

The Parish Visitor



March, 2014

Visit us at myaledoumc.com

AMBIENCE

By Rev. Mark

Ambience- noun- "the atmosphere of a place". Ambience is an important aspect of a place. Think about it- you walk into McDonalds...you expect a certain kind of ambience. You walk into a 5-Star restaurant...you expect a very different kind of ambience. Wal-Mart has a much different ambience than Sacks Fifth Avenue. It doesn't necessarily make one better than the other...just different. There is a certain feel when you walk into a building. Sometimes the feel is intentionally designed to put you in a certain frame of mind, while other times the ambience you experience has NO intentionality about it...it just...IS.

I have been thinking about ambience a lot lately. Having done a decent amount of restaurant work, as well as managing retail businesses and professional theaters, I have a strong appreciation for the power of well-planned and executed ambience. I am immediately in the RIGHT frame of mind when the intended ambience works. Likewise, I am immediately in the WRONG frame of mind when it doesn't. In fact, I have literally turned around and walked back out of a restaurant based on A. how dirty the building was and B. how we were greeted!

I don't know about you but the one thing I hear, over and over, with GREAT consistency, from people who talk about The AleDo United Methodist Church is how friendly and welcoming we are. My response? "I would LOVE to take credit for that, but they all greeted my family exactly the same way when WE first walked in the door!" This is a VERY friendly and welcoming congregation...sometimes DESPITE your pastor!

In recent months, we have made some "improvements" to heighten that sense of welcoming. The two biggest pieces that have been added are The Hospitality Team and The Fellowship Café. How awesome is it that, before someone ever reaches the sanctuary on Sunday morning or the dining room on Wednesday night, they have already been greeted and welcomed?! How awesome is it that, by the time most people actually sit in a pew on Sunday morning, they have had probably 3, 4...10 people speak to them?!

Likewise, to stand in the Fellowship Café area at 9AM on a Sunday morning is a GREAT thing! Tons of conversation going on. People laughing. People talking. People sharing. AND...people eating good breakfast food and drinking good coffee! It has been a GREAT addition!

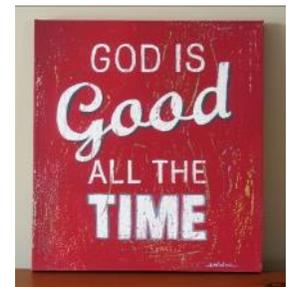
So, are we a friendly, welcoming congregation because we have a Fellowship Café and a Hospitality Team? I would answer that with a resounding..."NO!" It's the exact polar opposite of that, in fact! You are a friendly, welcoming congregation regardless of coffee bars and people at the door. In fact, the reason we HAVE those things is because you were already a friendly, welcoming congregation and wanted to ramp that up even more!

We are growing. In a climate of churches losing ground and churches closing their doors for good because they don't have the support to keep going...we are growing. And the reason we are growing is simple- it's YOU! People in search of a church home are simply not looking for tons of bells and whistles. Oh sure, those bells and whistles can be nice and all, but if they are housed in a congregation that puts off a vibe that says, "Yeah, yeah...glad you're here...just don't sit in MY pew!", then those church seekers won't stay. But if instead they find a friendly, welcoming bunch of folks who seem genuinely glad they are there...they are likely to stay...even if the church doesn't have every bell and whistle they seek.

So...keep doing what you're doing. Welcome people, honestly and sincerely, for no other reason but that...they're here! Be glad to see them. Remember how you felt when you were the "newbie". Remember that, regardless of what society says, when we come together as the body of Christ, we are RADICALLY equal in His eyes. Thank you for being SO friendly and SO welcoming...and keep up the good work!

