The Finance Committee: Faithful ministry through responsible stewardship
By Beth A. Palm

A church with a 1.1 million dollar budget has many pieces and people behind it making sure the church ministry continues faithfully.

The responsibilities of the Finance Committee of the church are outlined by The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church. These basic responsibilities are: stewardship of the church assets, generating monetary funds, responsibility for annual budget, putting standard financial policies in place, annual audit, and accounting for restricted funds.

Jeff Holmertz is the current chair of the committee. The committee consists of nine members of the church who serve for three year terms. Each year three new people rotate onto the team. Our church treasurer Ed Rounds, and assistant treasurer, Richard Schultz, also serve on the committee. Pastors Jane and Scott serve on the committee as well as staff member Megan Abbott, Director of Accounting.

As Director of Accounting, Megan has the responsibility annually to work with the staff and committees to develop the annual budget. Once all the information is gathered and entered, it goes to the Finance Committee for approval and then to the Leadership Team for final approval. Megan provides monthly income statements to the Finance Committee for their review. Crystal Lake, our financial secretary on staff, records all the contributions and inputs the bills into the system. Megan is responsible for cutting the checks, processing payroll, and balancing the bank account. She said the Treasurer then is the one who signs the checks. She explained that this division of labor is outlined in The Book of Discipline to protect the church.

Jeff explained that their goals for this year are to complete the financial policies project. Megan Abbott has been assisting with this project that is nearing completion. Megan explained that the policies basically outline who has the power to do what and make what decisions. It also includes policies on gift acceptance and memorial gifts policy.

The Finance Committee also would like to perform an annual audit. Communicating the financial information to the congregation is a priority. They also are working with other church leadership to consider the feasibility of a capital campaign.

When asked what happens if it appears we may run short of money, Jeff pointed back to the responsibilities listed in The Book of Discipline. The committee is responsible to generate more funds. They watch the budget closely and if they need to make a plea to the congregation to meet the budget, committee members then communicate the situation and tell of the need.

A combined effort of staff and Finance Committee members work together, led by the guidelines set by the General Church, to see to it that the business side of running the church is handled so that the church can continue in faithful ministry.
Questions of Faith

“What are human beings, that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?” (Ps. 8:4)

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?” (Ps. 22:1).

Job to his wife: “Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?” (Job 1:10).

This summer, our preaching series will focus on your questions of faith. We have invited people in the congregation to share their theological questions with us, and we will be developing a preaching series out of your submissions. Many of these are deep questions that we won’t be able to answer as effectively as we would like, but I hope we can at least point to some ways of approaching the issues raised.

What makes us raise questions in our faith? Sometimes the questions of faith arise out of the process of learning and study. As we spend more time in Christian community, we begin to think more deeply about issues we might have taken for granted. I’ve been a church goer my entire life, but I remember my surprise when I realized that there are two creation stories in Genesis. What?? How had I never noticed that? The first is Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 (or 4), in which creation takes place over six days, with the Lord resting on the seventh. The second story begins in Genesis 2:4 and goes through 2:25 (or through chapter 3, depending on how you see it). If you think they’re one story, go back and re-read them—in the first, the human is created last, after the animals; in the second one, humans are created after the plants, and God creates the animals after the man is created. So, why do we have two creation stories? Maybe it’s because Jewish (and then Christian) faith can be comfortable with recognizing diverse opinions and approaches. Thus the Hebrew Scriptures include I and II Samuel and I and II Chronicles, which cover much of the same historical periods, but from a different perspective. In the New Testament, we have four gospels—we hear four versions of how people witness to the life they found in Christ. We can be troubled as we are surprised by in-depth Bible study, or we can draw closer to God as we wrestle and pray with these questions.

We also raise questions as our faith assumptions bump up against real life. There’s nothing in Christianity to suggest that good people don’t suffer (in fact, we worship a suffering savior); yet, it’s remarkable how we can feel as though God has cheated us when a good person dies young. Such feelings make perfect sense—we look for God’s justice, and the suffering of the innocent seems so terribly unjust. What do we do with these feelings? Too often, we turn away from God precisely when we need God the most. This is why I love the Psalms that take anger and heartbreak to God. The “How long, O Lord?” passages show us that we are called not to hide our anguish but to share it with God. Whenever we are honest with God about what we are feeling, the relationship is strengthened. The fact that the Bible includes so many passages of anguish and struggle shows us that such expressions are a valid part of the faith journey.

I have written above about questions coming out of study and life struggle, but our questions also come out of awe. This is the stance of Psalm 8, as the psalmist observes the beauty of creation and cannot take in the grandeur of God’s love. Put in contemporary language, we might ask questions like, “How can God love me when I sin again and again?” or “How can God teach me to forgive when I find resentments and bitterness overtaking me?” When we reflect upon the goodness of God, we find ourselves asking the personal questions of what such mercy requires of us: “God, you have done all of this for me? How would you have me respond?” Or, to put it biblically (from Micah 6:8): “What does the Lord require of you?”

Join us this summer as we reflect, learn, and draw closer to the God of love,

Jane
Justice for Our Neighbors (JFON) is a free immigration legal clinic. It helps immigrants who are poor receive the same consideration under the law as someone who is wealthy enough to hire an attorney in immigration matters. A paid immigration attorney staffs three JFON clinics in the Northern Illinois Conference. In Rockford, the clinic is held on the fourth Sunday of the month, 2:00 p.m to 5:30 p.m., at Court Street United Methodist Church, 215 N. Court St., Rockford 61103.

Many volunteers are needed to support the attorney at the clinics. If the immigration issue pulls at your heart, here are some ways that you can give a gift of time:

**Prayers** - Pray for the attorney, volunteers, and clients. Pray that the clinic will be a welcoming place and that each client and family member will feel loved as a child of God.

