

# The Parish Visitor

## February 2024



Visit us at [myaledoumc.com](http://myaledoumc.com)

### Love Is Hard

There's an old story about a Texas rancher who went to see his pastor one day. "Reverend," the rancher said, "I need to get a dee-voice from my wife." (This story will work better if you read it out loud in your best Texas drawl.)

Taken aback, the preacher asked, "Why do you want a divorce?"

"Well, preacher, it's like this: I just don't love her anymore."

Scratching his chin, the preacher responded, "You do realize that according to the Word of God, you are commanded to love your wife. It says so in Ephesians 5:25, 'Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.'"

The rancher didn't expect that. Stammering, he said, "Preacher, you don't understand. We're way past that. There's just no affection anymore. I just can't love her the way a man is supposed to love his wife."

"Is that so?" the preacher asked. "As it turns out, the Bible also commands you to 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' If you can't love her as your wife, then you have to love her as your neighbor."

Now the rancher was really befuddled. "But Reverend, I can't love her as my neighbor. We don't get along at all. We bicker and fight all the time. I just can't love her as my neighbor."

"Then you have no choice," the preacher said. "The Bible also says in Matthew 5:44 to 'Love your enemies.' If you can't love her as your wife and you can't love her as your neighbor, then you have to love her as your enemy."



We tend to toss around the word "love" rather easily. We forget that love is hard; that's underscored in the story of the Texas rancher. Love was hard for him, even when it meant loving someone that he used to love. Biblical love is especially hard. Love drove Jesus to the cross where he suffered a cruel death just because he loved us. In return, he expects us to love one another. "A new command I give you," Jesus says in John 13:34. "Love one another." God expects us to love people who are radically different from us, people of different color, or gender, or beliefs. God expects us to love people who are otherwise unlovable. Anyone can love their friends; Jesus calls us to love people we hate. "As I have loved you," Jesus says, "so you must love one another."

(Continued on page 2)

#### SPECIAL DATES:

- February 1 Caring Hearts Food Prep 9AM
- February 4 Communion All Services
- February 6 Loving Hands Food Prep 1PM
- February 6 Vashti Early Valentine Meal
- February 11 Super Bowl Sunday-5th Sunday Format 9:15AM Service Only
- February 11 Youth Sponsored Potato Bar Fundraiser 11:30AM
- February 14 Ash Wednesday Service 6PM
- February 15 Caring Hearts Food Prep 1PM
- February 15 UMW Exec Meeting 4PM
- February 18 Missions Meeting 5:45PM
- February 18 Trustees Meeting 6PM
- February 18 Finance Meeting 6:45PM
- February 18 Administrative Council 7:30PM
- February 19 Men Meeting 6PM
- February 20 Loving Hands Food Prep 1PM
- February 21 Parish Visitor Deadline 8AM
- February 24 Stamping Group 1-5PM
- February 25 Youth Pizza & Skating 11:30AM

(continued from page 1)

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” Sadly, the Church in America is not viewed that way. Rather, the Church is perceived to be judgmental and unloving. And that may be more than a perception.

It’s February. Thanks to Valentine’s Day, February is known as the month of love. May we take heed and “Love one another.”

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 February. 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, February 4: Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; and Mark 1:29-39.

Sunday, February 11: 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; and Mark 9:2-9. You’ll note that today is Transfiguration Sunday, which is reflected in today’s readings.

Ash Wednesday, February 14: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 and Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21.

Sunday, February 18: Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25; 1 Peter 3:18-22 and Mark 1:9-15.

Sunday, February 25: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22; Romans 4:13-25; and Mark 8:31-38.

Connecting People to Christ with you,

*Pastor Dave*

### Luke 6:38, New Living Translation

**<sup>38</sup> Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.**

### Sponsors for our February Radio Broadcasts

February 4- Kathy Jenkins in memory of Brian & David

February 11- Steve & Rhonda Brown in honor of Rhonda's mom Lois

Marston's 103 birthday and Steve's parents Ray & Irene Brown's 90th anniversary on Valentine's Day

February 18- Bill & Brooke Fleurette in memory of their mothers Lois and Linda

February 25- Zimmerman in memory of their son Eric



## Join Our “Bucket Brigade”

We had an excellent response to our Advent Buckets with proceeds going to Heifer International as we raised \$2,245 for this excellent ministry. With the arrival of Lent, you will have another chance to fill them with your spare change, only this time, proceeds will be directed to another vital missions endeavor: our United Methodist Connectional Ministries and Benevolence Fund.

