



Aldersgate United Methodist Church

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Aldersgate UMC Web Site

<http://www.aumcgreece.org/>

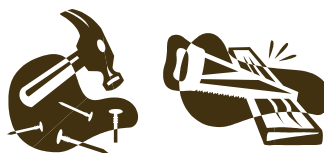
Volume 8, Issue 76

March 2009

FROM YOUR PASTOR...

The February *Hinge* just arrived and I'm already writing an article for the March *Hinge*. Time goes by so quickly. Winter's almost over. Soon it will be spring. It seems like just the other day our daughters were born and now they are all grown up. Life passes so quickly. This may sound morbid, but before we know it, our lives on this earth will be over. On Ash Wednesday we were reminded of our own mortality and confessed our sins before God within the light of God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ. This awareness of our own mortality makes us realize even more that how we live each day really matters. After all, it could be our last.

During Lent this year we will be focusing on living like we are dying. The sermons each Sunday and the small group lessons are part of a series entitled "Live Like You Were Dying," after a song by the same title. I've heard lots of good things about this study from other churches who have done it. You do not want to miss out! Be sure to be in worship each Sunday in March and if you are not currently a part of a small group, this would be a great time to join one. I will be leading the study on Tuesday mornings and Tuesday evenings, if there is interest. If you'd like to be a part of one of these new groups, please sign up on the sheet posted by the elevator or call the church office.



On another note, I want to thank all of you for your support of our mission trip to New Orleans. Rich Keller, Candy and John Metzger, Laurie Ruell, Colleen Tyler, and I joined 18 others from five other churches in our District to continue the rehabilitation efforts for homeowners left destitute by Hurricane Katrina. I look forward to sharing more about this later.

Blessings,

Anne

Anne

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OUR MINISTRY OF CONCERN

People are added to our ongoing prayer list on request. If you know of someone whose name and/or concern should be added, please verify that the person desires to be on a published list before requesting the addition. Names are added and can be removed from the prayer list by request. If you have a prayer request, please call Barbara Robinson at 227-7845. Reports regarding prayer results are made also.

Please call the church office if you have other names that need to be added or reinstated to the list or removed from the list.

Due to privacy restrictions at our hospitals They will no longer release patient information over the phone. In the event that you are hospitalized, please let us know. If you are unable to notify us, please have a family member or close friend call the church office, Pastor Anne or Pastor Jerry.

Hospitalized: Harold & Stella Elich, Jack Lynch – Unity

Recovering: Elizabeth Jones in Transitional Care at Unity.

Recovering at home: Ted Coburn, Jane Guitson, Jerry Jones, Kim Latragna, Olivia Marsh, Eleanor

McNeil (mother of Nancy Wayne), Fran Okita, John Sobus, Martha Thomson

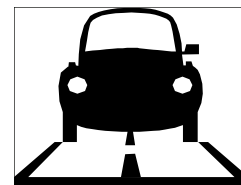
Those with ongoing health concerns: Vonnie Ackerman (sister of Gloria Montgomery), Joyce Anderson (sister of Wanda Strauss), Al Antczak, Albina DeBell, Nancy Beers (granddaughter of Mavis and Malcolm), Phoebe Brown, Ted Coburn, Carl Dunn, Carol Finch (friend of the DeVincentis Family), Patricia Forbes, Ed Geier, Shirley Geier, David Grierson (son of Shirley Grierson), Jay Glowinski (friend of Denise Sayre), Alma Harmer, Dave Haring, Becky Hess, Gary & Cindy Hogan, Frank Ireland (brother of Jackie Hogestyn), Earl Kelley (Cindy Groves' father), Bonnie Kennedy (former member), Anna Kneisel (mother of Anne Palmer), Eric Linder (nephew of Tammy Ruiz), Lynn Linder (sister-in-law of Tammy Ruiz), Ruth Loomis, Steven Lynch (son of Sylvia & Jack Lynch), Cody Mastradenato (neighbor of O'Connor's), Charlotte McCabe (Betty Baybutt's daughter), Lea McQuown, Denise Montgomery (daughter of Gloria Montgomery), Marion Murray (friend of Joyce DeBell), Kamran Pickering (grandson

of Donna Colangelo), Polly Roberts (friend of Bette Edgett), Tammy Ruiz, Steven Savage, Mary Sims, Gail Snyder, John Sobus, Jr., Sebastian Sofia (friend of Don Heinz), David Stanley, Justin (grandson of Jean Stevens), Heather Tidwell (granddaughter of Ross & Nancy Wayne), Ashley & Peyton VanKouwenberg, Alene VanPutte, Hal Wagner, Ross Wayne, Mark Williams (son-in-law of Bob Wiederhold), Clair Yeamans (step-father of David Kaszubowski).

Our home-bound: Malcolm Beers, Olive Chapman (mother of Barbara Marsh), Jean Frey, John Haldane, Glenn Ide, Myrtle Koch, Maxine Pollock, Martha Thomson, Marion Voglesong.