**Greeters**  Be the first to give a warm hello at the door. Help people sign in and out and get name tags.

**Hospitality Room**  Help set up and take care of the refreshment table. And/or provide food (can be delivered to the Christ UMC kitchen by 10:00 a.m. on a clinic morning or you can deliver it to Court Street). Just as important, help the clients and their families feel comfortable and at ease. Set out games and activities for adults and older children.

**Child Engagement**  With one or more other people, watch over the younger children. Offer games and crafts. The game and art supplies are provided.

**Intake Interviewers**  Interview new clients. Use a multi-page form that is provided. There is training for this.

**Interpreters**  Interpret during the intake interviews and in the attorney interviews. Spanish/English is most often needed, but other language speakers are sometimes required.

**Case Manager**  Work with the attorney and intake people. Make copies of documents and help manage the flow of the interview process.

The above jobs take different amounts of time. These descriptions are very general. **If you would like to discuss any of these jobs or to volunteer, call Mary English, JFON-Rockford volunteer coordinator, 815-397-4883.**

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**Welcome to Christ United Methodist Church!**

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**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 a.m.

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**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

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**Rev. Jane Eesley**, Sr. Pastor
jeesley@christumc.cc

**Rev. Min Chea**, Assoc. Pastor
mchea@christumc.cc

**Rev. Scott Himel**, Assoc. Pastor
shimel@christumc.cc

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**Christ UMC Mission Statement**
We will live out God’s vision as we
Gather: introduce people to Jesus Christ,
Grow: move from believer to follower, and
Go: make a Gospel impact beyond the church

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

**Editor**—Linda Kuntz
**Features Editor**—Linda Kuntz
**Features Writers**—Don Black, Mark McGowan, Beth A. Palm
**Contributing Photographer**—Joe Whinnery
**Director of Worship Arts and Communications**—Jody Warren
Fellowship News

CUMC Senior Fellowship Group
Friday, June 20 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.
Call the church office at 815-399-5910 to make your reservation by Monday, June 16. Please join us!

Scrapbooking/Stamping Group
Saturday, June 21, 9:00 am—4:00 pm
Alpine Dining Room
Scrapbooking/Stamping is scheduled for Saturday, June 21 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Alpine Dining Room. Stay for all day or just a half day - whatever fits your schedule. Not everyone in our group scrapbooks. Some are stamping so join us for a fun day of crafting! Childcare will be provided from 9 a.m. to noon only, but you must request it. If children will be joining us, it's requested they be at least middle school age.
Please bring money for a sandwich plus snack to share and your own beverage. Call Mary Hicks at 815-742-1136 by Wednesday, June 18th if you need childcare. Hope to see you there.

WOWS
Widows Or Widowers and Singles
Open to all single women age 65 and over

In June:
The WOWS will be having lunch at the Hoffman House (we'll order from the menu) and then attending the Senior Follies at Harlem High School on June 11. Lunch is at 11:30 and the Follies at 2:00. You may do both lunch and the Follies or just one. Money for the Follies—$12—is due May 9 to Rhea Hoyt, 4715 Stonegate Place, Rockford, 61108. Sounds like fun—please join us!

In July:
The WOWS will be going to lunch at Granite City on Wednesday, July 16 at 12:00 pm. Please bring a travel size shaving cream. Please call Karen Greenwood at 815-962-1235 to make your reservation or if you have any questions before July 13.

In August:
The WOWS will be going to the White Pines on Wednesday, August 13 to see “Sunshine on My Shoulder” celebrating the life and times of John Denver. If you have not already signed up and are interested in going, please contact Carol Letsinger soon at 815-399-1291. The cost is $28 and must be paid by July 7 to Carol. Please bring travel size disposable razors for your donation this month.

Jackie's number and name of June movie
June 27, 6:15 p.m., at Sacred Grounds

Celebrate summer with a baseball movie. At movie night on Fri., June 27, we'll view the 2013 PG-13 film 42, the story of the breaking of the color barrier in baseball in 1946. In that year, the Brooklyn Dodgers general manager, Branch Rickey (played by Harrison Ford), signed on Jackie Robinson (Chadwick Boseman). Join us at 6:15 in the Alpine Center Sacred Grounds Coffee House for conversation and free munchies. The movie (2 hrs 8 min) starts at 6:30 and is followed by a discussion. We end by 9:30.
If you would like free child care in the church nursery, please call the church office (815 399-5910) at least a week before the movie to make a reservation for your children.
This is the fourth article about John Wesley. Rev. Adam Hamilton, senior pastor of The Church of the Resurrection, preached a series of six sermons on Revival. This is information from his sermons. We continue the series on John Wesley and the faith that he lived that led to a revival of Christianity in the 18th century, first in Great Britain and then across America. John Wesley was preaching the scriptures and living the scriptures and so today we are going to look at a key scriptural idea. We are going to look at how Wesley lived and applied that, which lead to the revival of Christianity. We hope that we might see a revival of Christian faith in our own hearts and minds, in our congregation and our community and world.

Ephesians 2:8-10: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—" not by works, so that no one can boast. " For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Wesley preached from this same text not less than 40 times in his ministry. He would go back to it again and again and again. It was such an important text. By grace you have been saved, through faith and not by your works, and it is a gift from God so that no one can boast. What does it actually mean to experience it, live it and then be changed by grace?

Let’s start with the definition. There is a Greek word for grace. (Charis) If you take off the “s” and you put on the letters “ty” what word do you have? (Charity) We have a negative impression of that word but in the most positive it means, “I see that you are in need and I am willing to give you something to help you even though I do not know you.” It means that I am willing to show you kindness even though it is not deserved. It does call for me and I want to show you grace. The character of God is that God has the desire to give to us even though we do not deserve it. It is a desire for our best, a desire to bless us, to build us up to encourage us, to forgive us, to show love for us. God is grateful. God reaches out to us even before we know to reach out to God. God knows all of our stuff; God knows all of our sins and still longs to give us grace. God still wants to show us kindness, mercy and forgiveness before we even ask. This is the nature of God.