As a United Methodist Church, Aledo contributes a set amount of money every year to our denomination at both the regional and the global level. The regional level is the Illinois Great Rivers Conference which encompasses roughly all of Illinois south of Interstate 80.

The funds we contribute are called *apportionments* and they fall into two categories. The first is *Clergy Support and Administration* which essentially pays for our denominational “overhead.” It’s not quite as glamorous as some of the more visible work The United Methodist Church is doing to combat hunger, share the good news of Jesus Christ, or raise up new leaders to develop innovative solutions to the challenges facing our world today. But, guided by God’s Spirit, it is the oil that lubricates these gears moving the church’s work forward to impact hearts and lives. Without it, the lifegiving work of The United Methodist Church simply wouldn’t be possible.

The second category is called *Benevolences and Connectional Ministries* and it includes missions and outreach ministries within our Conference and beyond. For 2024, the Conference budget for this category is \$3.6 million; Aledo’s portion of that total is \$13,956 or \$1,163 per month.

This year, we want to get a head start on this apportionment, so we’ve set a goal for our Lenten buckets: with your help, we’ve set a Silver Goal of \$1,164, or one month’s apportionments for Benevolences and Connectional Ministries . Our Gold Goal is \$2,326, or two month’s apportionments.

*Benevolences and Connectional Ministries* supports congregational development, Wesley Foundations on Illinois campuses, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), Africa University, and the Black College Fund, to list just a few ministries.

Buckets will be distributed beginning on Sunday, February 11. You may also pick up you Lenten bucket at our Ash Wednesday service, 6 pm on February 14.

Please return your buckets on Easter Sunday, March 31.



## Our AUMC Volunteer of the Month for February: Mike Millar

“Live in the love of Jesus” is a statement that Mike Millar makes every Sunday as our director of praise bands, but it is also true that he uses that statement as a way to live his life. His love for Jesus is apparent because of the many volunteer hours that Mike puts in behind the scenes, and that is what makes him our February Volunteer of the Month.

Can you hear us now? The answer to that question is a resounding ‘yes’ because AUMC has a new state of the art sound system. Mike has been an integral part of this process, coordinating and scheduling of many appointments with Finn Solutions, our contractor for this project. Every time the company came to work on the installation of the sound system, Mike was there to answer any questions and to make sure the work went smoothly. Once the sound system was installed, Mike spent countless hours finetuning the sound that was produced. All of these hours were volunteered by Mike. We now have an audio/visual system that live streams our 8 and 10:30 a.m. services as well as generates a Facebook live video of our 8 a.m. service. It is one of the ways the we are able to connect people to Jesus Christ and Mike was a big part in making it happen.

Mike also is an active member of the AUMC Mission Team. He participates in many of their projects throughout the year. Some examples include making of the rice meals, providing meals to the County Fair workers, and entertaining Vashti residents with his guitar playing. Mike also spearheaded the mission team’s restocking of the food pantry for the month of January.

Mike certainly practices Jesus’ command to “love your neighbor”. He has a heart for Jesus and for people that he knows and those he hasn’t met. Mike has provided transportation to doctor’s appointments and to people’s houses, helped people move, picked up limbs in people’s yards, found keys in the snow and many others acts of kindness that we will never know because Mike does all of this with a smile on his face and never wants to be recognized. We are so blessed to have Mike as part of AUMC family. He freely gives of his time, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Let’s all try to “live in the love of Jesus” with Mike.



# Youth News

- Youth Sunday School for grades 6-12 meets every Sunday at 10:30 in the youth lounge and is taught by John Taylor.

# The Forge

- Forge is the youth ministry of Aledo UMC and is designed for youths grade 6 through 12. Friends are always welcome. Forge meets most Sunday evenings at 6 pm under the direction of Kaitlyn Marceleno. This month Forge will meet on Sunday, February 4, 11, and 18.

