

The Flame

August 6, 2012

Christ United Methodist Church

Mission Camp: Seven years of service and still growing by Laura Widstrom

The last week of June marked Christ UMC's seventh annual Mission Camp, this year in Valparaiso, Ind. Mission Camp is a "another" work camp Christ UMC sponsors for high school youth and adults from other churches—not to be confused with the Senior High Work Camp that took place July 14–21. Mission Camp was the dream of Pastor Patty

Anderson after a request from a friend's church for Christ UMC to share some of the best of what they do in expressing the love of Jesus by making homes safer, drier, and warmer.

Concerned about our numbers at the time and overloading Senior High Work Camp, Patty came up with the idea of running a second camp for smaller churches to attend and using it as leadership training for our college students who are in that in-between phase moving from camper to leader.

Christ UMC still provides the core staff with support from other Mission Camp churches. The camp is directed by myself, Linda Bjur, and Steve Hudgin. Phyllis Melenas and Judi Thorn are the heroes in the kitchen, and Dennis Thorn is the troublemaker—oops, I mean trouble-shooter—to help work crews when they run into a challenge at their sites. This year, Christ UMC's Dan Robinson and Derek Hudgin joined six other college students from Mission Camp churches to offer leadership for the week, prepare lunch supplies, run materials to work sites, take pictures, and run the technical aspects of chapel.

We have participants from churches in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin, many who have come for the past seven years. In the time we have had together, the campers and adult leaders have become a community, staying in touch throughout the year and supporting one another.

This year we served at 10 different sites, painting, cleaning, weatherizing, installing doors, clearing brush,

repairing gates, drywalling, roofing, and living life alongside our residents for the week. Although the temperatures were in the 90s most days, the crews worked hard and completed all of the promised work.

At site 3, the resident had been in an industrial accident, leaving him as a double amputee. A poor attic insulation

job at his home left the ceilings sagging dangerously low. Our crews removed the old drywall, laid new insulation, and hung new drywall. One day, the crew also enjoyed the fabulous Puerto Rican cooking of their resident!

Site 5 was home to a disabled man who relied on an electric scooter for his mobility around the house and his transportation into town. Every week this resident "scooters" several miles

to and from church, despite weather conditions. The crew at his home scraped and painted the badly peeling paint. One of their favorite stories to share was when the resident snuck away and scooted to the store to bring them cherries as a treat during lunch and devotions.

On Thursday at camp, we host "resident night," inviting our residents and their families to join us for dinner and chapel. This year, we had more residents than ever as crews made strong relational connections with their residents and, in many situations, rekindled a love for Jesus through their gift of service and in conversations at the work site. Worshipping in a packed sanctuary with about 20 of our residents was easily the highlight of the week; we pray that those sparks of faith will grow into flames.

On behalf of the eight participating churches, we extend our thanks to Christ UMC for their prayer support and for loaning the work camp equipment. We welcome new groups into the Mission Camp family; if you know of a youth group that would enjoy this experience, please have them contact the Christ UMC office.



Journey with Jane



What re-connects you to your soul?

"Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters"
(Isaiah 55:1a, NRSV)

In our busy lives and also in times of desolation, it can be easy to lose track of our deepest knowledge of who God is in our lives. Upsetting events may knock us off our centers; times of illness or unemployment can leave us feeling shaky and uncertain. When we feel lost or separated from God, it's good to know what will help us reconnect.

What re-connects you to your soul? Is it scripture? Relationship? Nature? Music? Quotes?

Which scriptures bring you alive? When I was a teenager and going through hard times, I clung to John 14:18, "I will not leave you desolate; I am coming to you." (RSV). In my college years and 20s, I discovered Micah 6:8: "What does the LORD require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (NRSV). During theological struggles after my missionary service in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I read Isaiah 43:18-19, and these words jumped off the page: "Stop dwelling on past events and brooding over days gone by. I am about to do something new; can you not perceive it? Even through the wilderness I will make a way, and paths in the barren desert" (REB). And the longer passages of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 – 7) and Romans 8 make me whole again.

What about relationships? Are there people who help you know that you are loved? Do you need to visit with a treasured family member? A favorite neighbor? A wise soul? In every church I've served, there have been wise older members whose compassion flowed from them. I would visit them to bring comfort, and I would go away feeling restored. Sometimes on a bad day, a trip to the nursing home to see one of these saints is just what I need.

What about nature? Do you need a walk through the woods? Time out in the fields? A lazy day of fishing? I'm a water person, with my childhood shaped by the Pacific and Atlantic oceans and an adult love affair with Lake Michigan and Lake Erie. A couple of days ago I walked with a friend through Anderson Gardens and drew

strength from the ponds and waterfalls there. Time by water restores me.

For many of us, music is one of the key ways we hear God's voice. Years ago I heard a tenor sing, "If with all your hearts ye truly seek me," from Mendelssohn's oratorio Elijah. My heart melted then, and it still melts every time I hear that. We may receive a boost from Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." We all have favorite hymns or contemporary songs. I love "God of grace and God of glory" for its Social Gospel emphasis, and Sara Groves' "The other side of something" fills me with hope. Years ago when I was feeling blue, I heard "Blessed be the name" by Matt Redman, and I loved the reminder to bless God in good times and bad. What music speaks to you?

What about favorite quotes? Irenaeus of Lyon, who lived in the third century, wrote, "The glory of God is a human being fully alive." On a trip to Washington, DC, I discovered this quote from Eleanor Roosevelt: "We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face... we must do that which we think we cannot." I love the poetry of Wendell Berry, Naomi Shihab Nye, Mary Oliver (and now, Christine Swanberg). A good poem can set me right with the world.

In these waning days of summer, I encourage you to make space for God. Do those things (or make those visits) that remind you of God's love and care. Strengthened by that gift, may you return to the world renewed.

Peace,

Jane





Urgent Need: Volunteers to Help Paint the Preschool

There are two classrooms, cafeteria, play area, two stairwells and the foyer to paint at the preschool building. **Painting needs to be finished by August 27 if possible.** We will be painting afternoons, starting at noon, evenings until 8 or 9 p.m. and Saturdays, 9-4 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come and join us in a painting fellowship. Contact Betty Gibson at 815-282-4915(h) or 815-978-2329 (c) if you have some hours you can volunteer. We are doing this with short notice because other arrangements did not materialize and cost of having it done with outside painters would run between \$5,500-\$7,700.