Last week we learned that Wesley had been struggling with guilt and shame and rejection. He was at Aldersgate St., in a small group gathered in London. He heard Martin Luther’s preface to Romans read and suddenly he got it. It moved from his head to his heart and he realized that God had already accepted him. God had already shown grace and mercy and given him salvation. He had been accepted. “I felt my heart strangely warmed and I trusted in Christ alone for my salvation.” Not everything changed instantly for him but a lot began to change for him and began to make sense. From that time forward he felt passionate about offering that free grace to anyone who would listen. He wanted people to know that God already had accepted you and you do not have to win his favor, or earn his love, as God had already given it to you. When you accept it, it begins to change you and you live your life differently because of the love you have already been given. (Continued next month)

Our coins for Rainbow Covenant mission giving each Sunday in June will go to the United Methodist Children’s Fund for Christian Mission. Four projects, two international and two U.S-based are chosen by the General Board of Global Ministries. Each project receives an equal share of the money received. The following are the children’s projects chosen for 2014.

- **Integrated Children Development Program (Philippines)**
  Funds would be used to provide health programs, educational assistance, leadership development, tutoring, values education and spiritual formation.

- **Nhiambeni Welcome Place Enrichment Program (Swaziland)**
  Funds will be used for teachers to provide tutoring services, musical instruments, books for enrichment, and cover the cost of weekend camps.

- **Tutoring Program, United Methodist Community Outreach Program (Roanoke, Virginia)**
  Funds will be used for tutoring, school supplies, weekend meals, clean clothes, Christmas gifts, and a week at summer camp.

- **The Arts Support Academics Program, Resurrection UMC (Chicago, Il)**
  Funds will be used for training, technical support and educational materials for teachers, as well as materials for the arts.
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, June 26, 12:30 pm
At Spring Garden Family Restaurant (new location)
4820 North 2nd Street, Loves Park
For reservations please call Rickie Andersen at 815-885-4373 or email r.andersen@comcast.net. For personal care donations this month, please bring feminine care items.

Martha Circle

On Wednesday, June 11 at 12:30 pm, we will meet for our annual lunch at the Stone Eagle Restaurant, 6445 East State Street, phone 815 316 3696. Stone Eagle is located across from Schnuck’s and Target, and in front of Office Max. If you have questions, or would like a ride, please call Wilma 815-877 3465, or Donna 815-715 8249.

Harmony Circle

On Tuesday, June 10, we will meet for lunch at the Bistro at Wesley Willows Town Center at 11:30 am. Please let Jo Hellmich know if you plan to attend: 815-639-3074. Our next gathering will be in September.

Ta-Da! Party

Thursday, June 26 at 9:00 am
Alpine Fellowship Hall

The quilters of Christ UMC will be hosting their annual Ta-Da Party on June 26 at 9:00 am in the Alpine Fellowship Hall.

We will be reviewing the quilts, table runners, wall hangings, etc. which we have worked on since January. All items will be for sale. This event is open to the public and our church family. Please bring your friends, neighbors and relatives to share in some fun, fellowship, and light refreshments.

We will also have a bed-turning. Anyone who has a quilt, old or new, and would like to share its story, should bring it to the party. We will hold up each quilt and hear the story and then you may take it home.

Questions? Call Renée Johnson at 815-397-9270.

Tender Loving Crafts

The TLC craft sale will be on Saturday, October 18, 2014. We are in need of handmade craft items for our UMW booth. All who are “crafty” should start making items to help us have a successful sale! If you would like to rent a booth, contact Diane Kirkland at 815-885-1757. Remember, all proceeds go to support our missions!

UMC Cards

The card creators have been busy doing what they enjoy, making greeting cards for you! Stop by our display on June 8 and June 22 and see what we have been up to.

UMW Study at Our Master’s Center

Tuesdays, September 9—October 14
9:30–11:00 am

Our Master’s UMW will have a spiritual growth study. Lasting six weeks, “A Faithful Heart” by Bishop Sally Dyck will be discussed. Price of the book is $12. Checks can be made out to OM UMW. Contact Judy Thorn at 815-398-4261 or dennisthorn@hotmail.com. Please contact by August 27.
Becoming Disciples through Bible study ...

Why?

The questions are many. The answers are few.
What’s in the Bible and how much is true?
Where should I start in the front or the back?
It’s a very large book and that is a fact.
I know that the stories have morals and such.
Is there more to it? Will I learn that much?
I know there is symbolism somewhere inside.
But I’m not sure where. I could use a guide.
Abraham, Moses, David and Saul.
What are the details? Tell me it all.
Who is Jesus? And why was he here?
I know bits and pieces but it’s not really clear.
If these are your questions and you don’t really know
The answers to life and the way you should go
Disciple Bible Study is where you should go.
You will get the answers to all you don’t know.
I was looking for answers in all the wrong places.
But found them among my Disciple group’s faces.
As we talked and encountered the Word of the Lord
I learned that the Bible is the same as the sword.
It is our weapon to fight evil ways.
That we’ve fallen into in all of our days.
I have gained so much knowledge from short readings each day.
And once a week meetings was a small price to pay.
For now I understand that no matter where
Always and forever the Lord, our God, is there!

DISCIPLE

If you were wondering “WHY” Disciple Bible study, the poem above, from a Disciple graduate in Maryland, says it all.