# Youth Potato Bar

- Sunday, February 11 following the 9:15 service. All proceeds will be directed to this summer's mission trip July 21-26.

# Pizza and Skating!

- Sunday, February 25: We begin after the 10:30 service by enjoying pizza together at approximately 11:45 am. Then we'll take the church bus to Skate City in East Moline. Cost is \$10 per person.

# Confirmation

- AUMC is offering Confirmation classes using the *CoLABorate Methodist Confirmation* series. Pastor Dave is the teacher. Classes continue on Sunday, February 4 & 18 as we focus on "Methodist History & Doctrine" in an 18-session course. We begin with a light meal right after the 10:30 worship service. Confirmation then begins at noon and lasts until 1 pm.

## THE NURSERY

Have you ever wondered why churches need good, safe, well-staffed nursery programs? Well, wonder no more! The reason churches need strong nursery programs is that, for folks with young children, the nursery is often THE most important part of the church. If there is a good nursery, they can comfortably leave their kids in capable hands and attend a worship service. If, however, they find a nursery that is poorly or under-staffed with folks who seem unfriendly and stressed, they A. won't leave their kids, and B. won't come back! Your church truly believes that children are NOT simply the future of the church- they are very much an active, important part of the present.



## Heifer Project Results

We collected \$2,245.00 in the Advent buckets for Heifer International. This was multiplied times 4 because of a matching grant! Thank you!

We sent a \$1000 cash gift. We also purchased a heifer, a water buffalo, a goat, a sheep, a pig, a flock of chicks, a hive of honey bees, and a Promise Gift Basket that included chicks, ducks, and rabbits. By multiplying all this times 4, our contribution ended up supplying \$8,980.00 worth of help for families who need a leg up!. Thank you all so much for contributing to this project. As you can see, it will positively impact families all over the world.

**HEIFER**  
INTERNATIONAL



Aledo UMC offers two  
**Bible Studies for Men**

- **Men's Bible Study of 1st & 2nd Thessalonians Wednesday Morning at 6:30AM .**  
Come for breakfast and a time of studying God's Word.
- **Saturday 8-9:15AM Men's Bible Study.**  
We are studying the Book of Acts.

**OUR USUAL  
 WORSHIP TIMES:**

**Sundays**  
**8AM Contemporary**  
**9:15AM Rock & Worship**  
**10:30AM Traditional**

**Tuesday Morning Bible Study**

Pastor Dave leads a Bible Study every Tuesday morning at 9 am. This study is open to all and concludes by 10:30 am. They are just about to wrap up their study of Hebrews and sometime in February will launch into a study of the Book of James. Our study guide is written by Max Lucado.

**VALENTINE'S DINNER FOR VASHTI**

The Missions Committee will be serving a Valentine's Dinner at Vashti on February 7th at 5:30PM. The meal will consist of chicken & noodles, mashed potatoes, veggies, fruit salad, and cookies. Our Youth will help serve the meal and will have a hand-made craft for each resident. There will also be a fun activity, Easy Trivia, led by Pastor Dave.

On Wednesday afternoon, February 7th at 3PM, the Missions team will meet at the church to prepare for this event. All Missions members, please plan to help if possible.



**Valentine Cards and Notes for Senior Women**

We are accepting Valentine cards and notes for women who live alone in their homes. These women often get forgotten at this time of year. Let's flood them with love! Drop your cards into the box in the Fellowship Café. No postage is necessary.

Cards need to be in the box by noon on February 11th.

