

The Parish Visitor

August 2024



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The Witch Hunt

Earlier this year I read *Killing the Witches* by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard. I realize that O'Reilly is a controversial figure, but he's also a former history teacher and he's written several books about historical events. I thoroughly enjoy his *Killing* series; I've read nearly all of them.

I found *Killing the Witches* to be especially intriguing because of its religious overtones. *Killing the Witches* is about the Salem witch trials of 1692 to 1693 in which 19 people were hanged for practicing witchcraft, including 14 women and 5 men. Over 200 were accused of being witches, and many of them were imprisoned and tortured. However, none of the accused were witches. Their accusers were either clergymen who abused their power or they were connected to abusive clergymen. Accusations of witchcraft were made because someone simply didn't like someone else, or they wanted their property, or they were caught up in the frenzy of the day.

O'Reilly goes back to the early history of our nation, back to when we were a collection of British colonies. He notes that with the exception of Providence, Rhode Island, all the New England settlements were theocracies, which is a form of government in which a god (or the God) is believed to be in charge of all civic laws and matters. The theocracies of New England were, of course, Christian theocracies, and for a theocracy to function, a clergyman must interpret the scriptures and the will of God to the people. Unfortunately, in a theocracy, there is only one narrow interpretation of scripture, and as we know by the number of Christian denominations just in our country, there are many ways to interpret the Word of God. The Christians who suffer are those who belong to a denomination that does not hold the seat of power.

O'Reilly quotes John Winthrop, governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, who states that citizens should not have free will to rule themselves. "A democracy is, amongst civil nations, accounted the meanest and worst of all forms of government" (pg. 38).

The Salem Witch Trials stand as one of the ugliest and most horrific blots on our nation's history. However, they have had a lasting, positive effect in the formation of our nation. According to O'Reilly, before our Founding Fathers crafted our government, they had the option of establishing

SPECIAL DATES:

- August 4th Communion Sunday
- August 6 UMW Picnic and Jon & Chris Swanson's home at 6PM
- August 8 Caring Hearts Food Prep 9AM
- August 10 Fry baby shower 10AM-4PM
- August 10 UMW Pork Chops at Mercer Market 10AM-1PM
- August 13 Loving Hands Food Prep 1PM
- August 18 Missions Meeting 5:15PM
- August 18 Trustees Meeting 6PM
- August 18 Finance Meeting 6:45PM
- August 18 Administrative Council Meeting 7:30PM
- August 19 Men Meeting 6PM
- August 22 Parish Visitor Deadline
- August 22 Caring Hearts Food Prep 1PM 8AM
- August 24 Stamping Group 1-5PM
- August 26 Endowment Memorial Meeting
- August 27 Loving Hands Food Prep 1PM
- August 29 UMW Executive Board Meeting 4PM

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America as a theocracy. However, reflecting on the evil that was leveled against the citizens of Salem in the name of religion, our founders resolutely established these United States as a federal democratic republic with a “wall of separation between church and state” as codified in the First Amendment. Consequently, we the people have the freedom to worship—or not worship—as we choose, provided we live in peace with one another, respecting the freedom of the other.

Today there is much talk about Christian nationalism, and while we are a nation founded by Christians, they were Christians of varying stripes who never intended to break down the wall of separation between church and state. That is the positive legacy of the Salem Witch Trials.

Connecting People to Jesus Christ with you,

Pastor Dave

Connecting with the Word

As believers in Christ, we are shaped by the Word of God. Following are the scriptures suggested by the Revised Common Lectionary for each week in June. I encourage you to read these passages to prepare your hearts for worship, whether in-person, on the radio, on Facebook, or on our church website, Myaledoumc.com.

Sunday, August 4: 2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a; Psalm 51; Ephesians 4:1-16; and John 6:24-35. Holy Communion will be served.

Sunday, August 11: 2 Samuel 18:5-9; Psalm 130; Ephesians 4:25-5:2; and John 6:35, 41-51.

Sunday, August 18: 1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14; Psalm 111; Ephesians 5:15-20; and John 6:51-58.

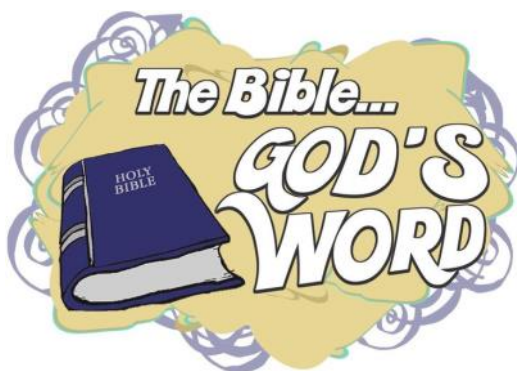
Sunday, August 25: 1 Kings 8:1-30, 41-43; Psalm 84; Ephesians 6:10-20; and John 6:56-69.

