 22- The Baptism** (Matthew 3:13-17) Jesus' public ministry is set in motion in a powerful way.
 - **Sunday, March 1- The Calling** (Matthew 4:18-22) Jesus puts together His team.
 - **Sunday, March 8- The Canaanite Woman** (Matthew 15:21-28) Jesus is challenged from an unlikely source.
 - **Sunday, March 15- The Transfiguration** (Matthew 17:1-8) Peter, John and James are blinded by the light...and their eyes are opened.
 - **Sunday, March 22- The Greatest** (Matthew 18:1-9) Jesus reimagines what it means to be "first".
 - **Sunday, March 29- The Triumphal Entry** (Matthew 21:1-11) Jesus' ministry hits a high point.
 - **Sunday, April 5- It Is TRULY Finished** (John 20:1-18) The grave could not keep Him.
- Come every week expecting to experience a real and tangible interaction with Jesus Christ!

FAT TUESDAY DINNER/ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

On **Wednesday, February 18th 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.



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.

THE JOURNEY

This year's "Journey" will be held on Saturday, April 11. The theme is "Find Joy in the Journey". The Prayer Team is in place, plans and decisions are being made, and the speakers have prayerfully accepted the call to speak. Please contact Julie Bigham or Pam Truman if you would like to help, as we are always looking for new ideas and helpers. Mark your calendars to save the date. You won't want to miss this year's Women's Event.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

It's that time! Confirmation, when young people dig into what it means to be a Christian and prepare to become full members of their church, will start in early February. This opportunity is for youth **7th Grade and older**. They will spend 7 **Sunday afternoons, 1PM** starting **February 8th** and ending March 22nd with Rev. Mark and Melissa, learning more about what it truly means to be a Christian. There will be lots of conversation and reflection, but there will also be music videos and fun "game shows"! Then, on Palm Sunday, March 29th, they will be baptized (if they have not been), confirmed and become full members of the church! If you have a youth who is in **7th Grade or beyond**, let Rev. Mark or Melissa know that you are interested in this great opportunity!!

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, **Angels (see accompanying article)**
 Bell Choir
 Choir

See you on Wednesday evenings!



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.

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!

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.

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- Gumdrop 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!

ONE VERSE EVANGELISM

Many times we feel that to be effective in evangelism we have to create complex illustrations and memorize a seminary-worthy number of verses. But the Gospel is most powerful when shared with love, clarity, and (sometimes most importantly) simplicity. Let's try it with Romans 6:23.

Wages: How would you feel if your boss refused to pay you the wages that were due to you? The answer, of course, is that you would want justice—in this case, the wages you had worked for. Deep down, we all know that it is only right that we get what we deserve. Similarly, we earn “wages” from God for how we have lived our lives.

Sin: It can be either actively fighting God or as simple as excluding Him from our lives. You can ask, “Has God ever seemed far away?” If they say “Yes,” you can explain that that's one of the things sin does—it makes God seem far away. Now draw two opposing cliffs with a gap in between.

Death: Because God is the author of life, a spiritual death simply means separation from Him.

BUT: It means that a sharp contrast in ideas is coming. What we have just looked at is the bad news; what comes next is the good news.

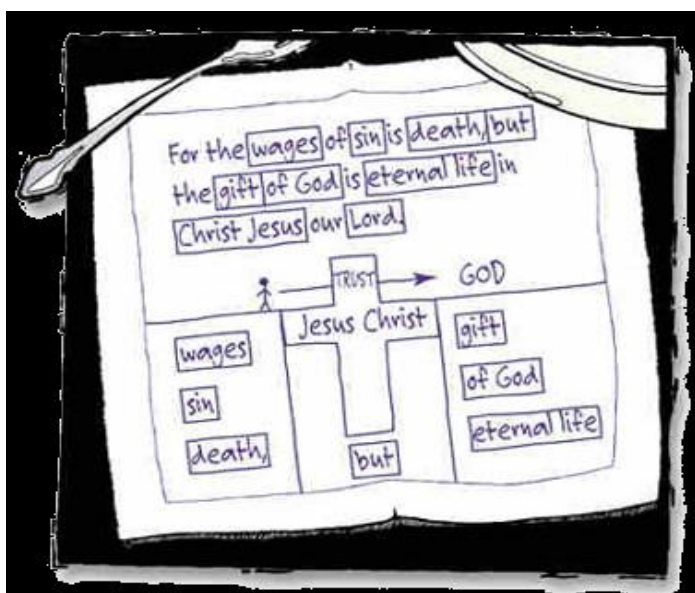
Gift: If wages are what a person earns, then what is a gift? Every gift is free for the person receiving it, someone still has to purchase it.