This Month's Outreach Focus MAYA's House



**August 15—Alpine Center
August 22—Our Master's Center**

MAYA'S House is a drop-in center for children under five whose families are homeless. Open 8 a.m. to 1 pm. Monday through Friday, MAYA'S House provides children with a calm, pleasant, nurturing environment. Breakfast, lunch, and healthy snacks are provided, and clothing and supplies are always available to parents.

MAYA'S House endeavors to break the cycle of poverty and instill a moment of possibility in children. The staff believes that every seed planted will root, and when the moment is right, it will grow.

Visit www.christumc.cc to view a video about MAYA's house, or visit www.shelter-care.org for more information.

Welcome to Christ United Methodist Church!

**Alpine Center
(MAILING ADDRESS FOR
BOTH CENTERS):**
4509 Highcrest Road
Rockford, IL 61107
Phone: 815-399-5910
Office Hours: Monday—Friday
8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Sunday Worship Services
Blended Worship Services:
8:00 and 9:30 a.m.
Celebration Service: 11:00

Our Master's Center
5973 Darlene Drive
Rockford, IL 61109
Phone: (815)399-5910

Sunday Worship Service
9:30 a.m. Child care is available

Rev. Jane Eesley, Sr. Pastor
Rev. Laura Barkley, Sr. Assoc. Pastor
Rev. Sun Hyung Jo, Assoc. Pastor

because
there **IS** more to life.
www.christumc.cc
CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Flame is a monthly publication of Christ United Methodist Church, available by mail or at online at www.christumc.cc.

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Christ UMC Mission Statement

We will live out God's vision by

Gathering: introducing people to Jesus Christ,

Growing: moving from believer to follower, and

Going: making a Gospel impact beyond the church

Pork Chop Dinner

**Saturday, August 11, 5:00-7:00 p.m.
at Our Master's Center**

Come join us for a great pork chop dinner and fellowship. There will be children's events and the band Epiphany will play. **Cost will be \$8 for adults and \$4 for children ages 4-12.** Tickets will be sold between services in Fellowship Hall, at the church office, and at the door.

Summer ends with bang at Movie Night***Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back***

**Friday, August 24, 6:15 p.m.,
Coffee House, Alpine Center**

Join us for the 1980 George Lucas film *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (PG) at Movie Night at CUMC on Fri., Aug. 24. We'll get together at 6:15 p.m. in the Sacred Grounds Coffee House (Alpine Center) to fill our popcorn bowls. Munchies and drinks are provided. The free movie starts at 6:30 and a discussion follows. The evening ends by 9:30. The screen in the coffee house is pretty big and is a good one for watching a movie like this.

Children are welcome to come with their parents for the movie and discussion. If you prefer, **you may take young children to free child care in the church nursery if you make reservations with the church office (815 399-5910) at least a week in advance.**



**Here are some family
ministry events
to put on your calendar**

Saturday, August 11, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Pork Chop Dinner at Our Master's Center

We'll support this annual event at Our Master's Center. Join us for a great dinner and fellowship.

Friday, September 14, Movie Night at Our Master's Center Watch for more details to come soon.

We're looking for someone who has a popcorn machine that they would be willing to both loan and run on September 14. It would be great to have freshly made popcorn for movie night. If you can help with this, please let Pastor Laura know or call the church office at 815-399-5910.

**A Special Fall Education Opportunity
Come see and study the movie,
"Courageous"**

When a tragedy strikes close to home, four police officers struggle with their faith and their roles as husbands and fathers; together they make a decision...

One of the first things the new Men's Group did was enjoy going to see the movie "Courageous" together one Saturday morning. It made an impression. Life styles were re-evaluated. Relationships were changed. It is the pleasure of the CUMC men to host a series of showings of this box office success to not only those who enjoy worship at CUMC but to our neighbors in Rockford as well.

The first viewing will be on August 26th at 3:00 pm in the Our Master's Center sanctuary. This is intended to be the springboard that launches the showings on during the fall CUMC education series 6:15pm Wednesday evenings. Not only will we be interested in finding volunteers to lead short 4 week Bible Studies, associated with the movie, but distribute free tickets for the congregation to give to our friends, neighbors, and strangers to be our guest for Wednesday evening dinner & a movie. The movie will begin at 6:15 pm due to its 2hr 10min length on September 12, 19, 26, October 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31 in the Coffee House, Alpine Center.

It bears repeating that we will be showing the same film each Wednesday. The message & the presentation deserve to be heard & seen. The church helping that experience is a part of our charter "Gather, Grow, Go". **This is open to men and women.**

CUMC Senior Fellowship Group

**Friday, August 17, at noon,
Dining Room, Alpine Center**

Come and join this group for those who are age 65 or better for a wonderful homemade lunch and fellowship with your friends. After lunch, we'll have a program by Dennis Sweeney, who will speak about his trip to Peru and about the United Methodist presence there.. You won't want to miss this inspirational story.

Call the church office at 815-399-5910 to make your reservation by Monday, August 13. Please join us!

WOWS Group**Widows or Widowers and Singles**

September 19 at 12:30 p.m.

Ciao Bella Restaurant

We will meet for lunch at Ciao Bella on East Riverside on Wednesday, September 19, at 12:30 p.m. For reservations call Donna Simmons at 815-877-5381 by Monday, September 17. See you there.



Sympathy to Pat Sample and the family
on the death of Rev. Darrell Sample.
Rev. Sample served as Christ UMC's second pastor.

The memorial service will be on Saturday,
August 11, at 11:00 a.m. in Riverside Community
Church, 6816 North Second Street, with visitation
from 9:30 a.m. until service time.

In lieu of flowers, memorials to VNA Hospice,
Riverside Community Church or
Wesley Willows Good Samaritan Fund.

United Methodist Men Spiritual Congress, 2012

The 2012 United Methodist Men Spiritual Congress will be held September 14th - 16th at Conference Point, Williams Bay, WI. This event is geared toward personal spiritual formation for men. This weekend will also feature a showing of the movie "Courageous" on Saturday evening, followed by a bonfire. Brochures with registration forms are available at the Connection Center. More information is also available on the website at www.NICUMM.org.