Brown Bag Stories: Since we do not offer children’s Sunday school during the summer, Pastor Dave will be sharing one of his Brown Bag stories during all three services as children are present. Because we exist to connect *children* to Jesus Christ.

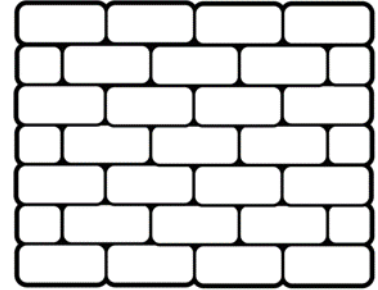
Also, Children’s Church will be offered most Sundays following the Brown Bag Story until Sunday school resumes this fall. Children’s Church will be held in the education wing. Children’s Church will not offered on August 4 because that is communion Sunday and we want our children to receive Holy Communion.

Connecting People to Christ with you,

Pastor Dave



Rebuild the Wall



Work has been completed in a third-floor storeroom where we keep our seasonal decorations. Four old stained-glass windows were removed, and the opening was bricked in. This will not only reverse the damage to the north side of our building, but it will also save energy.

Cost for this phase of our Rebuild the Wall project is \$12,800, and as of July 21, we have received \$11,815 toward this most necessary project. As we move forward, any money given in excess of \$12,800 will be designated for other critical building needs.

If you would like to give toward this project above and beyond your regular tithes and offerings, please make your check payable to AUMC and indicate it is for “Rebuild the Wall.”

This was the second phase of an ongoing project to keep our church in good repair for our ongoing ministry to our community and beyond. There will be future phases added as we will strive to address our needs in manageable “bites.”

Our first plastic mat!



On Tuesday, July 16, volunteers completed our first plastic sleeping mat, weaving together some 720 plastic bags. The mat will be sent to the Midwest Mission which, in turn, will ship it overseas to benefit a refugee who has been displaced by war or natural disaster.

Over a dozen people helped weave this mat, including Shari Chandler, left, Barb Millar, and Sue Galambos.

This is an ongoing project of our church. Watch the announcements for future opportunities to fellowship, cut, and weave together more plastic mats out of love for strangers in need.

Fifth Sunday

Our next Fifth Sunday falls on September 29 with special music and a fellowship meal prepared by our United Methodist Men. This has also been an excellent opportunity to welcome new members into the church. Those interested in joining Aledo UMC should contact Pastor Dave.

We need you!

We need volunteers starting in September for the Tech Booth, Fellowship Café, and Hospitality Greeters. We really need more helpers in each area! Contact Ruth Dulaney if you can help.



Illinois Great Rivers Conference to Receive Two Bishops

SPRINGFIELD — The Illinois Great Rivers Committee on the Episcopacy (IGRCOE) is delighted to announce the assignment of TWO new bishops to the IGRC.

Bishop David Bard and Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai, pictured, will begin their joint episcopacy on September 1, 2024.

Bishop Bard is also assigned to the Michigan Annual Conference (where he has served for the past eight years), and Bishop Bigham-Tsai is also assigned to Iowa (where she has served for the past two). The assignments were announced on Saturday, July 13, at the North Central Jurisdictional Conference in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, by Rev. Sara Isbell (Bloomington Wesley UMC).



Bishop Bard will have primary responsibility for our conference over the first two years of the upcoming quadrennium and Bishop Bigham-Tsai will have primary responsibility during the last two years.

It should be noted that both bishops will actively serve for the next four years; the balance of duties may shift, but not the shared assignment. Bishop Bard's focus will likely include finishing up the gracious exit process for congregations wishing to depart the UMC, while Bishop Bigham-Tsai will have the opportunity to pave the way for a shared episcopal area with Iowa.

Bishop David Alan Bard was elected a bishop in 2016 at the North Central Jurisdictional Conference in Peoria, Illinois and has served since as bishop of the Michigan Area. He also served as interim bishop of the Minnesota Conference in 2021-2022.

Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai was elected on the first ballot at the North Central Jurisdictional Conference of 2022 and has served in Iowa since that time.