Nursing Homes/Living Centers: Orville Loomis – Unity Living Center; Jack Lynch, Betty Shoemaker, Juanita Scrivens (mother of Larry Scrivens) – Shore Winds; Carolyn Fisher – St. Ann's; Ethel Martin, Robert Royer – St. John's; Leota Matthews – Monroe Community Hospital; Jeanne Barr – Hilton East

Christian sympathy is extended to the Guitson Family on the death of Jane's aunt, Celia Thran.



ALDERSGATE EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER SERVICE

The church provides emergency services such as transportation and babysitting. If you can provide services, or need help, call the church office.

PARISH VISITATIONS

Please advise the church office when someone enters the hospital (or is discharged). This will help in providing better pastoral care and help avoid unnecessary trips. If you, or someone of whom you are aware, desire a pastoral call, please advise the church office. Arrangements for the Sacrament of Holy Communion are encouraged. Both pastors visit regularly and would be happy to include others in the visitation schedule.



There are two prayer chains at Aldersgate. Each is coordinated by Barbara Robinson. One is for daytime calling. The other is for calling in the evening. Each member of the prayer chain has only one person to call and everyone will lift up the prayer re-

quests in his or her own way. This can be a very rewarding experience, especially when concerns turn into joy. We invite you to be part of this care team. Call me at 227-7845.

~Barbara Robinson

FROM THE PASTOR OF VISITATION AND MEMBERSHIP CARE

Dear Aldersgate Family:

It doesn't seem possible that the season of Lent has arrived. This is the time of year in which we reflect on the sacrifice that our Lord made to bring us redemption. It is a time to prepare for the celebration of His death and resurrection. It is a time to remember how much He loves us. It reminds me of the story entitled...

"Making Pancakes."

Six-year-old Brandon decided one Saturday morning to fix his parents pancakes. He found a big bowl and spoon, pulled a chair to the counter, opened the cupboard, and pulled out the heavy flour canister, spilling it on the floor. He scooped some of the flour into the bowl with his hands, mixed in most of a cup of milk, and added some sugar, leaving a floury trail on the floor which by now had a few tracks left by his kitten.

Brandon was covered with flour and getting frustrated. He wanted this to be something very good for Mom and Dad, but it

was getting very bad. He didn't know what to do next, whether to put it all into the oven, or on the stove, and he didn't know how the stove worked! Suddenly, he saw his kitten licking from the bowl of mix and reached to push her away, knocking the egg carton to the floor. Frantically, he tried to clean up this monumental mess but slipped on the eggs, getting his pajamas white and sticky.

Just then, he saw Dad standing at the door. Big crocodile tears welled up in Brandon's eyes. All he wanted to do was something good, but he'd made a terrible mess. He was sure a scolding was coming, maybe even a spanking. But his father just watched him. Then, walking through the mess, he picked up his crying son, hugged him and loved him, getting his own pajamas white and sticky in the process!

That's how God deals with us... We try to do something good in life, but it turns into a mess. Our marriage gets all sticky, we insult a friend, or we can't stand our job, or our health goes sour. Sometimes we just stand there in tears, because we can't think of anything else to do. That's when God picks

us up and loves us and forgives us, even though some of our mess gets all over Him. But just because we might mess up, we can't stop trying to "make pancakes" for God or for others. Sooner or later we'll get it right, and then they'll be glad we tried...

I was thinking and wondered if I had any wounds needing to be healed, friendships that need rekindling or three words needing to be said, sometimes, "I love you" can heal and bless!

Remind every one of your friends that you love them. Even if you think they don't love back, you would be amazed at what those three little words, a smile, and a reminder like this can do.

Remember that the message of Lent is "God loves you!" Suppose one morning you were called to God; do all your friends know you love them? Never stop "making pancakes!"

Jerry Wolter
Visitation Pastor

First Serve

If you are thinking God may be calling you to a deeper level of involvement in ministry, check out the "First Serve" brochures available on the Welcome Table in the gathering space. Try out a ministry. Live beyond yourself by serving in the church and the world. You will find great fulfillment in living according to God's plan for your life!

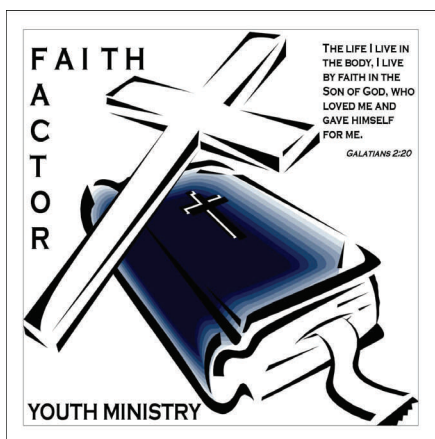
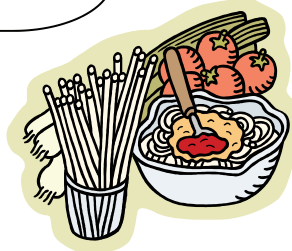
FAITH FACTOR YOUTH MINISTRY



We have been meeting and discussing our faith and relationships with our friends and family. If you would like to come speak to our youth, we would love to have you! Please contact Kim if you would like to come speak with us.