Of God: The gift itself is from God Himself. It's so special that no one else can give it. How do you feel when someone gives you a special gift?

Eternal Life: How would you define these words? Contrast one side of the cliff, death, with the other side, eternal life. What is the opposite of separation from God?

Christ Jesus: He creates a bridge between the two cliffs. Every gift has a unique giver, only Jesus Christ can give the gift of eternal life.

Trust: Trusting Jesus means believing that He has power to forgive us for rejecting God and that He will wash us clean from all that we have done wrong in life. **DO YOU WANT THIS?**



ANNIVERSARIES

FEBRUARY

02/03/2007– Jesse & Connie Midkiff
 02/07/1954– Richard & Beverly Norton
 02/13/2011– Ron & Diane Engstrom
 02/14/1971– Bruce & Linda Reynolds
 02/14/1948– Kenneth & Dorothy Anderson
 02/20/1993– Larry & Clara McCreight
 02/21/1954– David & Beverly Haney
 02/26/1977– William & Kathryn Newswander

UM Women

Golden Age Birthdays

2/1– Connie Shaw
 2/14– Molly Paulsgrove
 2/20– Sheila Spencer
 2/21– Dora Mae Howlett
 2/29– Joanne Beard
 2/29– JeAnne Balmer



YOUNG ADULT/FAMILY MINISTRY EVENT

Last February, we started a new ministry for young adults and folks with kids at home. It started with a “Late Valentine’s Dinner” and grew from there. Well...it’s that time again! On Friday, February 20th from 6:30PM- 8PM, we will host the 2nd Annual Young Adult/Family Late Valentine’s Day Dinner! The evening will start of 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 2015. 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!

THOSE WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS



Jerry McAlister
 Sherry Barnhart
 Henna Baxter
 Leslie Baxter
 Joanne Beard
 Evelyn Brown family
 Lucy & Tom Ceurvorst
 Margie & Jim Earl
 Sandra Ernst family
 The Fitzsimmons
 Keith Fowler
 Jenifer Franks & family
 Eilene Genett
 Jolene Greedman

Patty Hamilton
 Lori Hepker
 Hiscocks & new baby
 The Hustons
 Chuck Inman
 Gary Kaufmann
 Susie Kenney
 Terry Kernan
 Ken Kisling
 Vickie Korns
 Diane Lestor
 Marsha & Linda
 Ken Minden
 Molly Paulsgrove

Bryce Rathje/6 yrs old
 Curt Richardson
 Elizabeth Schroeder
 Marlin Stegall
 Connor Sutton
 Phyllis Swearingen family
 Pam & Neil Truman
 Marilyn Wagler
 Kent Weeks
 Ashley White
 All in Nursing Homes
 All who are ill/hospitals
 Our world, nation, state
 Families

Mercer County Schools: Administration, Teachers, Students, Staff
 National and Local Governmental Leaders, Military, Security Officers
 FUEL, Bus Ministry, College Students, Shut Ins, the lost

NEW/CURRENT PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDIES

Psalms: Glorifying God For Who He Is

WHAT: Rev. Mark and Joanne's current Bible Study

WHEN: Tuesdays @ 9AM and 2PM starting on Tuesday, January 6

WHERE: In the Fellowship Area next to the sanctuary (Tues. 2PM in the Sonrise Coffee House)

WHY: Our God is extraordinary. A loving Savior. A caring Comforter. A tenderhearted Father. The One who has pursued our hearts at any cost. The book of Psalms celebrates the love story between creation and its Creator. It's a story that shares the remarkable attributes of God, and our joyous response to all that He is. This study guide explores the book of Psalms, a collection that continues to be the definitive devotional, prayer book, and hymnal for every believer.

Angels

WHAT: Rev. Mark's current Wednesday Evening Bible Study

WHEN: Wednesdays @ 6PM, starting on Wednesday, January 7

WHERE: In the Fellowship Café next to the sanctuary

WHY: Do angels really have wings? Do they protect people from harm? Can people become angels after death? Misconceptions about angels abound--in books, in movies and on talk shows. In eight intriguing studies, Douglas Connelly explores with you what the Bible really says about angels, including their service to God and their ministry to people.