SPECIAL DATES:

- March 2 Communion & Food Pantry Collection Sunday
- March 3 Finance meeting 6PM
- March 3 Trustee Board Meeting 7PM
- March 4 Church Financial Audit 5:30PM
- March 5 Ash Wednesday Service 6:30PM
- March 9 Lenten Breakfast 9:15AM
- March 11 Miriam Circle 6PM
- March 16 Administrative Council 7:15PM
- March 17 UMM Meeting
- March 18 Red Cross Blood Drive noon-6PM
- March 20 Naomi Wesleyan Circle 11:30AM @ T & C
- March 23 CIA Luncheon 11:30AM



WORSHIP TIMES:

- Sundays 8AM & 10:15AM
- Sunday School 9:15AM
- Evening Service 6PM

PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDIES



The Easter Experience (beginning the week of the 9th of March)

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

WHEN: Tuesdays @ 9AM and 1:30PM
Wednesdays @ 6PM

WHERE: In the Fellowship Area next to the sanctuary (Tues. 1:30PM in the Sonrise Coffee House)

WHY: Make the life-changing story of Easter real this year. State-of-the art 20-minute videos and in-depth studies will keep you engaged in discussing Christ's Passion and resurrection as they bond with each other—and with the eternal message of Scripture. What "The Passion of the Christ" did for moviegoers, the 6-week *Easter Experience* will do for you.

WHAT ELSE: It is **NOT** too late to join.

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 Letter to the Romans

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

WHEN: Sundays @ 9:15AM

WHERE: In the Chapel next to the sanctuary

WHY: The Letter to the Romans is the best, most complete example of the Apostle Paul's theology found in the New Testament.

WHAT ELSE: It is **NOT** too late to join this class.



FAT TUESDAY DINNER/ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

On **Wednesday, March 5th 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.

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 March. This opportunity is for youth **7th Grade and older**. They will spend **6 Sunday afternoons, 1PM** starting **March 2nd** and ending **April 6th** with Rev. Mark and Melissa, learning more about what it truly means to be a Christian. There will be lots of conversation and refection, but there will also be music videos and fun "game shows"! Then, on Palm Sunday, April 13th, 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!!

THE MULTI-FACETED CARING HEARTS PROGRAM JUST KEEPS GROWING!



Our *caring hearts* have many “chambers” and we encourage more to participate, share your compassion, and utilize the program. The *hands and feet of Jesus* teams include:

- **Food Ministry** – The team, with the generosity of many WNF donations, has served over 650 meals since it’s beginning a year and a half ago. Thanks to those who have taken food to someone in need! *We hope that anyone feels welcome to pick up a meal whenever it is needed.*
- **CIA** – Caring Individual Adults group enjoy a fellowship meal the fourth Sunday of each month.
- **Respite Care** – Individuals graciously volunteer to offer care when needed.
- **Connection Coins** – Cheery cards and compassionate notes are written to those who need a pick-me-up and is financed by the coins collected the second Sunday of each month.
- **Travel** – We have volunteers who are ready to transport someone in need to an appointment, grocery store, or run an errand.
- **Hospitality Greeters** – Happy faces welcome our guests before and after our church services and WNF. *Would you like to join this team and spread His Joy?*
- **Fellowship Café** – Enjoy a healthy and delicious snack before and after church services while visiting with your church family.
- **Safety Team** – A new team will be formed to ensure the continued safety of our congregation starting with an AED unit and CPR training.
- **Young Adults Ministry** – The first young adult’s ministry was launched February 21st with a Valentine dinner and babysitting provided for the families.

The Caring Hearts team was humbled by the many thank you notes received for the Christmas cookies and fruit trays including these: Ed & Marian Nesbitt, Julia Fairburn, Nadine Liby, Katharine Jones, Tommy Greer, Evelyn Yerkey, Bonnie Ricketts, Melinda, Mallory & Dillon Mazzocco, Rita Haizlip, Leona Bonney, Sharon Mayhew, and Florence Louck.

