

# The Parish Visitor



## March 2025

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### A Season for Cinders

The story of Cinderella is a familiar one; it's rooted in the cultural lore of several countries. Perhaps the most familiar version of the story was given to us by Walt Disney. In his adaptation, Cinderella lives with her stepmother and stepsisters where she is forced into the harsh role of a household servant. And yet, despite her hardships, Cinderella blossoms into a beautiful and kind young woman.

One day all the young maidens of the country are invited to a royal ball where the prince hopes to find a beautiful and worthy young lady to marry.

You know the rest of the story: with help from her fairy Godmother, Cinderella manages to attend the ball and dance with the prince until the stroke of midnight when she dashes off, leaving her glass slipper behind. The prince is smitten by the young maiden and searches the country for her, slipper in hand. He finds her and the two are married and live happily ever after.

Originally the name "Cinderella" was given derisively to a girl named Ella. She was forced to work so hard that when everything was finally done, she could only collapse by the kitchen fire and rest among the cinders. Her stepmother would taunt her by saying, *"Sitting among the cinders as usual! You ought to be called Cinder-Ella instead of Ella."* Hence her nickname: "Cinder," of course, means "Ash."

We, as Christians, have our own Cinderella story. Lent is a season of preparation as we anticipate Easter. We begin by "sitting among the cinders." A bit of ash may even be marked upon our brow as we hear the solemn words, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return." Ash Wednesday is more than a day; it's the first day in a Season of Ash. To put on ashes, or to sit in ashes, is to say to yourself and to the world that you are in a reflective, penitential mode. It's a way of saying that some important work is going on silently within you, and that you are, metaphorically and perhaps even more so, sitting in the cinders of a dead fire.

There is something inside the human soul that knows that periodically we must make a journey of descent, be smudged, and wait while the ashes do their work. That's what Lent is about. Like Cinderella, we work and sit among the cinders of the fire—refraining from dance, renouncing the banquet and refusing to go on with business as usual—not to punish ourselves, but to wait for silent growth to take place within us as the ashes do their work within us.

#### SPECIAL DATES:

- March 2 Communion All Services
- March 5 Ash Wednesday 6PM
- March 6 Caring Hearts 9AM,
- March 9 Shawna
- Bunnell speaking
- March 11 Loving Hands 1PM
- March 16 New Members
- March 16 Trustees Meeting 6PM Café
- March 16 Finance Meeting 6:45-7:30PM Dining room
- March 16 Admin Council Meeting 7:30-8:30 Café
- March 17 Men Meeting 6PM
- March 18 Red Cross Blood Drive 8:00 to 2:00 at the YMCA
- March 20 Caring Hearts 1PM
- March 21 Parish Visitor Deadline 8AM
- March 24 Relay for Life Meeting 6PM
- March 25 Loving Hands 1PM
- March 29 Trivia 5:00-8:00PM
- March 30 5th Sunday
- Potato Bar sponsored by youth at 10:30
- March 30 YMCA 5:30-7:30PM

(continued from page 1)

Fortunately, that season always comes to an end. We do not stay in the cinders for long. There's always a turning point; there's always a reward; there's always forgiveness. And then we arrive at the royal gala! We'll get to dance at the ball! And God himself will clothe us with the garments of praise. God himself will adorn us with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. We'll be able to say with the psalmist, "Thou hast turned my mourning into dancing! Thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with joy!" (Ps. 30:11).

The cinders of Ash Wednesday are always followed by the overwhelming joy of Easter morn. And as a result of that day we, as the church, the bride of Christ get to marry a Prince—the Prince of Peace!

We find in the story of Cinderella a story of Lent. Before the glass slipper could be slipped upon the maiden's foot, before she could wear the beautiful gown, or dance at the royal gala, before she was able to marry a prince, she had to sit among the cinders; she had to first endure a period of being humbled. Likewise, before we can rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we humble ourselves in the ashes of Lent.

Connecting People to Jesus Christ with you,

*Pastor Dave*

*adapted from my 2023 Ash Wednesday sermon*

## How to use this *Parish Visitor*

**Fill your calendar.** Decide which activities you want to be involved in. Are you on a committee which meets this month? When will it meet? Are there special services you want to attend? Is there a fun activity being planned this month that you don't want to miss? Let your *Parish Visitor* be your guide to a blessed month!

**Look for mission opportunities.** When will Loving Hands gather to make meals for those facing food insecurities? Are we collecting items or funds for a special project? Do I want to connect people to Jesus Christ by sponsoring a radio broadcast?