If you’re wondering “HOW” to sign-up, please contact Linda Kuntz at the church via phone (815-399-5910), or e-mail (lindakuntz@christumc.cc).

If you’re wondering “WHO” is teaching the course, Rev. Scott S. Himel and Mr. Don Black will serve as co-teachers for this class. Please feel free to contact Scott (815-399-5910; x42 / shimel@christumc.cc) or Don (815-633-0365 / black8618@sbcglobal.com) with any questions you might have about the course’s content.

If you’re wondering “WHEN,” it’s Monday nights from 6:00 to 8:30 PM in the Alpine Dining Room, starting on
September 15th, for this next academic year.

Prayer is Finding the Heart’s True Home!

Adult study group—3 sessions
July 9, 16 and 23, Alpine Coffee House
Wednesdays, 6:30-8:00 pm
Facilitated by Pastor Min Chea

You know you should pray but are not sure where to begin. You are invited to this book group that could change your view on prayer from obligation to longing. “Today the heart of God is an open wound of love. He aches over our distance and preoccupation. He mourns that we do not draw near to him. He grieves that we have forgotten him. He weeps over our obsession with muchness and manyness. He longs for our presence.”

Please join us when you can. Each session has its own theme so you would not be lost. I believe that this book will change your relationship with God through powerful and insightful views on prayer. Prayer is about receiving God’s love and being blessed by it.

The book we will use is Prayer: Finding the Heart’s True Home, by Richard J. Foster. You can sign up for this class and request a copy of the book by contacting Linda Kuntz via phone (815-399-5910) or email at lindakuntz@christumc.cc. Cost of the book is $18. Scholarships are available by contacting Pastor Min. You may then pick up your copy of the book between services on Sundays June 22, June 29 and July 6.
“My Dad probably still remembers the day when I called ... to tell him I was going into accounting,” he said, although his father never pushed him in that direction.

“I took Swedish as a foreign language,” he recalled, but he never went on one of the school’s annual trips to Sweden. Jeff was graduated in 1992 magna cum laude with a BA in accounting.

He aced the CPA test, he said, placing seventh in the state and 21st in the country. “I got a special award for the status.”

However, “The smartest thing I ever did was marry Beth.” Their children are Julia, 17, a junior at Boylan Catholic High School and Ben, 13, who attends Rockford Lutheran Middle School.

Jeff says Ben is a big Blackhawks fan, so he watches games with him.

Beth was born in Ohio. Her father moved her family to Moline to work for John Deere. But she roots for Ohio State. She and Jeff met at a Lake Geneva church camp. After his freshman year, they were counselors there, where he had attended as a kid.

The following year they returned. However, she was program director — thus his boss — and he again was counselor. She worked several years there. “We didn’t have many dates,” Jeff said, “but we spent time working together.”

In a year they were planning vows. In May 1991, they were married. “We got engaged in the boat house, during the second camp, at the end of the summer,” he said. She was attending Southern Illinois University and he was at North Park, “so it was a long-distance relationship.”

They moved to Chicago, where he finished his last year of school. They lived there five years while he was an accountant for a hospital.

They left Chicago to raise their children in Rockford and Jeff went to work for his father, although that hadn’t been his intention. “Things just worked out,” he said.

In May 2006, Jeff bought his father’s part of the business. In January 1998, Bill Parsons, Jeff’s partner, bought out his father’s partner. “On May 1, 2006, I became the boss. Dad continued to work part time, during the tax season.” He has been there since.

Holmertz-Parsons helps small businesses, with 20 or fewer employees. The firm itself has the two partners and six employees.

Jeff and Beth returned to Broadway Covenant and he was church treasurer, as had been his father, and Beth led Christian education. But he said their involvement became overwhelming, so they backed off.

Since they live near Christ Church — about three blocks from Pastor Jane — a friend, Jane Gottlick, told them about our church. The family attended about five years before they joined. Usually one sees them at the 9:30 a.m. service. They’ve been greeters and Jeff and Julia are learning how to operate the sound system.

Barb Peterson, one of Jeff’s substitute teachers at Guilford, persuaded him to join the finance committee. He became the chair in January, after a year on the committee.

Beth, a stay-at-home mother, teaches computers to preschoolers at the Discovery Center, and occasionally helps out at the business.

Jeff says he stays in shape by walking Wrigley, a collie pup, and Jax, a rescued mutt. You guessed it … Wrigley is named after the famous Chicago baseball stadium.

Jeff and Beth are licensed foster parents, primarily because of former Pastor Laura. They had two preschoolers for about a year. “That kept us busy,” he said. “We have a new perspective on life, having to deal with the DCFS,” he pointed out, stressing that it was easier to deal with the two preschool children than with the state.

With the business here and his grandmother, parents, and in-laws now living in Rockford, they plan to stay.

As for his years of travel to ball parks, Jeff said he didn’t care much for the “cookie cutter” stadiums, like Busch at St. Louis. “I like all of the old stadiums,” he said, like Wrigley and Yankee Stadiums.
Katie Childs just finished her freshman year at Rockford Christian High School. She has yet to get used to being a sophomore! She came to Christ UMC with her family when they moved to Illinois when she was two years old. She grew up through the church in Sunday school, Kids Klub, and youth groups. She was confirmed with the 2013 confirmation class. Katie has helped serve in the Soup Kitchen, helped with VBS, and enjoys the annual youth Dinner Theater.

Katie’s life has known its share of challenges. When Katie was seven, her father died. Katie remembers Laura Widstrom and Pastor Dick Wisdom being a tremendous help in getting her and her family through that time. She knows others were very loving to them as well. Katie explained that she feels her faith was strengthened from the experience of losing her dad because she had to cling to God.

Katie shares her life with her mom, Becky Childs, her sister Alex, who just finished her freshman year of college, her golden retriever, Maggie, and Maltese poodle, Nomi.