Blessing of the Backpacks

Mark your calendar for Sunday, August 19

Children, youth, and teachers are invited to bring their backpacks to worship at all services on August 19. We will have a special time of blessing each backpack.

Hospitality at CUMC

People have asked. What does it cost to provide a cup of coffee to persons? It is \$.65. This does not include extras like cookies, lemonade etc. This does not account for the rising costs expected this fall. Needless to say the church's budget underwrites a good part of our hospitality budget. If you are able to put extra money in the basket when you have a cup of coffee or glass of lemonade, it will be appreciated.

Sharing this information is not to diminish our strong emphasis on hospitality. Hospitality has a strong Biblical emphasis. Hospitality has us seeing each other as Jesus sees us and seeing Jesus in the people God brings to us. (Paraphrase taken from *5 Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, page 13.)

Birthday Celebration at

Our Master's Center September 23

On September 23, following the church service at 9:30, we will be celebrating Lois Rolander's 90th birthday. Please join us in wishing her a happy birthday!

New Member Session on November 4

Our next new member session will be Sunday, November 4, 2012, 4:30-7:30 p.m. Alpine Center. The session will include supper and child care. If you are interested in joining Christ UMC as part of your discipleship journey, please contact Gayle George at the church office, 815-399-5910, or email her at gayleGeorge@christumc.cc. New members will be received on November 11 at the service of your preference.

United Methodist Women Cookie Walk Help Needed

The UMW annually have a Cookie Walk, usually in December. We would like to continue this event, but if we aren't able to obtain volunteers we will have to cancel this worthwhile fund raiser. If you would like to help in this project, call Arlene Earleywine, 815-885-1583.

CROP Walk Results from 2011

Last year's CROP Hunger Walk in the Greater Rockford area was the fourth largest walk in Illinois and raised nearly \$47,000. More than \$11,700 went to the Great Rockford Pantry Coalition. The rest is addressing crisis situations from tornado destruction in America's Midwest, to earthquakes in many areas, as well as worldwide hunger relief through Church World Service. Christ UMC was among the top six givers last year. Let's increase our giving in 2012 to help feed those in need.

Here are the top six givers last year:

Second Con UCC	\$2,724
Christ UMC	\$2,294
Westminster Presbyterian	\$2,041
Christ Lutheran	\$2,026
Woodside UCC	\$1,900
First Presbyterian	\$1,830



UMW Circle Schedule

The United Methodist Women invite all women of the church to their circle meetings. Visitors are welcome and encouraged! To learn more about each circle, Contact Carla White-Carpenter at 815-885-3425

Out to Lunch Bunch

Thursday, August 30 at 12:30 p.m.

At Ciao Bella Ristorante

6500 E. Riverside Blvd., Loves Park

Call Rickie Andersen at 815-885-4373 or email r.andersen@comcast.net to make your reservations.

Rebekah Circle

Rebekah Circle will be meeting for the start of our new season in the Coffee House, Alpine Center at **9:30 a.m.** on Wednesday, **September 12**. We will be discussing our future events and new plans and direction for our circle. Please plan on being there. We welcome anyone who would like to visit and see if you would like to be part of our circle. If we can answer your questions, please call Mary English at 815-397-4883 or Marion Kern at 815-227-0711, or Donna Gillette at 815-397-9053.

Harmony Circle

The **September 11th** meeting will be held at the home of Betty Nelson at **9:30 AM**. We will be continuing our study of Amazing Grace and will be doing chapter Eleven, A Home for Bastards, and Chapter Twelve, No Oddballs Allowed. This will be our first meeting of the season and if anyone is interested in studying with us you are welcome. Contact Jo Hellmich if you need any information at 815-639-3074.

Tender Loving Crafts Resale

Please remember to set aside clothing you no longer need for the resale at TLC. We are looking for sizes women, misses and juniors. Sweaters, blouses, slacks, jeans, skirts, scarves, purses and jewelry are needed. Also winter coats and jackets. Any items not sold will be given to a charitable organization.

Collection will begin on September 1 at the church and there will be a drop off site announced. All proceeds from this sale will go to the church to be spent as needed.

Tender Loving Crafts Show and Sale on October 20, 2012

It is not too early to start planning. If you have talent, you can begin making your crafts, needlework, or other handmade items. We need many items for our own missions booth, so get busy now!

We have only seven 9x10 spaces in the basement left to rent at \$40 each. For information or to reserve your booth call Diane Kirkland at 815-885-1757. All proceeds go to missions. To make this another successful show and sale, we need everyone's help. Don't put it off!

Please Volunteer to Help with Funeral Luncheons

We encourage you to volunteer for this rewarding and much needed service to CUMC members. While funerals are a time of sadness, they are also a time of bonding with our church family as we work together to bring comfort to those in mourning. Volunteers can donate salads or bars, or perhaps make new acquaintances while helping on the serving committee.

If this is a mission you are interested in please call Joyce Lantz at 815-282-5008. If you have questions ask any of the following leaders -- Margaret Newell, Marion Kern, Wilma Porter or Joyce Lantz.

"But I Don't Have An Address" Christ United Methodist Women's Fall Kick-Off

**Monday, August 27, 2012
7:00 PM in the Dining Room,
Alpine Center**

All CUMC members and their friends are invited to join us to learn all about the homeless children who are enrolled in Rockford Public Schools and the services which are provided to encourage school attendance and success. Elmer Rice, Homeless Student Advocate for the Rockford Public Schools Homeless Service Program, will speak and answer questions.

A free will offering will be taken to support the program. Please join us and invite your friends and neighbors.

UMW Greeting Cards at Alpine Center

**On Sale August 12 and 26 in Fellowship Hall,
Alpine Center**

If you have never visited our display, please stop by and check out the cards!

Coins in August

The Northern Illinois Conference entered into partnership with the Methodist Church of Bolivia in June, 2008. This relationship includes:

- Leadership training
 - Volunteers in Mission teams to help build and restore facilities in Bolivia
 - Medical teams to support health ministries in Bolivia
 - Social justice work to support indigenous people
- The Bolivia Partnership is a Rainbow Covenant option. Coins given during Sunday morning offerings in August will go for the Bolivia Partnership.