SPECIAL OBSERVANCES IN MARCH

March is Irish American Month. It’s also Music in Our Schools Month. And Craft Month. Also Frozen Food Month, Peanut Month, Women's History Month, Poetry Month and Social Workers Month. Here are some special days to celebrate in March: 1st- Peanut Butter Lovers' Day, 2nd- Old Stuff Day, 3rd- If Pets Had Thumbs Day, 4th- Hug a GI Day, 5th- Ash Wednesday, 6th- Frozen Food Day, 7th- Crown Roast of Pork Day, 8th- Be Nasty Day, 9th- Panic Day, 10th- Middle Name Pride Day, 11th- Johnny Appleseed Day, 12th- Plant a Flower Day, 13th- Ear Muff Day, 14th- Learn about Butterflies Day, 15th- Everything You Think is Wrong Day, 16th- Everything You Do is Right Day, 17th- Saint Patrick's Day, 18th- Goddess of Fertility Day, 19th- Poultry Day, 20th- Extraterrestrial Abductions Day, 21st- Fragrance Day, 22nd- National Goof Off Day, 23rd- Chip and Dip Day, 24th- Pet Your Pet Day, 25th- Waffle Day, 26th- Make Up Your Own Holiday Day, 27th- "Joe" Day, 28th- Something on a Stick Day, 29th- Smoke and Mirrors Day, 30th- I am in Control Day and 31st- Jelly Donut Day.

Pets with opposable thumbs, snacks, middle names and little green men- take time this month to step out of your routine- recognize and celebrate the fun, unusual and downright weird days March has to offer!

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.



THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Last month we told you about wanting to purchase an AED- Automated External Defibrillator. An automated external defibrillator is a portable device that checks the heart rhythm. If needed, it can send an electric shock to the heart to try to restore a normal rhythm. AEDs are used to treat sudden cardiac arrest. And thanks to your incredibly generous donations, we raised the necessary funds in just TWO weeks! The unit, and the accompanying "kits", will be purchased and installed soon. There will be a training session that will cover both the use of the AED Unit and CPR. If you are interested, watch/listen for that announcement coming up! Again...thank you!!

NEW SERMON SERIES

We tend to make empty promises- ones that we either have no intention...or ability...to keep. God does just the opposite! On Sunday, March 9th, we begin a new sermon series- **Full Promises**. We will spend the seven weeks leading up to, and including, Easter walking through just a few of the high spots of Jesus' earthly ministry as we look deeper into some of the promises God makes to us- and how they can RADICALLY impact our lives...if we will let them. The weeks of the series look like this:

Sunday, March 9- The Water is Fine (Matthew 3:13-17) Your loneliness will be gone

Sunday, March 16- Calling All Cars (Mark 1:14-20) Your wandering will be gone

Sunday, March 23- Walking on Sunshine (John 5:1-9) Your paralysis will be gone

Sunday, March 30- Wayward Son (Mark 5:1-20) Your panic will be gone

Sunday, April 6- Give It Up (Mark 10:17-25) Your addiction will be gone

Sunday, April 13 (Palm Sunday)- I Love a Parade (John 12:12-19) Your unwillingness will be gone

Sunday, April 20 (Easter Sunday)- Reach Out Your Hand (John 20:24-31) Your doubt will be gone

Come each week expecting God to make...and keep...His promises to you!



BLOOD DRIVE

Our Aledo UMC is sponsoring the **MARCH Red Cross Blood Drive on Tues., Mar. 18th**. The drive is at the **Aledo VFW and is from 11:30-5:30**.

The need for blood is especially great this year due to the difficult winter months we've had. What a life-saving gift we can give with just a donation of our time.

I am putting this plea out to all of you past donors and to all of you who have considered giving blood, but have never quite gotten around to it. The Red Cross and all its recipients need you.

In addition to givers, I will also need volunteers to donate sandwiches and to work at the canteen that day. Please contact me if you would be willing to help in any way.

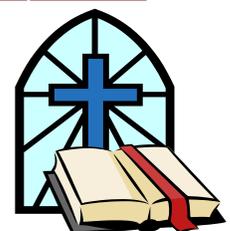
Thanks in advance for marking this important date on your calendar.

Mary Flint

PASTORAL CARE

If you are ill, having surgery, or are simply in need of some Pastoral Care, let your pastor know! Rev. Mark would be happy to visit you, pray with you, even bring Communion to you. Simply contact the office (582-2169) or contact him directly

(revmark@stickwithjesus.com, 217-390-2359- call or text).





YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

by Rev. Mark

If you have any children, you remember...you will ALWAYS remember...the day they were born. There are a very small handful of days that stand out in my life, and be assured that the day my gorgeous wife was silly enough to say “I do” is at the top, and the birth of both of my boys is right up there as well!

The birth of a new ministry is pretty exciting, too! And I got the extreme pleasure of experiencing that recently! One of the most under-represented groups in this church...in MOST churches...is the “young family/couple” group. Some churches lack in that area because they simply don’t HAVE enough folks who fit into that category while others lack in that area because they aren't sure what to DO with that group.

Over the 20 months that I have been at this church, our “pool” of young families/couples has grown, which is an AWESOME. So in recent months, a few of us have been in discussion about what we could do to intentionally reach out to those folks with a ministry geared specifically for them. Out of that discussion grew the recent event.

We struggled with how we would “label” this group. We thought the “family” designation was important, but we didn't want to limit it to only those who had kids. We thought the “young” designation was important, but we didn't want that to make some feel that they didn't belong. (I mean, I’m going to be 53 in less than 2 months and we have a kid in Junior High!) We thought the “couple” designation was important, but we didn't want to leave out anybody who was either a single parent or fit into the age group. So we were as SPECIFIC as possible while being as GENERAL as possible! (Clear as MUD, Pastor!)

We put together a dinner that we called Late Valentine’s Day Dinner, arranged babysitting and sent out personal invitations. We planned the dinner (pork loin, baked potato, broccoli, salad and cheesecake!) and the décor. (I am, by the way, eternally grateful for Ruth Dulaney and Deb Swank who have an incredible eye for style and detail- that saved us from the paper plates and chili dogs I would have planned!) And then...Friday night came!

8 families were represented at the dinner, with 5 other families who WANTED to come but had other commitments. I don’t know about you, but 8 families for the maiden voyage of a new ministry is pretty dog-gone awesome! They were intentionally seated in groups of 4 and then the serving, by Ruth, Deb and Molly and Bill Joseph, began. During the salad course, they were invited to A. as couples fill out a Valentine’s Day trivia quiz and B. each write down something that most people wouldn't know about them. Then we ate the main course...which was AMAZING! (Thank you, Stan Swank, for your awesome culinary skills!) After that we gave door prizes for the couples who got the most trivia questions correct.

As we ate dessert, I read the “thing most people wouldn't know about you”, one at a time, and those gathered had to try and figure out who wrote it. It was A. quite fun and B. pretty enlightening! (Mine was that, in a “former life” as the Business Manager of a professional theater/entertainment venue, I once wrote Jay Leno a check for \$40,000!)

We spent the rest of the 90-minute evening talking about what THEY wanted this new ministry to be. It seems to me that an awful lot of churches seem to think that THEY know what a group like this would want to do and therefore they simply dictate what that will be. I wanted to know what THEY wanted! We then made plans for moving forward, finished dessert and went home. It was a GREAT evening and...I pray...the beginning of a marvelous ministry opportunity!

www.stickwithjesus.com

ANNIVERSARIES

MARCH

- 03/02/2007- Jessie & Connie Midkiff
- 03/02/2002- Ron & Carol Schmidt
- 03/05/2004- Joe & Brooke Loving
- 03/05/1965- Richard & Sonja Fell
- 03/10/1973- Donald & Barbara Manthe
- 03/11/1989- John & Julie Balmer
- 03/16/1990- Greg & Wanda Cobert
- 03/17/1946- Paul & Maxine Riley
- 03/18/1983- James & Dee Dellitt
- 03/20/1993- Garrett & Jodi Lindell
- 03/21/2009- William & Angela Millar
- 03/25/1972- Bruce & Linda Hall
- 03/27/1965- Ronald & Sharon Hank
- 03/31/1979- James & Lynn Childs

UM Women

Golden Age Birthdays

- 03/09- Aileen Andress
- 03/09- Darlene Jones
- 03/16- Carol Hess
- 03/22- Norma Adams
- 03/24- Doris Shellenberg
- 03/26- Frances Huber
- 03/27- Ella Luallen