**Use it as a Prayer Guide:** Yes, there's a list of "Those We Remember In Our Prayers," but you can also use this newsletter as a guide to pray for the various services, activities, and ministries which will be happening throughout the month. Pray for the United Methodist Men and Women, the Forge Youth, the Caring Hearts and Loving Hands ministries, and so much more!

**Invite a friend.** After you've filled your calendar, found a mission opportunity, and prayed for the various events taking place this month, why not give your well-used *Parish Visitor* to a neighbor and invite them to a church that is alive, active, and filled with the love of God.

## Connecting with the Word

As followers of Christ, the Living Word, we are formed by the written word. The Revised Common Lectionary suggests readings each week from the Old Testament, the Psalms, the New Testament, and the Gospels. Those readings often frame each week's worship services and are listed here to help you prepare for Sunday.

Transfiguration Sunday, March 2: Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2; and Luke 9:28-36.

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

Sunday, March 9: Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91; Romans 10:8b-13; and Luke 4:1-13.

Sunday, March 16: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; and Luke 13:31-35.

Sunday, March 23: Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; and Luke 13:1-9.

Sunday, March 30: Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5:6-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32.

## Join Our “Bucket Brigade

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 \$919 or one month’s apportionments for Benevolences and Connectional Ministries . Our Gold Goal is \$1,838 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 on Ash Wednesday March the 5th at 6 p.m.



# TRIVIA NIGHT

## ALEDO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The church’s Missions Team will host a **TRIVIA NIGHT** Saturday, March 29. Pastor Dave will once again serve as trivia master for this multimedia event which includes, pictures, music, and video. Doors open at 5 pm and the trivia begins at 6 pm. All proceeds will enable the Missions Team which is raising money to fund a rice meal project at our church this spring. Cost for trivia is \$80 for a table of eight or \$10 per person. There is an additional cost for mulligans and double downs. You are invited to bring snacks for your table. The Missions Team will have walking tacos and soft drinks for sale. Reserve your table by contacting the church office.

## 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.



## Roof Project Update

Last October Riddell Roofing installed a new roof over our sanctuary at a cost of \$47,550. We financed the project with a loan from Black Hawk Bank and Trust. Thanks to your generosity, we have paid \$17,000 toward that loan, bringing our balance down to \$30,550.



Our loan is guaranteed by our endowment fund, which entitles us to a loan at 2.15 percent interest. As long as we make our interest payment every month, we do not have to make any other monthly payment. Our monthly interest payments are under \$100.

You may give toward this project any time by designating your gift for the “roof.”

## Off-site Worship Services

Pastor Dave will be preaching and serving communion at Brookstone at 10:15 am on Thursday, March 6. If you would like to reconnect with our friends at Brookstone, please feel free to join us for this monthly event. We will meet on the second floor activity room.

Pastor Dave will also be preaching and leading worship at Mercer Manor at 1:30 pm on Sunday, March 23 and then at Arcadia Care (formerly Aledo Rehab) at 2:30 pm that same afternoon.



## DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

On Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, at 2AM, you need to turn that clock ahead! (OK, if you REALLY want, you can do it Saturday the 8<sup>th</sup> before you go to bed!) If you DON'T change your clock before you go to bed, you might be LATE FOR CHURCH! And we would NOT want that! So...make sure you “spring forward” on March 9<sup>th</sup>!



## Fifth Sunday, March 30



As has become our custom, we are altering our schedule on the Fifth Sunday of March and encouraging everyone to worship in one combined service at 9:15 am. There will be lots of special music from our praise bands and others.

Following the 9:15 service, we will gather in the dining room for a potato bar provided by our Education and Youth Teams. There is no set price; donations are accepted and will be used to install new floor covering in two of our Sunday school classrooms.

Additionally, Pastor Dave will be offering a folk-style service at 8 am for streaming on our website, Facebook, and WRMJ radio.

## All Church Outing to the YMCA

Sunday, March 30, 5:30 to 7:30 pm

- We have reserved the Mercer county YMCA in Aledo for family fun, fellowship, and recreation. This is open to members and friends of Aledo UMC.
- Please bring a nut-free snack to share in the activity room.
- Activities include swimming, gym, game room, and walking track.
- The weight and cardio rooms are not included in this event. However, there is no charge for this opportunity for fun, exercise and
- fellowship!