Save the Date!
Informational Meeting
About Foster Care

Monday, August 13
6:30 p.m. in the Dining Room,
Alpine Center

There will be a presentation by Lutheran Social Services and Pastor Laura Barkley will be present to answer questions. If you have ever thought about being a foster parent, this is a time to get your questions answered. The need is great and loving foster parents are in great demand. Child care will be provided but you must request it by calling the church office at 815-399-5910, by August 10.

Next New Member Session
Sunday, November 4, 4:30-7:30 p.m.,
Alpine Center

The session will include supper and child care. If you are interested in joining Christ UMC as part of your discipleship journey, please contact Gayle George at the church office, 815-399-5910, or email her at gaylegeorge@christumc.cc. New members will be received on November 11 at the service of your preference.

Prayer and Meditation Garden
Planning Meeting

Sunday, September 2, 3:00 p.m. Dining Room,
Alpine Center

All gardeners and those who love gardens are invited to a brain-storming session to begin renovation ideas for the prayer and meditation garden at the church. Come with ideas for location, designs, plans, and other creative thoughts.

CUMC is filled with so many great gardeners and people who might not garden themselves, but have creative ideas!

We hope that God's will for this garden will be fulfilled by the efforts of the many talented people of our church!

If you have questions, call Marco Revoredo at 847-409-4438.

New Bishop for the
Northern Illinois Conference

The North Central Jurisdictional Conference has approved the assignment of Bishop Hee-Soo Jung to the Wisconsin Annual Conference and has assigned Bishop Sally Dyck as the new bishop in the Northern Illinois Conference. This change will be effective September 1.

We celebrate Bishop Jung's eight years of ministry and service to the Northern Illinois Conference and welcome Bishop Dyck, who comes to Northern Illinois from the Minnesota Annual Conference.

Sign up to be a Communion Server at
Alpine Center

If you attend the 8:00 or 11:00 worship service at Alpine Center, and would like to serve communion at one of the services, please sign up at the Connection Center or contact Gayle George at 815-399-5910 or

Tuesday Book Group Resumes
September 4

The Tuesday Night Book Discussion Group is getting an early start on their fall reading. The group will begin on September 4, 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the Trinity building, Alpine Center, with *The River of God: A New History of Christian Origins* (2001) by Gregory J. Riley. New people are always welcomed. Buy or borrow the book yourself, or contact Mary English at 815-397-4883, who will order a used book for you. This group operates like a book club, though it usually discusses just a chapter or two per week.



Music Ministry at Christ United Methodist Church

*"Come, let us sing to the Lord! Let us give a joyous shout
to the rock of our salvation." Psalm 95:1*

*Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet!
Praise him with harp and lyre!
Praise him with tambourine and dancing!
Praise him with stringed instruments and flute!
Praise him with loud cymbals!
Praise him with resounding cymbals!
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!
From Psalm 150*

**On September 6, we will begin
rehearsals for the Chancel Choir at Our
Master's Center, and the Sanctuary Choir
and Wesley Ringers at Alpine Center.
We would love to have YOU join us.**

The **Wesley Ringers** rehearses on Thursdays at 6:00-7:15p.m. in the balcony of the Alpine Center, and generally plays at the 8:00 and 9:30 worship Services once a month. The ability to read music and a desire to play bells is all that is required. The Wesley Ringers are under the direction of Donald Fraser.

The **Chancel Choir** rehearses on Thursdays from 7:00-8:30p.m. in the Our Master's Center Sanctuary, and sings during 9:30 worship all but the last Sunday of each month. The Chancel Choir is directed by Becky Keith. There is an opportunity to sing with the Joyful

Noise Praise Team on the last Sunday of the month under the direction of Pastor Sun Hyun Jo.

The **Sanctuary Choir** rehearses on Thursdays from 7:30-9:00p.m. in the choir room of Alpine Center, and sings two Sundays a month during the 8:00 and 9:30 worship services. If you can't commit to the full year which is September through May, you might consider singing September through December, which includes our annual Christmas Cantata on Sunday, December 16, or January through May, which includes music for Holy Week and Easter. The Sanctuary Choir is under the direction of Donald Fraser.

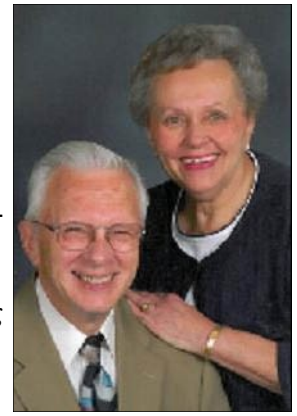
If you love music, and are high school age or older, we would love to have you join us.

For more information about the Chancel Choir or the Joyful Noise Praise Team, please contact Becky Keith at 815-637-4427 or becky.keith@comcast.net.

For more information about the Sanctuary Choir or Wesley Ringers, please contact Jody Warren at the church office at 815-399-5910 or jodywarren@christumc.cc.



Leland and Sandy Cottrell



Two familiar faces are missing at the doors of the 8 a.m. service at Alpine Center since Leland and Sandy Cottrell recently retired from ushering. They were the only ushers for that service when Christ UMC initiated the early service about 15 years ago. Another couple joined them after about 12 months, and then others through the years, but they continued to serve because, as Sandy said, “You want to be a part of your church.”

Sandy came to Christ UMC after Rev. Miller spoke at Baccalaureate for her Rockford East High School graduation, and her parents liked him. She and Leland were married at Alpine Center and have been a part of this church for many years. They left for a few years when they lived in New Milford, but returned when they moved back into Rockford in the early 1970s. When asked why they have remained members since then, Sandy replied, “It’s where your friends are. It’s just home.” It is the place where she met and married her husband, and where their daughter was baptized.

Leland and Sandy learned early on that being involved in the church is an opportunity to make new friends, and they clearly enjoy the fellowship. Through the years they have used their gifts and talents to serve our church and community together and individually. Besides ushering together, they have also worked on the Thanksgiving baskets.