The Sermon on the Mount

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

WHEN: Wednesdays @ 6:30AM

WHERE: In the Fellowship Area next to the sanctuary

WHY: United Methodist founder John Wesley's desire was to present "plain truth to plain people." Editor Clare Weakley has attempted to help him do just that by updating his original 18th century commentary for the modern reader. As you read *The Sermon on the Mount*, you will see that the Beatitudes are to be the attitude of believers. This study will show you how.

WHAT ELSE: It is NOT too late to join.

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

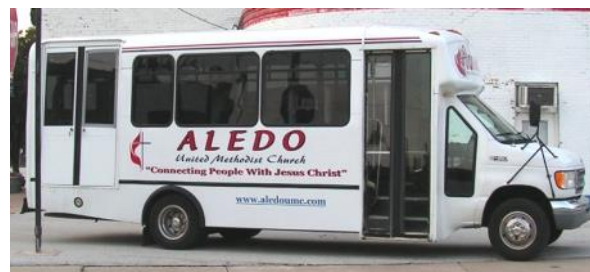
WHY: New Testament scholar William Barclay walks us through the letters of John and Jude. These books deal with dissenting teachings within the early Church.

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



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.



Dear Church Family,

On behalf of the UMW, I am pleased to pass along words of appreciation from Cunningham Children's Home in Champaign, IL. This past Christmas season, I sent a package to them that included 11 gift cards totaling \$450.00, and 16 pieces of Cross jewelry worth \$175.00!! I continue to be amazed by this congregation's generosity to so many worthy causes and ministries! Thank you so much for proving once again how blessed we are as members of Aledo United Methodist Church.

I am praying many blessings come back to each and every one in this New Year 2015.

Kathy Newswander

Cunningham and Lessie Bates Davis Liaison for Aledo UMW



CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Bishop Gregory Palmer, the former Bishop of our Illinois Great Rivers Conference of the United Methodist Church, in an e-letter dated December 20, 2008, said this about the decline of our denomination, "...the invitation to discipleship is at the core of our identity and mission as The United Methodist Church. We as an annual conference...have struggled to be invitational...with the gospel of Jesus Christ. In 2007, 60 percent of our congregations received ZERO persons by professions of faith. We are simply not bringing new people into the life of the church in a way that outpaces our decline. As Bishop of the Illinois Area, I want to encourage you that, as United Methodists, we have a glorious heritage of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and offering invitation to the transforming relationship with the Savior."

6 out of every 10 United Methodist Churches in our conference are losing ground. This makes AUMC all the more exciting of a place in which to do ministry! New members are joining. Baptisms are happening. AND...somewhere in the neighborhood of 15 kids will participate in this year's Confirmation Class! If THAT doesn't get you excited...then your wood's all wet!

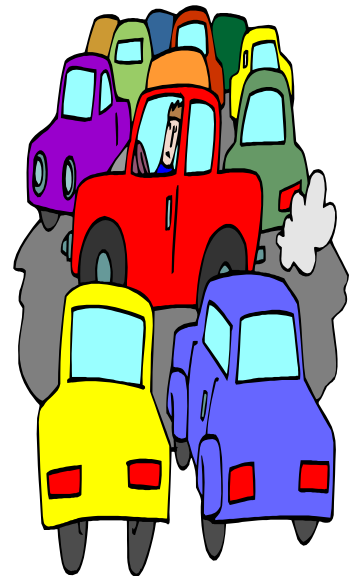
Have you felt God tugging at you, urging you to take a leap of faith and become a larger part of something bigger than yourself? Have you been considering joining the church, but don't quite know how? Here's what you do! Simply contact Rev. Mark (revmark@myaledoumc.com) and set up a time to visit with him. This 30-minute meeting will allow him to get to know you better and talk to you about your faith journey. At the end of the meeting, you'll decide which Sunday you would like to join the church... and the rest, as they say, is history! Pray about it- are YOU ready to step out in faith?

PARKING

By now, you've probably noticed that the parking area on 3rd Street just outside the Church Office has been re-painted. The goals that the Trustees have for that area are:

1. to offer two spots (all the way to the west) that are reserved for vehicles that have lifts which need extra space to load and unload
2. to offer a few parking spots that are designated for people who need to park as close as possible.

The nine spots in that stretch that are to the east ARE marked (on the pavement) as "handicapped" spots. They are, however, not "legal" handicapped spots, due to space requirements. Therefore, what the Trustees ask is that, if you HAVE a handicapped parking designation for your vehicle OR you simply need to park that close...please park there! On the other hand, if you are able/comfortable to park across the street and walk over, then please save the other spots for folks who need them! Parking is CERTAINLY a problem here at AUMC- and what a GREAT problem to have!