Katie loves to write and is the writer of the new column of The Flame, “Fresh Take...a Youth Perspective.” Katie also loves music. You will find her every day either singing, picking up her guitar, ukulele, or playing something on the piano. She also loves to read. Something I notice about Katie is that favorite Bible verses show up on her Facebook page. I asked what her favorite Bible verse was right now. It is Ecclesiastes 8:15: “So I commend enjoyment, for there is nothing better for people under the sun than to eat, and drink, and enjoy themselves, for this will go with them in their toil through the days of life that God gives them under the sun.”

Katie also volunteered to assist with Jr. High Fall Retreat and the Jr. High Workcamp. She enjoyed seeing the kids come to God through the retreat experience. Being present to help with that was very meaningful for Katie. Katie explained that these experiences with the Jr. High group have a positive impact in her faith journey because seeing how happy someone else is about God renews her own happiness with God. She said, "Seeing kids younger than me that are enthusiastic about God recharges my faith and makes me want to pursue my relationship with him even further."

Katie Childs

When asked about her favorite way to live out her faith, she mentioned two experiences – Workcamp and Jr. High Fall Retreat.

Last summer was her first experience of a Senior High Workcamp. She said that she was nervous at first being a freshman and being new. She found, however, that she was accepted and the experience brought her friendships. When asked what she looks forward to this year at workcamp, she said, “I want to welcome the freshmen coming this year. I look forward to encouraging new people.”

by Beth A. Palm

Help meet the challenge
Collection of infant sleepers and gowns for UMCOR

Each year the Northern Illinois Conference has a collection of items for UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), which helps people around the world in emergency situations. This year the collection is for layette kits. The churches in the Rockford District (together, not individually) have been challenged to donate 500 infant sleepers and gowns. There are two things to remember about these items: (1) buy newborn through 12-month sizes and (2) they should be new and unwashed. You can bring your donations to the church and put them in the marked cupboard during May until June 1. Your lay members to annual conference will pick them up and deliver them to the UMCOR truck on June 8, opening day of the conference in St. Charles.

If you would like to sew a gown, you can download the pattern and instructions by doing an internet search—UMCOR "layette kits" "infant gowns." No matter what you learned in home ec or from your mother, do not wash the fabric or finished gown. Washing it makes it "used" and UMCOR cannot include it in the layette kits.

Thank you for opening your hearts to the needs of the youngest children of God, sometimes born in conditions we cannot imagine.
Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,  
Keep far our foes; give peace at home;  
And lighten with celestial fire;  
Where Thou art guide, no ill can come.
Thou the anointing Spirit art,  
Teach us to know the Father, Son,  
Who dost Thy sevenfold gifts impart.  
And Thee, of both, to be but One;  
Thy blessed unction from above  
That through the ages all along  
In comfort, life, and fire of love;  
This, this may be our endless song:  
Enable with perpetual light  
This, this may be our endless song;  
The dullness of our blinded sight.  
Praise to Thy eternal merit  
The dullness of our blinded sight.  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Praise to Thy eternal merit

The Holy Spirit is often associated with fire. John the Baptist spoke of Jesus baptizing people with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Sure enough, when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, he appeared as tongues of fire resting on each believer.

There are seven gifts of the Spirit mentioned in Romans 12:6-8. This may be behind the “sevenfold gifts” of this hymn’s first stanza. Of course 1 Corinthians 12 offers another dozen or so, and Ephesians adds a few more. So it’s more likely that the author used seven as the number of perfection or completeness, as it is often used throughout Scripture.

Anointing had two purposes in Scripture. Ritually, it was used as a sign of God’s special empowerment for kings, prophets, and priests. But in everyday life it was a way of refreshing and cleansing. The Spirit does all that for us, empowering us to serve God as well as offering spiritual refreshment.

Summer Music 2014

We celebrate the musical gifts and talent in our congregation this summer June 1 through August 31. In the summer, our regular music programs take a break so that YOU have an opportunity to share your musical talent at both the Alpine Center and/or Our Master’s Center, mainly at the 8:00 and 9:30 services. We have 2 options available.

ONE: If you would like to play or sing a solo or duet, please let us know what dates you are available. Worship services will be filled on a first come, first serve basis, so contact us as soon as possible.
For Alpine Center please contact Jody Warren at jodywarren@christumc.cc.
For Our Master’s Center contact Becky Keith at Becky.Keith837@gmail.com

TWO: Do you enjoy singing but can’t commit to weekly rehearsals? Then summer choir at Alpine Center is for you! We will be singing once a month at both the 8:00 and 9:30 services with one rehearsal the Thursday evening prior. Sing one, two, or all three Sundays. Just remember to come to the Thursday rehearsal to learn the music.
Anyone high school age or older is welcome! Bring a friend. You need no previous church choir experience, just a desire to spread the Word of God through your love of music!

The three choir dates are:
Rehearse Thursday, June 19 and lead worship on Sunday, June 22
Rehearse Thursday, July 10 and lead worship on Sunday, July 13
Rehearse Thursday, August 7 and lead worship on Sunday, August 10
Rehearsals will be in the Alpine Center Choir Room from 7:00-8:30pm.
We will meet for a sound check and final rehearsal on Sundays starting at 7:30 am.

It would be helpful to know in advance if you will be singing in the summer choir so that we have enough music, but if you forget or your plans change at the last minute, don’t let that stop you from coming. For questions or to RSVP, please contact Vicki Peterson at 815-985-3766 or e-mail her at vpmusic55@comcast.net.
Summer Sunday School

During the summer we change things up a little with Children's Ministry in regard 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 Sundays available for you to sign up. Please contact Erika Coffer at the church office: 815-399-5910.