Leland uses his knowledge and skills to work with fellow parishioners on Habitat for Humanity homes. Sandy has shared her artistic talents with the quilting group and working to redo the stained glass windows in the sanctuary. She is also active with the United Methodist Women, helping with Tender Loving Crafts. Often, friends in the church led them to their next activities. “One thing leads to another,” said Sandy.

As the years and health have slowed their participation, they were surprised and a bit embarrassed to learn they were the subject of the Inspired Faith article. Giving their time to their church is just a part of who they are and what they do.

Leland and Sandy will tell you that participating at Christ UMC has added to their lives. In Sandy’s words, “There is so much that you can do. Everyone should have a chance to do things, to be able to meet more people in their church, to be able to become friends. Being involved is a chance to make more friends.” It is clear that they have made many friends through the years while using their gifts in service of their church and community. Their faith shines through their service.

by Judy Davison

(Velva Unger, continued from back page)

together. They were married in 1942, and children came in ’44, ’48, and ’54.

Their daughter Jean lives in Rockford and daughter Ann lives in Virginia, while their son, Dennis, lives in Indiana. She has four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Donald worked for ComEd as a line supervisor, she said. He retired after 35 years with the company. In the later years he was transferred to Rockford, but they decided to continue living in Dixon, so he commuted.

Velva was a stay-at-home Mom when the children were small. Later she drove a school bus for about 14 years.

In Dixon Velva served as church secretary, taught Sunday school, and was on many church committees. Then she became executive secretary of a high rise for low-income families—in about 100 apartments on six floors—for about 12 years.

As church secretary, she had done some work for the Dixon ministerial association, which was trying to start a day care center, but got no response to advertisements.

“I got some people together and we visited,” she said.

The day care started in a Methodist Church with five children. It grew and grew, moving into an old church and later to a building at the Ronald Reagan Museum. Later known as Open Sesame Child Care Center, the non-profit organization constructed its own building for children 6 weeks to 12 years old. Today it cares for 200 kids.

“It has a nice building, and a nice playground,” she said. “I just love that all of those children are cared for.” She served on the organization’s board about 20 years.

At Church of the Brethren, Velva and Donald were named Volunteers of the Month for their help with immigrants and with Meals on Wheels and Feed the Children, which provided breakfast to hungry schoolchildren.

They were involved with families from the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Hong Kong, and Laos. She remembers one family that had sewn their valuables into their skirts and another family that made tea from poisonous leaves.

She chose Christ UMC after “shopping around” for a church because it also had quilting and a day care center.

Velva enjoys reading and travel, like when the couple went to Alaska and Switzerland.

Jesus, the Very Thought of You
 Attributed to Bernard of Clairvaux (1091–1153)
 Translated by Edward Caswell (1814–1878)

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
 With sweetness fills my breast;
 But sweeter far Thy face to see,
 And in Thy presence rest.

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can
 frame,
 No can the memory find
 A sweeter sound than Thy blest
 name,
 O Savior of mankind!

O Hope of every contrite heart,
 O Joy of all the meek,

To those who fall, how kind
 Thou art!
 How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find?
 Ah, this
 Nor tongue nor pen can show;
 The love of Jesus, what it is
 None but His loved ones know.

Jesus, our only joy be Thou,
 As Thou our prize wilt be;
 Jesus, be Thou our glory now,
 And through eternity.

*Taken with permission from
 The One Year Great Songs of Faith,
 Tyndale House Publishers, 1995*



Knowing God is a matter of the heart. This truth dominated the life of Bernard of Clairvaux. At a very early age Bernard was drawn to spiritual things, largely influenced by the piety of his mother. At twenty-two he entered a monastery at Citeaux, and three years later he founded a monastery at Clairvaux, serving as its spiritual leader until he died in 1153.

In spite of his many pressing responsibilities and frequent travel, Bernard never lost sight of what he prized most—the love of Jesus. God’s love was Bernard’s lifeblood, pulsing through everything he said and did. His knowledge of God was deeply personal, a mystical love affair that not only gave meaning to his life on earth but formed his vision of heaven. As Bernard said, “{God} is Himself the reward of those who love Him, the eternal reward of those who love Him for eternity.”

Shelby Martin Fundraising Update

We have a few fundraisers on the horizon. Proceeds go to Shelby’s COTA fund for costs associated with her life-saving liver transplant!

Friday August 24th - BBQ to Go at CUMC. Our BBQ expert Becky Keith will be cooking up a mouth-watering barbeque dinner that you can take home or find a spot on the lawn to picnic with your family and friends. This will include North Carolina style pulled pork bbq with bun, two sides—choose from coleslaw, potato salad, macaroni salad, bag of chips. Service from 4:00-7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall, Alpine Center. Cost is \$8.00 per person, family pack (feeds 4) is \$25.00. We might have cold canned drinks for sale for those who want to stay to eat their dinner.

Sunday September 16th – Shelby Palooza!

At the Tebala Shrine, 7910 Newburg Rd. in Rockford.
Doors open at 1:00, entertainment starts at 1:30.

Here’s the entertainment schedule:

- 1:30-2:30 - Vintage Vinyl
- 3:00-4:00 - Missing Links
- 4:15-4:45 - Rockford magician Magic Mike
- 5:15-6:15 - Band of the Lost
- 6:45-7:45 - Mr. Big Stuff

Tickets are \$15 in advance for adults, \$20 at the door, available starting in early August at the church office and Postal Shoppe locations. Kids are \$5. There will be food available for purchase, a cash bar, 50/50 raffle, and silent auction. Magic Mike will be the MC and will entertain with magic through the crowd while the bands are switching over, so it will be fun for adults and kids. A poster and postcards are being designed and will also be printed in early August. They will be available for people who want to put them up at locations they know. Call Amy Nickel to get posters or postcards at 815-227-4425.





Children's Ministry News

August, 2012

Summer Sunday School

During the summer, we change things up a little in Children's Ministry in regards to Sunday School.

At the Our Master's Center, Nursery care remains available for infants-kindergarteners at the 9:30 worship service. Older children are encouraged to worship in the sanctuary with their families. There are activity bags on a coat rack outside the sanctuary that children are welcome to take into worship.

At the Alpine Center, classes are combined and modified for a more flexible summer schedule that allows more opportunity for families to worship together.