WINTER SAFETY TIPS FROM YOUR AUMC SAFETY TEAM

Choose Appropriate Clothing:

Avoid boots or shoes with smooth plastic or leather soles; boots made of non-slip rubber or neoprene with grooved soles are best.

Wear a heavy, bulky coat that will cushion you if you should fall.

Wear a bright scarf or hat so drivers can see you, but make sure it doesn't block your vision or hearing.

Wear sunglasses during the day to help you see better.

Walking Over Ice:

In cold temperatures, assume that all wet, dark areas on pavements are slippery and icy, and approach with caution. Dew or water vapor can freeze on cold surfaces, forming an extra-thin, nearly invisible layer of ice that can look like a wet spot on the pavement.

Walk in designated walkways as much as possible.

Point your feet out slightly *like a penguin*! Spreading your feet out slightly while walking on ice increases your center of gravity.

Bend slightly and walk flat-footed with your center of gravity directly over the feet as much as possible.

Extend your arms out to your sides to maintain balance. Keep your hands out of your pockets. You can help break your fall with your hands free if you do start to slip.

Watch where you are stepping, and GO S-L-O-W-L-Y.

When walking on steps, always use the hand railings and plant your feet firmly on each step.

Use special care when entering and exiting vehicles; use the vehicle for support.

Take short steps or shuffle for stability. It also helps to stop occasionally to break momentum.

Indoor Safety:

Walking over slippery floors can be just as dangerous as walking over ice!

Remove as much snow and water from your boots as you can when entering a building.

Notice that floors and stairs may be wet and slippery—walk carefully, especially by outer doors.

If You Should Fall:

Try to avoid landing on your knees, wrists, or spine. Try to fall on a fleshy part of your body, such as your side.

Try to relax your muscles if you fall. You'll injure yourself less if you are relaxed.

If you fall backward, make a conscious effort to tuck your chin so your head won't hit the ground with full force.



To Caring Hearts:

Thanks you so much! The food was very good! Caring Hearts, you are great!!

Joanne Moseley (friend of Kathy Haney)

To Caring Hearts:

Thank you all so much for that beautiful Christmas plate I received. I really enjoyed it so much.

Florence Louck

AUMC members & friends,

Thank you very much for the gift of money you gave us. It is a blessing to clean your church and meet such wonderful people. We appreciate your generosity.

Kent & Coleen Hessman

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! His exact words are, "You are the dirtiest church I clean!") And since we are busy connecting people with Jesus Christ, 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!

THE NEW CHURCH WEBSITE!

Have you looked at your church's website lately? If not...you should! It's changed. And it is not just a little different- it is COMPLETELY different! A complete overhaul has brought the church website from "good" to "really good". There are still some aspects of the new website that need to be "tweaked", but it is a great improvement! Hop on over to www.myaledoumc.com and see what's going on! Not only can you see the "basics" about your church- you can find the most current church 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!

www.myaledoumc.com

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.

LENTEN INVITATION

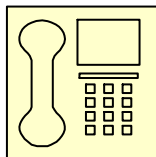
By Rev. Mark

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 17th this year.) and is immediately followed by Ash Wednesday (February 18th 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!

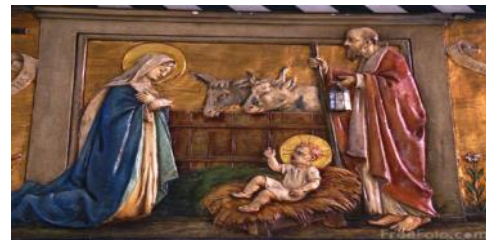
UPDATE INFORMATION

We are in the process of updating all information in our Church Windows program. If you have changed your phone number, cell phone number, email address, or physical address, could you please let us know? We want to stay connected with you!
Thank you!



HOLIDAY BAZAAR NATIVITY SETS:

The reported "lost" Nativity sets were in another location and all have been accounted for. Thank you to anyone who looked through their personal Nativity collection for them.



VOLUNTEER STAFF POSITIONS

by Ruth Dulaney, Chairperson, Staff-Parish Relations Committee

In an effort to meet the growing needs of our growing congregation, the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (the “Human Resources Department” of the church) is expanding the church staff! A total of three volunteer positions will be filled: 1. Hospitality Visiting Team Leader, 2. Web Master, 3. Membership Secretary.