Bishop Frank Beard, who has shepherded the Illinois Great Rivers Conference faithfully since 2016, begins a Long-Term Disability Leave on August 1, 2024 due to his ongoing battle with glaucoma.

We are hiring!

Aledo United Methodist Church is currently hiring a church office manager. Duties include managing the church office, answering phone calls, screening requests, and assisting church and community members. A complete list of responsibilities is available in the church office Monday-Friday, 8AM to noon. The deadline for applications is noon, Monday, August 12.

Qualified applicants will be committed to the mission of the church, which is to connect people to Jesus Christ. In addition, applicants will need to have the ability to maintain confidentiality while being friendly, punctual, and above reproach. Previous experience with Microsoft Office Suite is required as well as the availability to attend staff meetings (currently Tuesday mornings). Previous customer service, administrative assistant, or office coordinator experience and basic accounting skills are preferred. Qualified applicants should present their resume, cover letter and a minimum of 2 references to the church office C/O Pastor Dave Schultz. The successful candidate will be required to pass a background check.

**All Ladies!
UMW Potluck Picnic
Tuesday, August 6th
at 6:00 PM**



**Chris & Jon Swanson's home
2885 St Hwy 17, Viola, IL.**

(Carpool at the church at 5:30 PM)

Bring your favorite food to share.

**Pulled chicken sandwiches,
drinks and dinnerware provided.**

**We will eat inside and then enjoy fun and
fellowship outside, weather permitting**

New members and baptisms from June 30th Services.

Congratulations to our new members and those who were baptized on Sunday, June 30.

Our new members are Ali Brooks, Terra Hansen, Bill Kraut, Damon Seys, and Noah Seys.

Those who were baptized are Lauryn Brooks, Dysan Cooke, Everleigh Cooke, Jennette Cooke, Paisley Cooke, Serenity Fuget, Amaih Hansen, Carter Hansen, Jaelyn Hansen, Keira Davis, Ashley Thomas, Terra Hansen, and Clara Ward. Four were baptized by sprinkling while another nine were baptized by immersion. Blessings to all!



Sponsors for our August Radio Broadcasts

August 4- Randy & Laura McGinnis in honor of their parents

Aug 11- Denise Algren, Christy Bender, and Sharon Peterson in memory of their mother, Etheline Vorhies

Aug 18- Barry & Denise Algren in memory of their parents

Aug 25- Pastor Dave & Candice in honor of Robyn Schultz and all other teachers in our lives

Aledo UMC has a wonderful ministry partnership with WRMJ Radio 102.3 FM. Our services are now broadcast every Sunday at 5:10 pm, thanks to your sponsorship.

We encourage you to download the WRMJ app so you can listen to our broadcast live on your smartphone, tablet, or computer. The app is available free at your app store.



WRMJ RADIO BROADCAST.

We need sponsors starting in September!

Each Sunday at 5:10PM we broadcast our 8am Worship Service on WRMJ. Would you like to sponsor this? It costs \$30 to sponsor a Sunday broadcast, and is a wonderful way to get our Services out to the public and to those who cannot make it out to church. If you are interested, let the office know at 582-2169. If you would like to sponsor in memory of a loved one, give us the information and we will acknowledge it in the bulletin and in the announcements.

CONNECTION COINS FOR AUGUST

The Connection Coins (the “thinly-veiled Pringles cans”!) are doing great things in the life of the Aledo UMC! On the 2nd Sunday of each month, those cans are set out. 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 11th), the Connection Coin offering will go toward an awesome ministry, our Network of Caring Fund. This fund has a very specific reason for being— to help folks who are in need. Over the years, it has provided gas money for people to get to work or the doctor, helped pay an electric bill or a rent payment, and helped get food in someone’s refrigerator.... to just name a few. It is an anonymous fund – no one but the Pastor knows who receives help! Your coins will help make that happen. So, remember to bring your change on Sunday, August 11th. 100% of the money that is collected in the cans on the 11th of August will be used to help fund this valuable Ministry. What a GREAT way to help connect people to Jesus Christ. So, remember to bring your change on Sunday, August 11th!

Network of
Caring

Hy-Vee Baked Product Schedule

Our HyVee bread and many other goodies are delivered on Saturday morning. They are available for you to pick up in the Fellowship Café area when you come to Church Services on Sunday morning. The bread is in the lobby outside the church office on Monday morning 8–9AM for you to select bread products for your neighbors and yourself.



Aledo UMC offers two Bible Studies for Men

- **Men's Bible Study every Wednesday Morning at 6:30AM**. Come for breakfast and a time of studying God's Word. The men are currently studying James.
- **Saturday 8-9:15AM Men's Bible Study**. Meets once a month. In August, we will meet on August 17.