This summer we will be doing a combination of our Orange curriculum Sunday school lessons and Christian themed movies and popcorn. See the column to the right for details.

Children are asked to remain in the class they have been attending during the previous school year, and we will graduate together to our new classes in September.

If you are interested in helping out with summer Sunday school there are still a few Sunday's available for you to sign up! Please contact Erika Coffey at the church office: 815-399-5910

August 11th - Pork Chop Dinner

Join us for a fun night at Our Masters Center! There will be a variety of games for children including a Bounce House, music and great food.

August 15th - Summer Wednesday Night Live

This will be our last session of Awana for the summer.

Looking ahead:

September 2nd - No Sunday School

September 9th - Sunday School Kick Off

September 12th - Fall session of Awana begins

September 23rd - Third grade Bibles

Alpine Center, Summer Schedule

8:00am Worship Hour

Nursery care is available for all infants and children

9:30am Worship Hour

Infants-Pre-School: Nursery
Kindergarten-5th Grade: Begin in sanctuary, dismissed downstairs to Sunday School Room 1 following the Children's Sermon

11:00am Worship Hour

Infants-Pre-School: Nursery
Kindergarten-5th Grade: Begin in sanctuary, dismissed downstairs to Sunday School Room 1 following the Children's Sermon

Our Master's Center, Summer Schedule

9:30am Worship Hour

Infants- Kindergarten: Nursery
1st-6th Grade: Pick up an activity bag and join your family for in worship in the sanctuary



Birthdays and Anniversaries



August 11
Dawn Truitt
Elizabeth Hicks
Rachael Williams

August 12
Debbi Thurston
Helen Englehart
Patty Armstrong
Bev Johannes
Virginia O'Brien
Elizabeth Freethy

August 13
Julianna Edwards
Scott Springer
Jonah Barkley
Jaci Riggins
Deb Price
Eric Riha
Bob Hicks

August 14
Simone Rehak
Grace Jewell
Noah Reisetter
Kamryn Mattis
Martin Lurvey
Donna Simmons
Betty Lego

August 15
Beckie Dzik
Ralph Erickson
Maurice Lin
Dave Wehmeyer

Ed Rounds
Jane Gottlick
Kylie Kuba
Ken Harper

August 16
Natalie Magnus
Elena Saez-Gimeno
Lawrence Kisseih

August 17
Shae Page
Hailey Hunter
Jaime Arreguin
Stacy Binkowski
Carol Wehmeyer
Jeff Watts
Brent Card

August 18
Betty Mumma
Madilyn Taylor
Lee Johnson
Jenny Hunter
Becky Childs

August 19
Randy Volz
Thatcher Muldowney
Greg Deppe
Rebecca Mann
Zoe Beard
Dennis Gay
Karen Hornsby
Tom Schwalbach

August 20
Dean Dion
Marla Wainwright
Michael Stone
Lori Umenhofer
Deb Laskey

August 21
Jake Bloyer
Houston Mahurin
Marla Raffety

August 22
Emma Harper
Will Rodgers
Linda Wyatt
Beverly Smith
Joyce Reeves

August 23
Abby Layng
Lenore Lund
Sue Pedersen
Jack Schroeder

August 24
Elton Miller
Betty Nelson
Virg Wilson
Michelle Hult
Lindsay Melling
Dennis Rinaldi

August 25
Mary Padgett
Louis Cacciatore
Debbie Gustafson
Jillian Eilers
John Truitt
Noelle Brown

August 26
Sheryl Masters
Nancy Watson
Ashley Schwabero

August 27
Megan Gale
Priscilla Carr
Jenna Card
Rich Schultz
Teri Reynolds

Sandy Aarvig
Hunter Klenz
Paul Sackley
Andrea Rodger
Risè Barker
Kailynn Poynor
Mark Lundvall

August 28
Gretchen Poffinbarger
Chad Atkinson
Vivian McKelvey
Jeanne Steinmetz
Keira Burton
Lisa Blume

August 29
Jeff Nevel
Kyle Kneller
DJ Williams
Ella Prentice
Rich Fisher
Karen Weedman

August 30
Jason Woodard
Carol Parker
Joseph Bradel
Jordan Kurth
Susan Pomatto
Dawn Russell

August 31
Emily Myers
Myles Garcell

September 1
Renée Johnson
Grant Flodin
Don Francis

September 2
Aidan Clancy
Rita Beard

Janelle Calow
Vivian Knapp

September 3
Joshua Roberson

September 4
Ron Janecek
Mary Murata
John Armstrong
Sunil Chhatpar
Keane Tuschen
Peg Giannangeli
Ann Mathers
Linda Bjur

September 5
David Zimmerman
Pat Rinaldi
Vicki Lynn
Lynn Moczynski
Sue Sarauer
September 6
Chris Vipond-Keenan
Justin Shula
Robb Olson
Sandy Revoredo
Brenda Christiansen

September 7
Angie Harms
Ruth Klontz



August 11
Jerilyn Halpin and
Don Schauer

August 12
Peter and Jane Gottlick
Bob and Jan Noble
Paul and Joan Wallem

August 13
Morrie and Carol Earnest
Phil and Sally Plath

August 14
Michael and Sherrill
Muller

August 15
Art and Fran Kneller
Bill and Beth Lipton

August 16
Bill and Penny Cacciatore
Phil and Karen Grover
Tom and Bonnie McLeod

August 17
Ray and Janet Baker
Ken and Sue McMillin
Barry and Caroline Mikels
Paul and Michelle Myers
Craig and Debbie Rogers
Ed and Mary Anne Rounds
Daniel and Lisa Sargent

August 18
Jack and Connie Croffoot
Ryan and Kari Cullen

August 20
Dave and Cheri Carlson
Norm and Pat Hagman
Ray and Wilma Porter

August 21
John and Ann Daniels
Jack and Barb Hansen

August 22
Phillip and Emily Behnke
Jeff and Donna Kirk
Jim and Sandy Welte

August 23
Amy and Patrick Craig

Steve and Jane Kiley
Bob and Deb Laskey
Jerry and Meredith Nagles

August 24
David and Sandy Aarvig
Jeff and Jennifer Bockhop
Jeff and Jean Kearney
Dana and Brenda Kiley
Rex and Carol Parker
Tom and Britta Peterson