**The United Methodist Men meet on February 19th. There will be a meal, a short business meeting, and lots of fellowship.**

**Join us, and bring a friend!**



## FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

02/03/2007– Jesse & Connie Midkiff  
 02/13/1982– Bob & Sandi Fausett  
 02/26/1977– Bill & Kathie Newswander



## UM Women Golden Age Birthdays

02/20– Sheila Spencer  
 02/25– Ila Bertrand  
 02/29– JeAnne Balmer



The deadline for the next Parish Visitor is **Wednesday, February 19th at 8am.**  
**All articles must be submitted by this date!**

## THOSE WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

Alicia/healing	Andrew Hofer/FCA
Family of Phyllis Batson	Family of Gerry Harmon
Family of Mary Etta Baxter	Family of Keith Harrison
Bishop and Melissa Beard	Stan Hunt/health
Ayden Bennett/deployed	Roger Kidoo/cancer
Davis Biddle/injuries	Marcia Kelly/health
Bill Breeden/loss/health	Jim Kernan/cancer
Joalice Bresson/health	David Jacobs/health
Joyce Brinkman/health	Carole Korn
Renae Brown/mental health	Austin Krack & Cory Smith
Steve Brown/health	/kidney transplant
Bessie Bruce/health	Family of Marge Lloyd
Bryan Breuer/liver transplant	Mason's family
Alice Cantwell/healing	Family of Arlene Landis
Sandy Carlson/health	Ella Luallen/loss
Betty Clark/healing	Laura McGinnis/health
Family of Vivian Couer	Massey family/fire
Charlie David/healing	Connie & Jessie Midkiff/health
Neil David/hospice	Kirk Minter/cancer
Ruth Dulaney/healing	Linda Morrow/health
Connie Dellitt/health	Gena Nelson/health
Jim Droste/health	Natalie Nelson/healing
Brenda Dunn/loss	Mike Newsom/healing
Faith/chemo, radiation	Kathy Newswander/health
Ruth Ann Farrier	Pam O/heart surgery
Jayne Fitzsimmons/healing	Family of Sara Ott
Renee Forber/health	Paul & family/addiction
Don Franks/covid/cancer	John Pierce/health
Marie Fredrickson/InterVarsity	Bill Pollock/health
Ashlie Dellitt Fuller/health	Janice Pollock/cancer
Luella Giles/cancer	Don Rice/cancer
Scott Guyton/health	Chrissy Riddell/cancer
Karen Heck Coleman/recovery	Tad Robinson/cancer
Tony Hanson/health	Nancy Rockhold/heart



Barb Runyon  
 Don Schroeder/health  
 Derek Schroeder/health  
 Pastor Dave  
 Candice/ healing  
 Jack Schultz/health  
 Family of Nathan Seewald  
 Ted Short/cancer  
 Arlene Shotwell/hospice  
 Jenna Sackville/health  
 Stan Swank/healing  
 Jon Swanson/healing  
 Family of Roger Tharp  
 Connie Thomas  
 Dale, Debby, Ashley Thomas  
 Andy Vipond  
 Nena Visser/health  
 Kim Watkins and parents/health  
 Dick Zimmerman/health  
 Liz Zimmerman/health

Respect, Dignity, Equality  
 AUMC Family  
 Brookstone, nursing home and  
 Vashti residents  
 Maui, Russia, Ukraine, Syria,  
 World  
 The United Methodist Church  
*Please pray for our church and  
 all of the committees*

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



The family of Wendell Harroun just wanted to express our thanks for everything you all have done for him over the years and at the time of his passing.

The many Christmas cards and gift plates were so enjoyed and appreciated! When his sight got too bad for him to feel comfortable to go to church, you were all still there for him.

We are grateful for the wonderful funeral service and luncheon afterward. Thank everyone involved so much!

*Ted & Cathy Long and family*



## Church Website

Have you looked at your church's website? If not, go to [www.myaledoumc.com](http://www.myaledoumc.com) and see what's going on! Not only can you see the "basics" about the Aledo United Methodist Church, you can find the most current church calendar. Also, the monthly newsletter can be found on our website, as well as Pastor Dave's sermon transcripts. Stop by and check it out!

## 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.

## CONNECTION COINS FOR FEBRUARY

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 (February 11th), the Connection Coin offering will go toward an awesome ministry. The HyVee Bread Ministry touches so many in our congregation and beyond. Bill, our bread delivery man, does this as a mission, asking for nothing in return. We help with the fuel expenses of this valuable ministry, giving him \$20 a week for gas. 100% of the money that is collected in the cans on the 11th of February 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, February 11th.