## Mark Your Calendar for Easter and Palm Sunday

- ◆ **Sunday April 13th** : The Passion of Christ with Lessons and Hymns in a traditional worship service led by Pastor Dave. Katie Moran will be featured on the keyboard. Nursery care will be available.
- ◆ **8:30 am, Palm Sunday, April 13th**: Breakfast served by the United Methodist Men featuring pan-cakes, sausage, biscuits and gravy, all by donation. Serving continues until 12:30 pm. Please support our United Methodist Men as they are so supportive of our church and its mission!
- ◆ **9:15 am, Palm Sunday, April 13th**, Sunday school for all ages. Nursery care provided. No Rock and Worship this week only.
- ◆ **10:30 am, Palm Sunday, April 13th**: Celebration of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ featuring music from our Chancel Choir, Bell Choir, children and youth.
- ◆ 1Pm Good Friday April 18th, Prayer Walk, carrying the cross to the Courthouse and back.
- ◆ **Easter Sunday, April 20th**: Celebration of the Resurrection with Contemporary Worship at 8 am; Rock and Worship at 9:15; and Traditional Worship at 10:30. Nursery care will be available at 9:15

## Sponsors for our March Radio Broadcasts

March 2nd– Anonymous

March 9th– Anonymous

March 16th– Anonymous

March 23rd -Anonymous

March 30th Diana Eggen –in memory of loved ones



## “RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE”

All of us know someone who has received a unit or more of more blood. Perhaps you yourself have received blood.

It is our church’s turn to host the monthly Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, **March 18<sup>th</sup> from 8:00-2:00** , **at The Mercer County Family YMCA, -----Change in location-----**

You can save a life or two or three by donating blood to the American Red Cross. You may have seen or read lately that there currently is a critical blood shortage in the United States. All of us know someone who has received a unit or **this is a permanent change of location from the VFW.**

I am asking our congregation for three things, first of all consider giving blood.

You can make an appointment through the Red Cross or just walk in that day. Appointments will take precedence over walk-ins.

Secondly I need volunteers to make sandwiches and cookies for the event. Please contact me (Mary Flint) for the exact needs.

Lastly I will need a few workers to help out with food, visit with donors, etc. Please contact me if you would be willing to sit at the YMCA for an hour or two that day. This is a very easy task. Basically you sit and visit with people at the table.

Our congregation always steps up to help with worthy causes, and I trust that this will be another time that we will do that.

See me at Church or contact me at : 309-737-6139

I encourage you to come on March 18 to give blood and potentially save a life.

*Mary Flint (309) 737-6139*



## Bible Study Opportunities

Sunday evening Women's Bible Study is studying *Ten Women of the Bible*. Contact Natalie Nelson for more information, including a schedule of meetings.

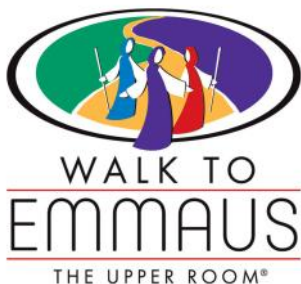
Tuesday morning Bible Study for men or women, led by Pastor Dave. The group is studying the Ten Commandments with help from *Words of Life* by Adam Hamilton. This class runs from 9 to 10:30 am.

Gary Heard leads a Bible study for men on Wednesday morning. The group is studying *Ten Men of the Bible* by Max Lucado and meet from 6:30 to 7:45 am. Breakfast pizza and donuts are available each week.

Pastor Dave also leads a Bible study at 8 am Saturday once a month. This month's study will be on March 8th..

### Spring Walk to Emmaus

The Walk to Emmaus is a weekend where you will be inspired, challenged and equipped for Christian action. You can renew or develop a relationship with God, grow spiritually or discover firm foundations for your faith. There are two walks that are scheduled for this spring.



**Men's Walk March 27-30**

**Women's Walk April 3-6**

**Questions? Contact Pastor Dave for more Information**

### ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICE



**MARCH 5TH AT 6PM**

**The United Methodist Men meet on March 17th There will be a meal, a short business meeting, and lots of fellowship. Join us, and bring a friend!**



## MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

03/10/1973– Donald & Barbara Manthe  
 03/20/2021– Todd & Ashley Walthall  
 03/25/1972– Bruce & Linda Hall  
 03/27/1965– Ronald & Sharon Hank  
 03/31/1979– James & Lynn Childs



## UM Women Golden Age Birthdays

03/01– Ruth Dulaney  
 03/02– Linda Morrow  
 03/09– Darlene Jones  
 03/12– Sharon Peterson  
 03/16– Carol Hess  
 03/24– Sandy Carlson  
 03/25– Jean Mahaffey  
 03/26– Shirley Harker  
 03/27– Ella Luallen  
 03/29– Linda Hall