Thank You!

When life seems filled with challenges,
That's when we need a helping hand
to be there to provide support,
caring, and understanding.
Thank you for being there.
I'm blessed by my church family!
Love,
Renee Forber

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

We will hit the books again beginning Tuesday, August 6 as we preview, "God Relents," a project by Pastor Dave. Studies begin at 9 am and are open to all who are curious about God.

Come ring with us!

If you're looking for a creative way to connect people to Jesus Christ, why not join our bell choir? The ringers have lots of fun together and you will be blessed by the fellowship as well as being a part of the music. Please contact Nicole Taylor for more information.



Thank You!

Thank you for all of the birthday cards and wishes. I really enjoyed!

Clara McCreight

The United Methodist Men will meet on Monday, August 19th at 6PM in the church dining room. There will be a meal, a short business meeting, and lots of fellowship. Join us, and bring a friend!



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

08/01/??- Brian & Lindsay Fearman
 08/06/1999- Scott & Dianna Spencer
 08/08/1964- Gail & Linda Morrow
 08/08/1998- Scott & Sabrina Earl
 08/16/2020- Ray & Betty Leng
 08/17/1984- Garry & Debra Toops
 08/17/2013- Gary & Karen Buchanan
 08/18/2007- Nick & Miranda Boss
 08/26/1972- Steve & Rhonda Brown
 08/28/2010- Jacob & Hannah Robinson
 08/29/1965- Stan & Debbie Swank
 08/29/1970- Dennis & Vicki Palmer
 08/30/1980- Jon & Chris Swanson
 08/30/2003- Barry & Denise Algren



UM Women Golden Age Birthdays

08/10- Erma Dobbins
 08/28- Audrey Anderson



The deadline for the next Parish Visitor is
Thursday, August 22nd at 8am.
 All articles must be submitted by this date!

THOSE WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

Alli Adams/health	Linda Hoy
Alicia/healing	Stan Hunt/health
Jodie Andress	Kathy Jenkins/health
Bishop David Bard	Jim Kaufman/health
Bishop and Melissa Beard	Greg LeHue/health
Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai	Family of Brett McWhorter
Clark Bennett/health	Linda Morrow/health
Bill Breeden/health	Natalie Nelson/healing
Rena Brown/mental health	Mike Newsom/healing
Family of Margaret Burger	Kathy Newswander/cancer treatment
Rev, John Crede/health	Noah/recovery
Neil David/hospice	Family of Dick Norton
Connie Dellitt/health	Paul & family/addiction
Jim Droste/health	Bonnie Peterson/health
Ruth Ann Farrier	Bill Pollock/health
Amber Fitzsimmons/cancer	Janice Pollock/cancer
Jayne Fitzsimmons/healing	Joan Reynolds/health
Renee Forber/healing	Richard Rockhold/health
Don Franks/cancer	Chrissy Riddell/cancer
Marie Fredrickson/InterVarsity	Don Schroeder/health
Gabrielle/FMD	Derek Schroeder/health
Tom and Liz Gastil/healing	Pastor Dave & Candice
Amanda Gaylord/healing	Katherine Shondel/health
Family of Bill Glenn	Patricia Short/peace
Scott Guyton/health	Family of Gary Smith
Jim Hanson	Dianna Spencer health
Andrew Hofer/FCA	Fern Swanson/broken arm
Don Harmon/loss	Rev. Herb Thompson/health
Vicki Harrison/recovery	



Pam Thorton/health
 Jeff Tipton/health
 Dale, Debby, Ashley Thomas
 Family of Cherie Tracy
 Nena Visser/health
 Elene Waters/health
 Dick Zimmerman/health
 Liz Zimmerman/health
 Respect, Dignity, Equality
 AUMC Family
 Brookstone, nursing home and Vashti residents
 Please pray for our church's committees
 Peace, Love, and Kindness, Kind Words Kind Hearts

Those who are feeling defeated and depressed
 Those in pain and looking for answers
 The United Methodist Church
 Areas affected by tornadoes, Gaza Strip, Haiti, Israel, Maui, Palestine, Russia, Sudan, Syria, Taiwan Ukraine, World Peace
 Mercer County and area Schools
 Administration, Teachers, Students and Staff
 National and Local Governmental Leaders

August Volunteers of the Month Wayne & Vi Darsnek



During the pandemic, Wayne and Vi Darsnek came to Aledo as “missionaries” from Kansas. And with their love of all things related to mission, they began worshipping at Aledo UMC where they soon immersed themselves in the mission of the church. There’s hardly a Loving Hands or Caring Hearts prep day in which the Darsneks aren’t involved. They take their turn preparing the Communion elements and they helped make our Rhubarb Festival luncheon a success.