THOSE WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS



- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Don Abel | Chris Engstrom | Lucille McHard |
| Rene Anderson family | Gildea family | Mary Lou McCreight |
| Kathy Bell | Don Harmon | Carly Meminger |
| Cindy Bender | Rev Mark & family | Charlie Newswander |
| Ila Bertrand | Emily Heflin | Baby Noah |
| Linda Biebaum | Leanne Helton | Betty Oaks |
| Amber Bittick | Bill Hofmann/family | Gary Olson |
| Brenda Brandt | Steve Jackson | Marla Reynolds |
| Lucy Ceurvorst | Josie | Bodie Salmon |
| Becky Crossman | Heather Kopp | Quinci Shride |
| Betty Dainty | Rodney Laird | Ashley Smith |
| Laura Diehl | Paige Lehrer | Dwight Welch |
| Eilene | Eleanor Lloyd | Mert Whitley |
| Judy Elliott | Logan's family | Roger Whittington |

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

EXPERIENCE “TREASURES OF THE HEART.”

The 5th annual **Journey Women’s Event** will be held on **Sat., April 5th from 9:15-2:30**. Doors open with refreshments at 8:30. If you have previously attended “The Journey”, you know what an awe-inspiring and faith-filled day it is. If you have never been, we sincerely hope you will clear your calendar this year to attend. Try it...you’ll like it!

This day is just for you, ladies. You will be pampered at this spa day for the soul. Four inspiring speakers (Dr. Martha Thornton, Julie Balmer, Amy Hess, and Lindi Kernan) will share their stories and faith with us. Our own Connections Praise Band will lead us in song and a delicious (and we do mean delicious) lunch will be served.

Registration is \$12.00 with scholarships available. Part of every registration will be donated to the Mercer County Crisis Center. For registration forms, visit the Aledo UMC office or go to our website www.myaledoumc.com. Forms will also be passed out during March church services.

Plan to attend and bring friends with you. It promises to be a wonderful day!

*Pam Truman and Mary Flint
Members of The Journey Committee*



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 March 3rd this year.) and is immediately followed by Ash Wednesday (March 4th 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! Choose 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!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP!

Wednesday Night Fellowship is in full swing- all it’s missing is...YOU! 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

AWANA for kids through 6th Grade

Junior/Senior High Bible Study

Rev. Mark and Joanne’s class, The Easter Experience (Make the life-changing story of Easter real this year. State-of-the art 20-minute videos and in-depth studies will keep you engaged in discussing Christ's Passion and resurrection as they bond with each other—and with the eternal message of Scripture. What "The Passion of the Christ" did for moviegoers, the 6-week *Easter Experience* will do for you.)

Bell Choir

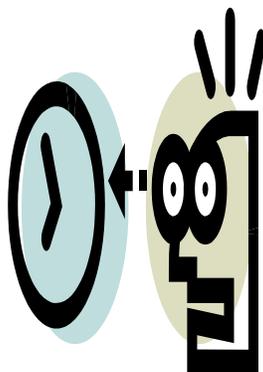
Choir

See you on Wednesday evenings!



The deadline for the next Parish Visitor is **Friday, March 21st, at 8am.**

Please have all articles submitted by this date!



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

On Sunday, March 9th, at 2AM, you need to turn that clock ahead! (OK, if you REALLY want, you can do it Saturday the 8th 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 9th!

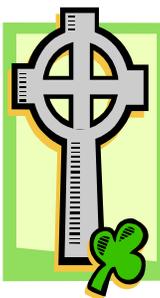
LENTEN BREAKFAST

It's not too late! Sign up now for the annual **UMW Lenten Breakfast**. Contact me by **March 6th** if you have not already signed up in church. 582-7615 is my number.

This breakfast (egg casserole, fruit, sweets, and drinks) will be held on the first Sunday morning of Lent, March 9th, from 9:15-10:00 a.m. in the dining room. It is for **EVERY-ONE OF ALL AGES**. Rev. Mark will offer Communion and a short message to us. There will be no Sunday School that day.