August 26
Roger and Jackie Dawson
Fred and Judy Raffety
John and Tammy Schmitt
James and Linda Wyatt

August 27
Todd and Denise Eilers
Roger and Margaret Newell
Michael and Darcy Wilson
Brad and Julia Zimmerman

August 28
Don and Suzy Black
Greg and Courtney Klein
Bruce and Gloria Lauher

August 29
Brian and Debbie Istad
Mike and Amy Nelson
Jim and Pat Vandiver

August 30
Mike and Lynda Moser

August 31
Terry and Gretchen
Poffinbarger

September 1
Don and Beth Hajek
John and Robbie Mink
John and Sue Murray

September 2
Leonard and Laurie Pink
Dennis and Mary Ann Priewe
John and Sue Spitzer

September 3
Dale and Nancy DeHart
Ken and Marion Kern
Dave and Jane Picken

September 4
Steve and Barb
Kaiser
Matt and Ashley
Schwabero

September 6
Frank and
Helen Laine

- **From Donna Simmons**

I can't thank you enough for all of your cards, calls and visits while I was recovering from a broken ankle at St. Anne's Center. When Emily brought the beautiful prayer shawl, I really felt your love and support! The visits from Reverend Sun were wonderful. God bless you all!

- **From Jim and Sandy Welte**

Our church family is definitely supportive and we want you all to know how appreciative we are for Pastors Jane and Laura, and so many of you, for your prayers, visits, cards, cares and concerns while Jim was in the hospital. We humbly thank you and ask God's blessing for you all.

- **From The Martin 5: Scott, Jennifer, Riley, Shelby, and Avery**

Thank you so much for all the support you have given and continue to give to our family during Shelby's wait for her liver transplant and now during her recovery. The meals, monetary gifts, gift cards, support of her fundraisers, and most of all, prayers, were and are greatly appreciated. She is doing amazingly well and we are so pleased that she has been able to resume several "normal" kid activities so soon post-transplant. She still has some restrictions due to being very immunosuppressed and we cannot wait until she is able to do **all** activities. Please choose to be an organ donor. Do it in honor of Shelby. Do it for the 114,000+ people in the U.S. who still wait. Make sure you have let your family know or have it marked on your driver's license.

- **From Sharyn Booth and family: Laura, Steve, and Mike**

A special thank you to the prayer chain members for offering faithful prayers for my ex-husband, George Booth, who has endured a long, courageous battle with an aggressive form of cancer. He is presently in the end stages of the disease with hospice involvement. Again, my family and I appreciate the hope, faith, and courage your prayers provided for us during this difficult journey.

- **Soup Kitchen Update**

On June 9 our youth and adults including Brittany and Lisa Jewell, Shane Hough, Kathy Gibbons, Rich Gibbons, Becky, Alex & Katie Childs, and Curt Sidener served at Emmanuel Lutheran Soup Kitchen. Thank you to Becky Keith for preparing the food.

On June 10, a team lead by Annette Hosmann served 192 meals of chicken, at the Soup Kitchen. Those serving included Tom Hosmann, Penny Cacciatore and sister Rhonda, Curt & Geneve Harris, Jolene Unangst and Sue Clark. Thank you to all for your hard work and dedication to serve the hungry.

- **From Wilma Porter**

Thank you for the many thoughtful cards and prayers at the time of my brother's death.

- **Funeral Luncheon Thank You from Wilma Porter**

On Thursday, July 19, The United Methodist Women served a funeral luncheon for the family and friends of Ruth Ahlstrand.

Thank you to the following persons for furnishing the delicious salads and dessert bars. Salads: Jo Mohrmann, Arlene Earleywine, Donna Gillette, Joan Gray, Rhea Hoyt, Linda Slife, Rickie Andersen, Renée Johnson, Mary English, and Arlene Persinger. Dessert bars: Donna Copeland, Mary Gassmann, Jane Gilbert, Donna Kirk, and Lynda Moser.

A special thank you to Donna Simmons for making these arrangements.

Thank you also to those who prepared and served the luncheon; so many hands make light work: Donna Kirk, Gennie Schultz, Sharon Snyder, Martha Ritter, Marilyn Rothermel, Maryann Leonard, Joyce Lantz, and Margaret Newell.

The Church is People

Sympathy to:

Al and LeeAnn Mowbray on the death of Al's father

Pat Sample on the death of her husband, Rev. Darrell Sample

Kathy and Kristi Fane on the death of a loved one

The family and friends of Ruth Ahlstrand, who died on July 15

Chuck and Joyce Lantz and family on the death of Chuck's brother, Rex

Jerilyn Halpin and Don Schauer on the death of Don's mother, Maryann Schauer, on July 5

Baptisms:

Ella Simone Holtze, daughter of Brian and Kathy Holtze on July 29

Cullen Andrew Schulz, son of Steven and Narina Schulz

Wedding:

Marriage of Chris Denklaub and Rachel Rubino on July 27

Adoption and Foster Care Ministry

We are excited to be launching Christ United Methodist's Foster Care and Adoption Ministry. Here are a few opportunities for you to plug in to this new ministry!

Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you. -- James 1:27

As I started our journey to foster care, one of the things that surprised me most was the lack of support groups for those who are fostering and/or adopting. Many people have sought out the internet through yahoo groups, facebook groups, etc. to experience a sense that they are not in it alone and receive the encouragement that one needs. I spent time in prayer asking God what specifically our church could do and I received a clear answer (with a lot of affirmation afterwards) that providing a Foster Care and Adoption Support Group would greatly benefit our community. Starting in the Fall, Christ UMC will host such a group on the Second Sundays from 4-7 p.m. Our kick-off will be **Sunday September 9th**. We invite foster care or adoption families to come and experience fellowship and support. We will start off with dinner for the whole family and then the parents will have a time of support while providing the kids with childcare and fun games. We are looking for committed people to help with these events. Specifically, we are in need of people who would like to help provide a safe and fun environment for the children that come to these support groups. Anyone volunteering will be required to undergo a background check in accordance with our church's Safe Sanctuaries policy. Additionally, we would appreciate anyone who would like to volunteer to provide beverages or desserts. I am excited to see where God will take this new ministry. I have been amazed at the conversations that have happened since I prayerfully considered this new ministry. I truly believe that Christ UMC can be a beacon of light to our community's children and parents. I look forward to sharing in this ministry with you!