At this time, we are prepared to “post” the first two of these positions:

Position: Hospitality Visiting Team Leader

Hospitality Visiting Team Mission Statement: This team exists to connect persons to Jesus Christ by bringing the Aledo United Methodist Church to others through visitations; because the team understands that not all members of the body of Christ can meet together.

Summary of Position: The Hospitality Visiting Team Leader is responsible for coordinating a team of volunteers from Aledo UMC to visit persons who find it difficult to regularly attend worship or fellowship services. This includes persons in the community in: homes, Brookstone Assisted Living, Genesis Senior Living and Aledo Rehab. The church office staff will work with the team leader to identify those needing visits.

Members of the Hospitality Visitation team will be identified through both church staff recommendations and Team Lead input. The Hospitality Visiting Team Leader reports to and communicates with the pastor.

Duties and Responsibilities: The Hospitality Visiting Team Leader is encouraged to visit persons as seen fit, but the leader position should be focused on building, motivating and coordinating a team that effectively reaches out to the persons described above. This position will need to summarize the team’s visits by sharing prayer concerns and needs with the pastor. The leader will coordinate with the Caring Hearts Ministry to provide food on an as needed basis.

Qualifications: Must be a member of Aledo United Methodist Church who is able to pass a background check and has prayerfully considered this position.

Skills: Heart for other people, compassionate, ability to determine confidentiality of visits and information obtained, self-motivated, effective leader that works well with a variety of people, organized self-starter

Time Commitment (Estimated): At the beginning – 10 hours a week to coordinate, after the team is up and running – 5 hours a week to coordinate visits.

Position: Web Master

Web-Based Ministries Mission Statement: This voluntary position exists to connect persons to Jesus Christ through the use of web-based ministry tools.

Summary of Position: The Web Master is responsible for maintaining, updating and upgrading The Aledo United Methodist Church website, as well as using Social Media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, etc.) as a tool for both reaching new people and disseminating information to existing members. The office staff will work with the Web Master to establish and provide information channels necessary to ensure that the electronic information being made available to the public remains current. The Web Master reports to and communicates with the pastor.

Qualifications: Must be a member of the Aledo United Methodist Church who is able to pass a background check and has prayerfully considered this position.

Skills: Computer literate, well-versed in the various elements that comprise the Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Publisher, PowerPoint, Excel), self-motivated, organized.

Time Commitment (Estimated): At the beginning – 10 hours a week to learn the software that powers the website, after the position is up and running – 3-5 hours a week to maintain, update, and upgrade the church’s web presence.

Applications (available in the church office or in the back of the sanctuary) are being taken now through Monday, February 23rd. At that time, the applications will be reviewed by the committee and interviews will be scheduled. Please pray about your involvement in this important next step in the life and health of our church.

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



WORSHIP TIMES:

**Sundays 8AM &
10:15AM**

Sunday School 9:15AM

“The Point” 6PM

AN OUTREACH IDEA

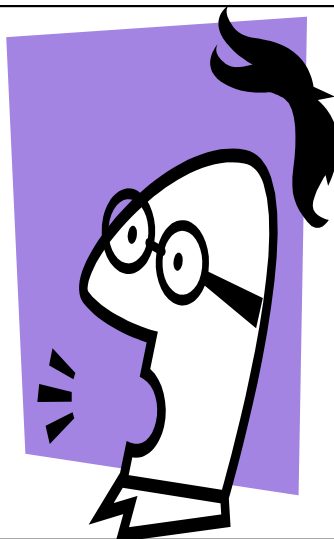
Here's a low-risk, easy way to introduce others to faith- share Rev. Mark's website with them. Described as “a daily look at life as a shaved-headed, earring-wearing, rock-drumming United Methodist minister”, www.stickwithjesus.com features a “thought for the day”, written by Rev. Mark- a new one is literally added daily! There is also a daily Bible verse AND a Prayer Request page, where you can (anonymously if you want) ask for prayer! Check it out- if you would like to subscribe and receive a daily email link, email Rev. Mark at revmark@myaledoumc.com and let him know.



The deadline for the
next Parish Visitor is

***Friday,
February 20th
at 8am.***

Please have all
articles
submitted
by this date!



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.

FINANCIAL MATTERS (WEEKLY NEED \$5,833)

Date	01/04	01/11	01/18	01/25
Attendance	200	234	331	193
Receipts	\$5,102.10	4,878.45	\$5,692.00	\$3,312.00