June 16-20: Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is our annual summer event where children ages 4 (by 9-1-13) through graduating 6th graders spend a week of mornings together enjoy music, games, snacks, crafts, and Bible lessons. Our theme this year is "Son Treasure Island", where we will discover the greatest treasure of all - God's Love. Graduating 6th graders will participate in a special traveling program with field trips each day. Pre-registration is required. Bring a friend and join us! VBS Mission Project: Imagine No Malaria.

July 9th: Wednesday Night Live and Summer Awana Begins

Our Wednesday Night Live will be at the Alpine Center. There will be opportunities for adults and children each Wednesday night through August 13th. More information and registration forms are available at the Connection Center or online at the church website www.christumc.cc/groups and classes/children.

August 17th: Grandparents Day
June 7
Alice Moczynski
Laura Varland
David Winker

June 8
Kasi Aarvig
Lisa Scribner

June 9
Jeff Baldwin
Dee Carlyle
Shelley Crane
Brenda McDonough
Ken McMILLIN
Nicole Menting
Wes Mouri
Jeff Wallem

June 10
Lori Reisetter
Gail Rothermel
Teena Scheub
Andrew Tate

June 11
Chloe Alexander
Richard Gassmann
Cooper Leaich
Anthony Leon
David Raffety

June 12
Bruce Dearborn
Sharon Snyder

June 13
Frank Dyke
Paula Hacker
Mary Ray Johnson
Alex Kobler
Ashley Menting
Jody Warren

June 14
Hilda Behn
Jack Erickson
Shane Hough
Nick Rippentrop
Katelyn Sarauer
Gayle Scheur

June 15
Sharon Hawes
Peter Herrmann
Laura Johannes
Carter McGowan
Lindsey Oyler
Annabel Seeling
Norm Shirk
Michaela Tyson
Shelly Watson

June 16
Ronnie Bass
Alexandra Bergsten
Tony Moczynski
James Noonan
Nicole Riemer

June 17
Jimmie Alston
Samantha Carter
Rylee Hunter
Mark Kneller

June 18
Jennifer Baker
Carol Earnest
Kasey Espar
Kylee Moore
John Shourek
Sammy Slife
Lucy Thomas
Dorothy Woodard

June 19
Cheri Carlson
Will Gay
Norm Hagman
Susie Wallin

June 20
Andrew Gummow
Reece Malone
Ashley Moore

June 21
Brooke Olson
Emery Perceell

June 22
Alex Childs
Payton Hawes
Chelsey Janke
Darrell Johnson
Bruce Kobischka
Mabel Paraggua
Jerry Spong
Addison Stender
Shirley Waddell
Colton Wieck

June 23
Allison Ackerman
Paige Deppe
Ruth Huckstep
Jack Masters

June 24
Ben Conway
Molly Cook
Jeff Holmgard
Keith Magnus
Olivia Stiles

June 25
Chris Jacobsen
Jeff Kearney
Anita Layng
Judy Lindner
Krystle Moore
Caden Prentice
Harold Sweeney

June 26
Patrick Anderson
Traci Parker
Dan Pete
Ryan Rappley

June 27
Lauren Abbott
Mary English
Anna Gibbons
Morry Harms
Katie Slife
Kayla Wainwright

June 28
Sharyn Booth
Ally Johnson
Toby Kuntzelman
Milo Melenas
Riley Miller
Tom Moss

June 29
Emma Cullen
Gary Fall
Erin Morgan
Leonard Pink

June 30
Jeannette Bloyer
Morgan Bockhop
Connie Bradel
Trent Miller
Toni Neitzel
Nolan Taylor

July 1
Darlene Beck
Rylie Hansen
Daniel Scheub

July 2
Betsy Cook
Brian Gale
Kathleen Johnson
John Noonan
Kevin Salser
Sharon Watts

July 3
Madison Griffith
Paige Griffith
Len Hamachek
Orville Schurr

July 4
Brad Auker
Donald Johnson
Fran Kneller
Tom Laughlin
Ryan Schmiett
Anniversaries; The Church is People; Bag It Sunday

Bag It Sunday June 22nd

Donations of non-perishable foods and money for the local pantries are accepted throughout the year. However, Bag It Sunday on June 22 marks the second of our special annual efforts to help the many area residents having a food crisis. The Outreach Committee will hand out bags after each service on June 15 as a reminder to donate non-perishable cans or packages of soup, cereal, canned fruits and vegetables, canned meat, pasta, juice, chili, rice, macaroni & cheese and peanut butter.

On June 22, containers will be available near each of the entrances for collection of your donations. When you say the words from the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread..." please remember those who have a need to use the food pantries. Your generosity is always appreciated.

The Church is People

Birth:
Peter James Rosenberg, son of Laura and Brendan Rosenberg, grandson of Toni Neitzel, born May 16

Wedding:
Michelle Anderson and T.J. Griesman, on May 24

Sympathy to:
Steve and Debbi Thurston and family on the death of Debbie’s father
Chuck and Robin Mann and family on the death of Chuck’s mother
Dennis Atkinson on the death of his fiancée, Vicki Johnson
Greg and Sabrina Knapp and family on the death of Sabrina’s mother
Natalie and Travis King on the death of Travis’ son by a previous marriage, Travis, Jr.