This is a great opportunity to fellowship with your church family. So, come to 8:00 service, then eat, or eat breakfast and stay for 10:15 service. Hope to see you there!

Mary Flint
UMW Co-president



ST. PATRICK'S DAY

St. Patrick is the patron saint and national apostle of Ireland. He is credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland. Most of what is known about him comes from his two works; The Confessio, a spiritual autobiography, and his Epistola, a denunciation of British mistreatment of Irish Christians. He described himself as a "most humble-minded man, pouring forth a continuous paean of thanks to my Maker for having chosen me as the instrument whereby multitudes who had worshipped idols and unclean things had become the people of God." St. Patrick is also widely known for driving the snakes out of Ireland. And while it's true there are no snakes in Ireland, there probably never have been- the island was separated from the rest of the continent at the end of the Ice Age.

Although it's not known for sure why we celebrate St. Patrick's Day on March 17th, one theory is that it's the day St. Patrick died. It is a religious holiday in Ireland, with many businesses closed. Have you ever wondered why the shamrock is so closely tied to St. Patrick's Day? Well, none other than St. Patrick himself used it to explain the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) to the pagans. Celebrate St. Patrick's Day...but don't forget the strong religious ties it bears!

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.



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!

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.

NEEDED: WATER BOTTLES!

The Family Crisis Center will be holding their "Champions4Children" walk on May 3rd. They are in great need of empty 16, 18, or 20 ounce water bottles. They are needed by April 1st. Thank you for your help!



Sunday Evening Lenten Services

This month, we begin our special Sunday evening worship services. Each Sunday evening, a Lay Speaker or staff member from our church is preaching a message of hope about the Easter season. Communion is served each week. We spend time in prayer. And we sing some GOOD songs! The weeks of Lent will feature these folks:

- Sunday, March 9th- Certified Lay Speaker Bill Joseph
- Sunday, March 16th- Director of Youth and Children's Ministries Melissa Farrell
- Sunday, March 23rd- Certified Lay Speaker Joanne Harris
- Sunday, March 30th- Certified Lay Speaker Linda Schrock
- Sunday, April 6th- Certified Lay Speaker Molly Joseph

Come each Sunday evening to support your fellow church members and experience very special worship services!



We would like to thank everyone who called, sent cards, and brought food from Caring Hearts after Max's back injury, and to Miriam Circle for the beautiful and delicious Valentine's platter! It was all deeply appreciated.

Max & Molly Paulsgrove

RELAY FOR LIFE

Our Aledo UMC team is currently forming for the 2014 Mercer County Relay for Life. It will be held Saturday, June 28th, in Central Park. See Pam Truman to join the team or help out. Also, mark your calendars for the Relay Kick-Off to be held at 6PM Friday, March 7th, at Mi Casa Mexican Restaurant . Mi Casa will donate 10% of sales that day to Relay. If you can't come to the Kick-off, please carry out or dine in that day to benefit the Relay event.

Pam Truman



RELAY FOR LIFE

The Aledo UMC Relay for Life Team will once again be collecting your loose change in pill bottles available at the back of the sanctuary. Monies raised will be given to the **Relay for Life of Mercer County** to be held on **Saturday, June 28th from noon until midnight**. Contact Pam Truman for information on how you can be on our team or help in some way.

THANK YOU

Connie Shaw and Evelyn Yerkey would like to say "THANK YOU" to Miriam Circle for the lovely Valentine's plates! It was greatly appreciated!



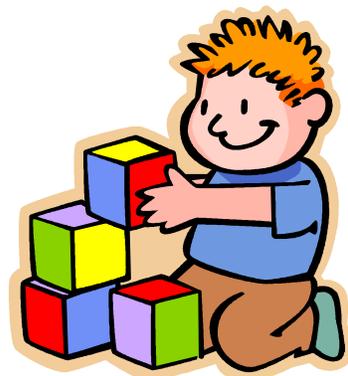
CHURCH WEBSITE



Have you looked at your church's website? If not, go to 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. 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!