Thanks to all who have prayed, called, texted, sent cards, brought food, cleared my driveway, ran errands, paid my dog's kennel bill, attended to my medical needs, and took over some of my AUMC responsibilities in January. I have been truly blessed by my church family.

*Ruth Dulaney*

Thank you very much for donating to the Nursing Home Project! The staff and residents of both nursing homes appreciate being remembered during this Christmas Season. We loved that your donation helped spread Christmas cheer! We're sure they loved all of the gifts!

Thanks again,  
*Linus & Cathy Griswold*

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Aledo United Methodist Church,

Thank you for the Christmas bonus. We appreciate you thinking of us. Thank you for all you do for the city of Aledo and your church family. May God continue to bless you and your ministry. Thanks again for your thoughtfulness.

*Kent & Colleen*

Aledo United Methodist Church,

We just wanted to thank the Church again for leading the luncheon following Mom's funeral service. It was much appreciated and it was great to see some old friends and familiar faces. I'd also like the congregation to know Kenny has moved to Mercer Manor in Aledo and would welcome any visitors!

*Family of Arlene Landis*

Dear Pastor Dave and congregation,

Thank you very much for your donation to New Boston Elementary. Our students thrive because of the generosity and care from community. We are deeply grateful for you.

*Thank you!*  
*New Boston Elementary*

Thank you to everyone that remembered me through the holidays. The food tray and all the nice cards were greatly appreciated. May you all have a blessed new year.

Sincerely,  
*Ella Luallen*

Thank you!

Thank you so much for the cards and prayers during our ongoing health issues. They are very appreciated!

*Dick & Liz Zimmerman*

## Ash Wednesday Service

Aledo United Methodist Church will hold an Ash Wednesday Service February 14th at 6PM. Join us as we start the season of Lent with this special Service.



*It's almost like a real*

# **FIFTH SUNDAY!**

**All-Church Worship and Fellowship  
9:15 am Sunday, February 11.**

**One Service featuring both our  
Connection and Forgiven Praise Bands  
along with our Chancel Choir and more Special Music.**

**All this will be followed by our**

**ANNUAL YOUTH POTATO BAR**

**in the dining room at about 10:30.**

**Join us for this community-building event  
as we worship and eat together.**

*There will be no Sunday School or 10:30 service.*

*However, some classes may meet at 8 am.*

*Please check with your teacher.*



Because we need to present a service on both WRMJ radio and Facebook, we will be presenting a folk-styled service at 8 am. Nursery will be available at 8 am only because we want our children to worship with us.

Our next Fifth Sunday is on Easter, March 31. However, we will follow our normal service schedule on Easter Sunday with services at 8, 9:15, and 10:30.



**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**

After a successful Advent Bible study, our Sunday evening women’s Bible Study will continue in February with a study of “Bad Girls of the Bible (and What We Can Learn from Them)” by Liz Curtis Higgs. This will start February 4th in the SonRise CoffeeHouse Sunday School Room. This study features ten chapters, one each on the following Bible characters: Eve, Potipher’s wife, Lot’s wife, the Woman at the Well, Delilah, Sapphira, Rahab, Jezebel, Michal, and the Sinful Woman of Luke 7:37. The study includes a video presentation about each character.

Liz Curtis Higgs combines contemporary fiction with biblical commentary. A good bit of humor is thrown in for good measure in Liz’s unique brand of “girlfriend theology.” More than three million copies of her various books are in print.

**Caring Hearts Food Ministry**

**The food is free to anyone who is in need of food or needs some cheer.**

Our Caring Hearts Food Freezer is located in the basement by the elevator door.

**Those obtaining food from the freezer need to observe our guidelines for picking up food only during office hours**

**8:00 AM – Noon Monday through Friday.**

Pick up a pamphlet with our guidelines listed as well as other food sources in Mercer County.

Pamphlets are on the basement bookshelf near the Caring Hearts Freezer



**FINANCIAL MATTERS**

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



Date	01/07/2024	01/14/2024	01/21/2024	01/28/2024
Attendance	151	40	128	NA
Receipts (Toward Budget)	\$6,268.00	\$2,858.00	\$4,894.00	NA