June 7
Ray and Nola Wood

June 8
Morry and Angie Harms
Gene and Betty Nelson
Karen and John Weedman

June 10
Korey and Erika Coffer
Curt and Lori Leppert

June 12
George and Mary English
Peg and Bob Giannangeli
Dean and Dorothy Hull
Sharon and David Mouri

June 14
Cynthia and John Beachum
Bill and Loretta Fry
Jane and Randy Mathews
Doug and Susan Pomatto

June 15
Judy and Rich Schultz
Irv and Joanne Stewart

June 16
Ty and Jolene Unangst

June 17
Venessa and Adam Powell
Richard and Jeanine Wang

June 18
Keith and Priscilla Carr
Steve and Jane Merritt

June 19
Gale and Becky Rippentrop
Thee and Jackie Vongsiri

June 20
Kelly and Greg Finch

June 21
Craig and Sue Anderson
Jean and Joe Hennis
Scott and Laura Johannes
Pam and Bill Miner
Sue and Scott Sarauer
Shirley and Jim Waddell

June 22
Jim and Claudia Lateer
Rich and Donna Riha

June 23
Kerry and Fran Schaible
Jason and Christine Woodard

June 24
Jan and Merle Clewett
Bill and Ruth Ann Eilders

June 25
Sharon and Harold Hawes
Virg and Dave Wilson

June 26
Cory and Megan Poynor

June 27
Bob and Donna Carter
Margot and Claire Kelley
Jeanne and Orv Steinmetz
Ryan and Shelly Stricker

June 28
Rod and Gail Brady
Jeff and Linda Nevel
Linda and Scott Springer

June 29
Paul Carpenter and Carla White-Carpenter
Jennifer and Andrew Tate

June 30
Brad and Ann Auker
Eric and Rachael Hill
Thank You Notes; A Fresh Take

A Fresh Take...
The Youth Perspective
By Katie Childs

Nature provides an escape for the soul that can’t be found anywhere else, no matter how hard you search. It gives you a sense of peace; a feeling of divine contentment. You can’t be in nature and not feel a slight tug at your heart from God, a tug from your inner self. The essence of nature is so strong and powerful that it makes me want to move to the woods right now and hibernate. Peace is present in the wilderness, along with comfort and silence. The quietness of nature is something majestic all in itself. It’s something that can’t be put into words. The best author in the world wouldn’t be able to fully explain the sensation of susceptibility that comes from true nature immersion.

The fulfillment and renewal that comes from being in nature provides the opportunity to be in touch with the constitutional part of your soul. Nature can reveal the key to knowing ourselves like no other influence can. God is at the center of nature and the center of our soul, and only when we understand that part of our soul can we fully know and understand God. What better way to get to know God than by spending time in his very own creation? A break from the man-made walls of our houses, schools, businesses, and offices is just what we all need. Next time you find yourself totally and completely in nature, take a moment to soak it in and feel God’s presence. He’s there—all you have to do is listen.

- From Jeanette Unger
Thank you for your prayers and your kind expressions of sympathy in the recent loss of my daughter. They provided both comfort and assurance. I thank God for the blessing I have in all of you.

- From Betty Fisher
May I take this opportunity to thank all of my friends from Christ UMC for your many kind words of encouragement as I’ve recovered from my recent fall. It’s taking a while longer than I had thought it would, but I’m hoping to be out and about soon.

- From the Outreach Committee, Deb Laskey and Lisa Jewell
Thank you to everyone who donated all the special gifts to the MELD baby shower. Your support will help MELD continue to provide assistance and programs for young parents and their children in our community.

- From Stan Campbell, Rockford Urban Ministries
I appreciate your generosity and support for mission, especially here in Rockford. There is so much that needs to be done and your church lends a lot of God’s grace to the projects. Please keep Rockford Urban Ministries in your prayers, especially for our work-camps program. We have 14 churches from across the country, and some of them have over 100 volunteers each. We pray for good work and for safety of the workers and recipients. I also appreciate your support for the JFON clinic for immigrants and for your prayers and mentoring of returning citizens from the state prisons.

- From Pastor Min Chea
Thank you so much for all your support in shopping, cooking, and delivering for Rock House kids with the Tuesday Women’s Group. Your loving hands gave a hot meal for children as they have evening programs. Many blessings for your time, hands and care for the children in our community.

- Julia Jones, Church World Service
I am impressed by the generosity of your church and its support of CWS Blankets program! Christ UMC is one of the top CWS Blankets churches in Illinois, which is something to be proud of!

June 7—Benefit for Laura Hagerman Simmons
June 16-20—Vacation Bible School
June 22—Car Hop
June 23-28—Mission Camp
July 19-25—Sr. High Workcamp
August 14-16—Jr. High Workcamp
August 17—Grandparents Day celebrated at all services
August 24—Blessing of the Backpacks
September 20—Blessing of the Animals
9:30 am—at Our Master’s Center
11:00 am—at Alpine Center

For more information, see the latest issue of The Flame or call the church office at 815-399-5910.
Youth Snapshot; Preschool News; Ministry Opportunities

A Quick Take…

Youth Snapshot

The youth have been up to a lot this month! It is the season of plays and performances, and we recently went to the Rockford Youth Symphony Orchestra performance on May 4th to support Abby “Wolfie” Layng, one of our SALT students. A few of our other students performed as well, including Elena and Sophia Gottlick. Sunday, May 18th was our final senior high youth group meeting for the spring, but not to fret! There are so many opportunities for the youth to see each other it will be like we are meeting every week, if not more! The last junior high youth group meeting was Wednesday, May 21st. We had a pizza party before we finished up our four week series, “Small things, big difference.”

On Saturday, May 24, a group of students and I went to see Riley Martin perform in “The Legend of Pocahontas,” at Hononegah High School. The following Saturday, May 31 is the first youth summer activity. We will be bowling at Don Carter Lanes from 2-4 p.m.

Make sure to come and support the youth at this year’s Car Hop on Sunday, June 22nd from 4-7 p.m. All proceeds support the senior high WorkCamp trip to Jackson, Michigan in July. Also, the kids that are attending WorkCamp will be selling stock certificates for the next month, so if you would like to directly support a student, this is your opportunity! Thank you so much for your continued support!