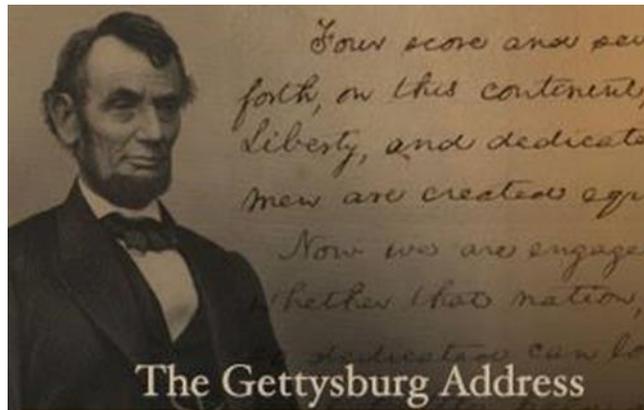
THE NURSERY

Perhaps one of the best-kept secrets at AUMC is our Nursery Program. Professionally staffed and lovingly tended, our Nursery is a great place to take your children! The main focus of our nursery is simple...care. Our goal is to provide a loving environment where the youngest among us can feel comfortable and safe. At the Aledo United Methodist Church, we truly believe that the children of our congregation are NOT simply the future of the church- they are very much an active, important part of the PRESENT of the church! We strive to take good care of them while offering them a glimpse of...THE KINGDOM!



SIMPLE IS GOOD!

I Cor. 2:1-5 (NIV): And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Holy Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power.



Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, upon this continent, a new nation. President Abraham Lincoln wrote and delivered his Gettysburg Address in November 1863. Lincoln reportedly wrote this speech on the train between Washington and Gettysburg.

As presidential speeches go, it's one of the shortest, coming in at less than three hundred words. Maybe that's why it has stood the test of time.

Paul shares a valuable lesson that Lincoln must have known: THERE IS POWER IN SIMPLICITY. When your message is true--as Paul's was--you don't need to hide behind superlatives and hype. In fact, the hoopla often detracts from the focus of what you're trying to accomplish.

I'm not arguing for poorly written or inane communication (neither Paul nor Lincoln insulted their readers' intelligence), but take a look at YOUR message. DO YOU NEED A SUPERLATIVE FILTER?

DEAR HEAVENLY FATHER, OFTEN TIMES WE TRY TO SHARE YOUR MESSAGES IN OUR POWER THROUGH FEEBLE HUMAN WORDS...WE GET CAUGHT UP IN MAKING THINGS OVERLY COMPLICATED, ONCE AGAIN RELYING ON OUR OWN STRENGTH. AUTHOR & FINISHER OF OUR FAITH, I PRAY YOUR DISCERNMENT AND ALL CONSUMING PASSION ON OUR LIVES. MAY WE SEEK YOUR HOLY SPIRIT'S POWER IN DELIVERING THE GOSPEL OF YOUR REDEEMING GRACE. AMEN!!!

Melissa Farrell
Director of Youth &
Children's Ministries



Junior High: 5-7pm
Senior High: 7-9pm

COME CONNECT WITH US IN PRAYER

WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP

Each *Tuesday* at 1:30pm
& 3pm in the Fellowship
Room

PRAYER WALK
through the church every
Sunday morning at 7am



CUNNINGHAM CHILDREN'S HOME'S BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

Please remember to bring your box tops to church! There is a clear plastic collection box on the desk in the Library area of the Fellowship Room. These will be taken to the UMW Spring Meeting on **April 12th**. Gift cards are also always appreciated. **Cunningham Children's Home** appreciates all we do to help them in their mission to help children!

FINANCIAL MATTERS (WEEKLY NEED \$5,768)

Date	02/02	02/09	02/16	02/23
Attendance	195	241	223	208
Receipts	\$6,738.25	\$5,240.00	\$4,847.16	\$3,971.00



**JOIN US SUNDAY
EVENINGS @ 6PM FOR
MESSAGE, WORSHIP,
COMMUNION,
AND PRAYER.**

¹⁸ "Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
¹⁹ See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.
Isaiah 43:18-19