Pastor Laura

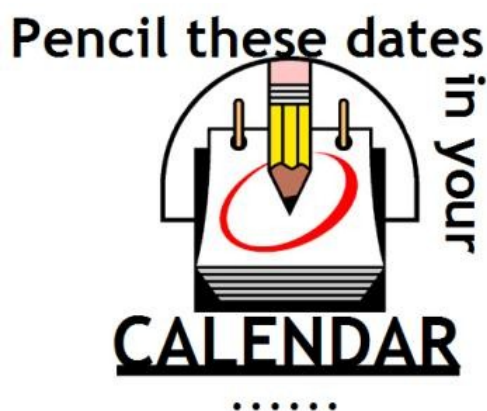
Calling All Painters!!

Recently, I had the opportunity to accompany one of our foster children on a visit at Lutheran Social Services. It was good for me to see the visit through this child's eyes. Children are brought to these offices and they visit with their parent(s) and/or siblings. It can be a time of great emotion. The agency has tried to make this space as welcoming as it can with toys and movies for the kids to play with. However, these offices could use a fresh coat of paint and to paint a child-friendly mural could make this space more welcoming and less intimidating for the children as they enter. If you would like to be a part of making this transformation happen please call Pastor Laura 815-399-5910.

Would you like to make the difference in a life of a child?

If the answer is yes, we have an opportunity for you! The state of Illinois (as most other states) has a shortage of foster homes. **On August 13th at 6:30 p.m. in the Dining Room, Alpine Center**, we will be hosting an informational session about foster care. Lutheran Social Services will provide a program and answer any questions you may have about how foster care works. If you would like to come and see if you might be able to provide a safe and loving home to a child in need or to find out more information to be able to share with other potential foster parents, we encourage you to come. Childcare will be provided for those that need it, we just ask that you call ahead so that we can make adequate arrangements. For any questions or to sign up for childcare, please call Pastor Laura at 815-399-5910.





Upcoming Events: Save the Date

- August 11**—Pork Chop Dinner, 5:00—7:00 p.m. at Our Master's Center
- August 13**—Informational Meeting on Foster Care, 6:30 p.m., Dining Room, Alpine Center
- August 19**—Blessing of the Backpacks at all services
- August 24**—Fundraiser for Shelby Martin—Shel-B-Q—4:00-7:00 p.m., Alpine Center
- August 26**—Kick off showing of the film, "Courageous" at Our Master's Center, 3:00 p.m.
- August 27**—Fall UMW Kickoff, 7:00 p.m. Dining Room, Alpine Center
- September 1**—Men's Group Breakfast, 9:00 a.m, Dining Room, Alpine Center
- September 2**—Prayer and Meditation Garden Planning Meeting, 3:00 p.m. Dining Room
- September 4**—Tuesday Book Group Resumes, 6:30 p.m. Trinity Growth Center, Alpine Center
- September 9**—Fall Sunday School Kick-Off
- September 9**—Kick off of Foster Care and Adoption Support Group, 4:00-7:00 p.m.
- September 12**—Wednesday Night Live Kick Off and Pig Roast; Wednesday Night Dinners Begin
- September 14**—Family Movie Night at Our Master's Center
- September 16**—Shelby Palooza at the Tebala Shrine Center
- September 23**—Presentation of Bibles to third graders in worship service
- September 23**—Confirmation at morning worship service
- October 3**—Kids Klub begins
- October 20**—Tender Loving Crafts, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m., Alpine Center
- November 4**—New Member Session, 4:30-7:30 p.m., Alpine Center
- November 4**—All Saints Sunday
- November 15**—Our Master's Center Falling Leaves Salad Luncheon

**For more information on any of the above events,
call the church office at 815-399-5910 or see The Flame.**

Christ United Methodist Church

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Next Flame Deadline: **August 30, 2012**

Articles may be e-mailed to lindakuntz@christumc.cc or mailed/brought to the church office by the deadline date.

Check out our website:
www.christumc.cc

Getting to Know You: Velva Unger by Don Black



When several members at Christ UMC's Our Master's Center were asked one Sunday last month, "Who's Velva Unger?" nobody recognized the name.

But when she later was pointed out, they all exclaimed, "Oh, I know her!" and told how delightful and charming she is.

Velva has been attending Our Master's only about three years. She's a life-long resident of

Dixon, where she's still a member of the Church of the Brethren. There Velva and her late husband, Donald, have long been recognized for their Christian work.

"I didn't come from a church-going family," she said. "Grandma and Grandpa picked us up and took us to Sunday school.

"I've been in church all of my life since," she said.

After her husband died in 2007, Velva was ready to sell her house in Dixon. At the same time her granddaughter and husband, who lived in Rockford, wanted their daughter to attend Dixon High School. So Velva moved to Rockford and her granddaughter moved into the family home. Velva's great-granddaughter will start her senior year at Dixon this fall.

Velva now lives with her daughter and son-in-law, Jean and Tom Johnson, in Rockford.

"We lived on a farm ... in the Polo-Dixon area," she explained, "and I rode a pony to school all but one year when the ice was 3 inches and Father drove me."

Grandpa gave her a Shetland pony, which she rode through eighth grade. Later she learned to drive in an old Model A Ford, which she drove through high school.

The family had a big garden and livestock, including goats. "They ate everything," she recalled, including the cardboard-like license plate on the car. "They probably weren't cardboard, but they were edible," she said. "They also butted the shiny car, once they got their horns."

"I got kidded when I drove the car with the chewed-up license plate to school," she said with a chuckle.

Velva was the first one in the family to graduate from high school. She started studies at Palmer's Chiropractic School in Dubuque, Iowa, "the day after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor." The classes stopped because "the guys just went to war."

Later she got a job sewing Army jackets.

She's been sewing all of her life—at home and in 4H—and today with the Quilters Group of Christ UMC.

Velva and Donald attended high school and graduated

(continued on page 9)