The deadline for the next Parish Visitor is  
*Friday March 21st at 8am.*  
**All articles must be  
 submitted by this date!**

## THOSE WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

Alicia/healing  
 Jodie Andress  
 Tom Balmer/health  
 John Bender/health  
 Jim Bigham/health  
 Bishop David Bard  
 Family of Vick Bieri  
 Bishop Kennetha Bigham-Tsai  
 Bill Breeden/health  
 Renae Brown/mental health  
 Family of Holly Blythe  
 Family of Greg Campbell  
 Neil David/hospice  
 Charlie David/health  
 Connie Dellitt/health  
 Family of Erma Dobbins  
 Dori/health  
 Jim Droste/health  
 Stacey Dutton/health  
 Hal Earl/health  
 Sonjia Fell/healing  
 Amber Fitzsimmons/cancer  
 Jayne Fitzsimmons/healing  
 Renee Forber/healing  
 Lyn & Donnie Franks/health  
 Marie Fredrickson/InterVarsity  
 Gabrielle/FMD  
 The Gerber Family  
 Family of Tyler Gilbert  
 Austin Hains/hurt leg

Family of Katie Harris  
 Diane an Stan Hunt/health/job  
 Vicki Lowe/health  
 Lupe/health  
 The McCaw Family  
 Laura and Randy McGinnis/  
 health  
 Family of Peggy Malone  
 Mauricio/health  
 Family of Sharon Moffitt  
 Linda Morrow/health  
 Family of Jane Mumm  
 Mike Newsom/healing  
 Kula Naeole/health  
 Kathy Newswander/cancer treat-  
 ment  
 Cookie Olsen  
 Jennifer Olson/cancer  
 Family of Cheryl Patterson  
 Sharon Peterson's family in CA  
 Paul & family/addiction  
 Baby Peyton/health  
 Marion Pinkham/health  
 Bill Pollock/health  
 Janice Pollock/cancer  
 Dan Reed/cancer  
 Chrissy Riddell/cancer  
 Annie Rudsell/health  
 Pastor Dave & Candice  
 Ashley Schmidt  
 Family of Gina Shaffer



Celia Sinclair/health  
 Joyce Smith/cancer  
 Dianna Spencer health  
 Whitney Stuart/health  
 Family of Amy Studer  
 Finn Tatum/health  
 Family of Corey Thompsen  
 Dale, Debby, Ashley Thomas  
 Family of Verla Thompson  
 Tony Tomsha/health  
 Leslie VanLanshoot/stroke  
 Nena Visser/health  
 Kim Watkins  
 Connie Whan/attitude  
 David Wheeler/healing  
 Jane Williams/pain  
 Family of Mike Willis  
 Dick Zimmerman/health

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 FORGE

## WHERE LIVES TAKE SHAPE

### FORGE IS OUR YOUTH FELLOWSHIP FOR GRADES 6 THROUGH 12.

- Forge will meet at 11:45 am Sunday, March 2 at Happy Joe's. Please bring \$1 for pizza. We will wrap up at about 1 pm. Invite your friends.
- On Thursday, March 20, we will be taking the church bus to River Bend Food Bank in Davenport where we will once again serve in the warehouse. This is during Mercer County's spring break. We will leave the church at 8 am and will work until 11 am. Please bring money for lunch, as we will go out to eat together after this service project. **This event is open to anyone in the congregation.**
- Forge will meet at 6 pm Sunday, March 23 at the church. As always, your friends are invited.
- Youth volunteers are needed to help during our Trivia Night on Saturday, March 29.
- Forge youth and parents will assist our education team in hosting a potato bar for the congregation as part of your Fifth Sunday all-church meal. Food will be served at 10:30 am following the 9:15 worship service on Sunday, March 30.
- All youth are invited to the YMCA for swimming and gym activities on Sunday, March 30. We've reserved the Y from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. **This is an all-church event.** Friends are invited, too.



The Illinois Great Rivers Conference camping program is an extension of the local church's disciple-making process. Its mission is to *Connect People, Nature, and Christ for the transformation of the world.*

Out Conference maintains programming at two camps; the camp that is nearest to Aledo is **East Bay Camp** near Hudson. Camping season begins with "Campfire Tales Family Camp" Friday April 25 through Sunday, April 27. Prices range from \$50 to \$125, depending on how many family members participate. The summer camping season begins Monday, June 2. Camping flyers with more details plus a QR code are available in the Fellowship Café. You may also log onto our Conference website at [igr.org/summercamps](http://igr.org/summercamps).