Jenny Thomas, Director of Youth Development

Ministry Opportunity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry Opportunity</th>
<th>Ministry Description</th>
<th>Time Commitment</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer Sunday School</td>
<td>Do you enjoy going to the movies and eating popcorn? Then during the summer this is the place for you! We enjoy some popcorn while we watch a Bible based movie. We need helpers who would be able to pass out popcorn and drinks who also like to watch a good children’s Bible based movie.</td>
<td>9:30 or 11:00 service at Alpine or Our Master’s at 9:30. As many Sundays as you would like to help.</td>
<td>Erika Coffer 815-399-5910 <a href="mailto:ecoffer@christumc.cc">ecoffer@christumc.cc</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up for VBS</td>
<td>Join us as we transform the church to worship Jesus in a Sun Treasure Island setting.</td>
<td>Sunday, June 15 1:00-5:00</td>
<td>Erika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VBS Teachers and Helpers</td>
<td>Join us for the week or for part of the week as we learn that Jesus is the true treasure.</td>
<td>Monday–Friday, June 16–20 9:00–noon</td>
<td>Erika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take down VBS</td>
<td>Many hands make light work as we take everything down from our fun week.</td>
<td>Friday, June 20 12:30–3:00</td>
<td>Erika</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are wrapping up another successful school year at the preschool and are looking forward to starting our summer camps. The month of May was a very busy month at the preschool. We held our Mother’s Day Tea on Friday the 9th and enjoyed seeing the children and mothers enjoy a sweet treat and the mom’s even got to take home a small memento from the children. We had over 150 people attend our annual end of the year picnic and fund-raiser on Wednesday, May 21st.

We would like to thank all of the families that came out to help us celebrate the end of the school year and help raise money for St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital. This year we raised over $1,500.00 for St. Jude’s! Our last day of school was May 30. It was hard to say goodbye to all the children heading off to kindergarten in the fall, but know that they will all be successful!

Our registration for Fall 2014 is going very well, we currently only have two fulltime spots and seven part time spots available.
Set your sails, grab your binoculars and come join us at VBS! This is no ordinary tropical escape! There is treasure to be found here. More precious than gold, more lasting than diamonds, it is the greatest treasure of all – God’s Love! At Son Treasure Island we will play island games, create colorful crafts and enjoy tropical snacks. But more importantly, we will discover the rich treasure of God’s love through the life of Jesus.

VBS runs Monday-Friday from 9am-12pm with a special closing program and picnic lunch for families on Friday. Children age four by 9/1/14 through those completing 6th grade (with a special traveling program for the 6th graders including swimming, bowling, mini-golf, and more!) are welcome to participate. Pre-registration is required, and space is limited! Invite a friend, and sign up today!

If you have questions or would be interested in helping staff this fantastic event, contact Erika Coffer in the church office (815-399-5910).

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Vacation Bible School
June 16th-20th, 2014

Christ United Methodist Church
Son Treasure Island
June 16th-20th  9am-12pm

Child’s Name: ___________________________________________  Male______  Female______

Parent’s Name: ___________________________________________

Street Address: ____________________________________________________________________

City: _________________________________________  Zip: ________________________________

Phone: ___________________  Age of Child During VBS: ________  Last grade completed: ______

Emergency Contact: ________________________________  At this number: __________________

Allergies or medical concerns: ________________________________________________________

Friend of: _________________________________________________________________________

I give permission for my child to participate in Son Treasure Island VBS with Christ United Methodist Church on the dates indicated. I also give permission for Christ United Methodist Church to make still pictures, videotapes, and sound recordings, separately or in combination of my child. I also give Christ United Methodist Church permission to use the finished videotapes, still pictures, and/or sound recordings over private or public broadcast for distribution purposes.

Parent’s Signature: ___________________________________________________

Early bird registration before June 6th is $12/child or $20/family. Regular registration after June 6th is $20/child or $30/family. Checks can be made out to Christ United Methodist Church.
Jeff Holmertz, chair of our church’s Finance Committee, has been involved with a church all of his life, but most of it hasn’t been with Christ United Methodist Church.

He was raised in Broadway Covenant Church of Rockford, which has its roots in the Swedish Mission Covenant Church. His grandparents were founding members there. And his parents, David and Karen, still are active in that church.

And, yes, he’s all Swede.

Jeff also followed in his father’s footsteps for a career. “I tried hard not to be a CPA,” Jeff said during an interview. But today he’s a partner in Holmertz-Parsons CPAs.

Jeff also is a baseball fan, as in fanatic. “At one time, I had visited every baseball park in the country,” he said. Jeff and his father toured America’s clubs over four years. Once in 1987 they went to 13 baseball games in 12 East Coast cities in 13 days. “I plotted it all out,” Jeff said, “the where, when, what game, etc.”

Jeff was graduated from Guilford High School in 1988. Although he’s 6 feet 4 inches tall, he wasn’t on the varsity basketball team. “I played basketball,” he said, “but mostly for fun.”

Jeff says that “most of my friends were in my church group, Eagilburn,” which is an acronym for the Rockford high schools then.

He went to school in the shadow of his older brother, Mark, who got into computers and today is a financial planner in Gray’s Lake.

Jeff recalls that the family frequently went to Lake Ripley in Wisconsin for boating.

It was during high school that he started watching the Cubs on WGN after school. Today he’s a Chicago fan, also watching the Bears, Bulls, Blackhawks, but not the Sox. “I’m a Cubs fan mostly,” he admitted.

When Jeff was touring colleges, he was thinking about a liberal arts degree, because he enjoyed international relations courses. At North Park College (later University), Jeff liked accounting and the professor who taught most of the related courses. The small university in northwest Chicago has about 3,200 students today.