The Darsneks have joined the church’s Missions Team, which is just one of the places where they have shared some excellent ideas. They have served meals to the county fair carnival workers as well as the residents of Vashti.

Wayne has demonstrated his skills on the grill, cooking most of the meat for July’s Vacation Bible School. Speaking of VBS, Wayne built the cabin that was used not only for VBS, but also in our Homecoming Parade float. Wayne is an active member of United Methodist Men as well as Mercer County’s Search and Rescue Team.

A couple of times each month, Vi and Wayne come to the church where Vi helps with the weekly deposit where her discretion is greatly appreciated. They’re both active in our Hy-Vee bread ministry, and oftentimes when Vi is helping to count the offering, Wayne comes to deliver bread to the Health Department and Vashti. Wayne has also ordered food from Riverbend and then helped with deliveries.

Not only are Wayne and Vi most deserving of being our August Volunteer of the Month, but they are also the first couple to receive that distinction. That is because they work together so well, and one hardly ever sees one without the other. Clearly, Aledo United Methodist Church has been blessed beyond measure thanks to these missionaries from Kansas!

Thank you to our missions team for serving 36 fair workers at the Mercer County fair on Monday, July 8. We exist to connect people to Jesus Christ!





Trivia Night

Plan now for a night of fun, fellowship, food, and trivia on Saturday, October 5. Doors will open at 5 pm; trivia begins at 6 pm. Cost is \$80 for a table of 8 with all proceeds going to the mission and outreach of Aledo UMC. Once again, Pastor Dave will be Trivia Master, and he

says this may be his best trivia night yet. This is a multimedia event with pictures, music, and videos. Best of all, you don't have to know a lot of trivia to have fun!

THE FORGE

WHERE LIVES TAKE SHAPE

FORGE IS OUR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP FOR GRADES 6 THROUGH 12. Contact Pastor Dave for meeting times this August.

As part of our Four Days of Mission, on Monday, July 22, ten youths and adults sorted and boxed food at Riverbend Food Bank in Davenport. Pictured from left are Caden Leng, Ethan Taylor, Ruth Dulaney, Miles Ward, Sophia Seys, Autumn Smith, Jon Swanson, Alexis Taylor, Clara Ward, and Pastor Dave.



Fun at Camp Firelight

Aledo UMC hosted another successful Vacation Bible School July 15 through 19 with approximately 40 children attending each night. Children connected to Jesus Christ through this year's theme, Camp Firelight. Thanks to all the kids who participated and all of the adult helpers in the various activity centers. Thanks as well to all those who helped prepare meals throughout the week.



Need a ride to church?

Contact the office at 309-582-2169 or Jon Swanson at 309-371-9501 to make arrangements



Sunday Evening Women’s Bible Study

A study started on Sunday, June 23rd at 6PM. This study is on the book of Ruth.

For our Fall Womens Book Study, we will be reading “Strength in the Struggle”. We will meet Sunday evenings at 6pm beginning Sept 8th.

Natalie Nelson leads this study which is held at 6 pm most—but not every—Sunday. Interested persons may contact her for details.



Thank you for your sponsorship

Thank you for another incredible year! We had 125 walkers and 158 Blue Kid sponsorships. In our 40th year, thanks to you, we raised a staggering \$40,000. Your unwavering support over the years has allowed us to provide our services to our clients. With our new building, we are eagerly looking forward to the next 40 years, filled with even more achievements and milestones.

Mercer County Crisis Center

Aledo United Methodist Church

Just a quick note to say thank you for the amazing job you do preparing and serving your incredible lunch. It’s such a nice additional option for a yummy sit-down lunch. You guys do such a great job and we appreciate you.

Amber and the rest of the Rhubarb board

KIDS, HAVE YOU SEEN TYSON’S TALES, OUR CHILDREN’S LIBRARY IN THE EDUCATION WING? STEP INTO THE WORLD OF READING!



FINANCIAL MATTERS

(WEEKLY NEED TO HOLD STEADY \$6,018.00)

Date	07/07/2024	07/14/2024	07/21/2024	07/28/2024
Attendance	140	145	249	NA
Receipts				
(Toward Budget)	\$6,103.00	\$3,901.00	\$5,314.00	NA