A limited number of scholarships are available. The church will pay 50 percent of the camp fee up to \$175 (whichever is less). Scholarships are being administered by our Missions Team. Questions may be directed to Pastor Dave.

East Bay is located at 24248 Ron Smith Memorial Highway, Hudson, IL 61748.

**Thank you!**

*On behalf of the Mercer County Food Pantry, we thank you for your continued support. Your food donations (800 plus items) and monetary support, totally \$481.00 in 2024 are very much appreciated.*

*Mercer County residents continue to visit the food pantry as a resource to help stretch their individual and family food means. We continue to see our numbers grow.*

*We appreciate the communities outpouring of support: Mercer County always delivers!*

*Churches of the Mercer County Food Pantry*



**Celebrate Darlene Jones'90th Birthday!**



**Open House 1:00 to 4:00 PM  
Sunday March 9th at Brookstone**

**If unable to attend you may send a card to:**

**Darlene Jones  
405 SE 13th Ave.  
Apt #246  
Aledo, IL 61231**

# March Volunteer of the Month

## Tim Hay



This past Thursday, February 27, Tim Hay joined a group of believers primarily from Christ Church, Fairview Heights, and together, they made their way to New Orleans for Mardi Gras. But they did not go to party; they went to bear witness to the love of God during that annual celebration through a ministry called *No Greater Love*.

Tim has traveled to New Orleans with NGL at least twelve times, and each time he goes, he's in a clown's costume, and he's part of a team of seven or eight men. This year, Tim will serve as the assistant to his team's leader and together they will mentor the others on the team. He and the other NGL volunteers return to Illinois on Ash Wednesday.

Thank you, Tim, for connecting people to Jesus Christ through No Greater Love. And while that may be the reason why Tim is our Volunteer of the Month for *this month*, it's not the only reason he is our Volunteer of the Month. That's because Tim is one of those individuals who serves the Lord in many, many ways. He sings with our chancel choir. He serves on our Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and is the chair of our Safety Committee. Tim is also very active in our United Methodist Men and served as its president in 2024.



**Congratulations to Tim Hay, our March  
Volunteer of the Month!**

### Membership Opportunity

Due to cold weather in January, Membership Sunday is being moved to Sunday, March 16. If you consider Aledo UMC to be your church home, then please contact Pastor Dave for more information and to be included in this opportunity. We would love to have you be a member of our Church!

## February Connection Coins: Chaddock



On Sunday, March 9, we welcome Shawna Bunnell back to Aledo to share her burden for Chaddock.

Located in Quincy, Chaddock is an internationally recognized leader in the treatment of children suffering from the psychological, emotional, and spiritual effects of significant abuse, neglect and trauma.

Founded in 1853, Chaddock was established as a ministry of the United Methodist Church and maintains a covenantal relationship with the UMC to this day. Chaddock has served children from 39 different states and four tribal nations.

“We’ve had Shawna here several times, but always in the form of pulpit supply,” Pastor Dave noted. “I love Chaddock, but I’ve never heard Shawna share her story. So I’m really looking forward to being a part of these services.”

Please remember to bring your coins, folding money, or checks payable to AUMC and drop them in our blue repurposed Pringles cans when they come around.

### A Much-Needed Update

We learned last fall that our sanctuary projector is not only obsolete, but the image is washed out.

We have explored replacing our projector and screen with a 98” monitor.

We also learned that our system cannot handle a hybrid system with a monitor in front and a projector in back. Therefore, on Sunday, February 16, our Trustees, Finance Committee, and Ad Council reviewed our options and all three committees voted to install two monitors in the sanctuary, one in the front and the other in the back. Total cost is \$11,690.

Admittedly, the timing of this is most inconvenient since we’re trying to pay off our roof project. Indeed, that’s one of the reasons why Pastor Dave will not be making an appeal from the pulpit for this expense. But that doesn’t mean your gifts are not needed. If you would like to give to this project, please indicate “monitors” on your check.

## FINANCIAL MATTERS

(WEEKLY NEED TO HOLD STEADY \$6,400.00)

Date	02/02/2024	02/09/2024	02/16/2024	02/23/2024
Attendance	165	157	150	N/A
Receipts				
(Toward Budget)	\$4,836.00	\$3,137.00.00	\$10,881.75	N/A