Thank you!

The youth group is looking to provide some service to the congregation. If you are in need of any household or outdoor assistance, please contact



Our Calendar...

Senior High

- March 3 – Bible Study
- March 10 – Current Events
- March 17 – Saints past and present
- March 24 – Family relationships
- March 31 – Night at Horizon Fun F/X

Junior High

- March 6 – Heroes in the Faith
- March 20 – What about God?

*****Please note! The date has changed*** MARCH 8 – 12:00-1:30 PM We will be having a Middle School youth group parent meeting.** We will be discussing youth events and the possibility of a Summer 2009 mission trip. Come with questions and comments. Lunch will be provided and youth may come as well. Please RSVP to Kim so she can plan for lunch.

April 21, 5:00 PM-7:00 PM: The Sr. High Youth Group will be having a Spaghetti Supper to raise funds for our mission trip to IL. Please join us for fellowship, great-tasting spaghetti, and hear about our plans for this summer! Sign up on the Bulletin Board. Thank you for your continued support.

****Permission slips are available at youth group or from Kim on Sundays. I can also send them to you via email or postal mail if you would prefer. ****
We have some exciting plans, but we won't be complete without YOU!!

See you in Youth Group,
Kim

MARCH CELEBRATIONS

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Mary Sims	March 3
Jacquelyn Schneider	March 4
Phoebe Brown	March 5
Scott Wagner	March 7
Dan Rothfuss	March 9
Steve Tyler	March 9
Robert Winter	March 10
Gerald Wolter	March 12
Matthew Michaels	March 12
Gloria Montgomery	March 13
Barbara Robinson	March 13
Dave Cosman	March 16
Jamie Manfredi	March 16
John Groves	March 17
John Shukitis	March 17

Kyle Brown	March 17
Alene VanPutte	March 18
Sarah Roza	March 20
Sylvia Lynch	March 22
Andrea Rex	March 26
Cathy Carpenter	March 27
Connie Gomez	March 27
Maribeth Hockey	March 28
Patricia Forbes	March 28
Nathan VanKouwenberg	March 28
Bryan Savage	March 28
Dean Hogestyn	March 29
Bob Hockey	March 30
Paul Brown	March 30
Gordon Spicer	March 30
Bill Tschorke	March 31



Happy Anniversary!

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Barry & Nancy Massing	March 3
John & Pat Geiselman	March 11
John & Marilyn Sobus	March 18
James & Lorraine Christie	March 18
Tom & Frances VanKouwenberg	March 24



Items for the APRIL
Hinge are due
March 15



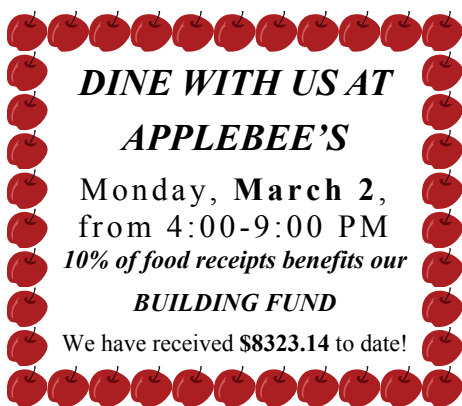
Dear Members of Aldersgate,

Dick and I wish to thank all for their prayers, cards, flowers, and casseroles. We wish to thank Anne and Jerry for their calls and prayers.

~Alma Harmer

CHURCH EVENTS, MINISTRIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Good Friday Prayer Vigil: Join us for prayer in the Chapel. Hours will be 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. A Sign-Up Sheet is posted on the bulletin board in the Gathering Space. Please fill out a prayer request or praise report and leave it in the treasure box on the table. If you would like to help in decorating the chapel or in planning the service, please call Joyce Farrokh at 865-5135. This will be a special time for quiet prayer and everyone is invited. A prayer guide will be provided for you to use and will be available for you to take home if you are unable to attend.



DINE WITH US AT
APPLEBEE'S
 Monday, **March 2**,
 from 4:00-9:00 PM
10% of food receipts benefits our
BUILDING FUND
 We have received **\$8323.14** to date!

SPEAKING OF GOOD FOOD...

On **Sunday, March 29, at 2:00 PM**, the Stewardship Team will be hosting a **Tastefully Simple** party in the Ide Family Life Center as a fundraiser. Fifteen percent of the proceeds will go toward reaching our church goal of raising \$6500 for the fourth Greece Churches Habitat for Humanity project.

This party is an opportunity to taste test a variety of gourmet food that is simple to prepare. Our Tastefully Simple representative is **Laura Acciaio**. The party will be open to both men and women--everyone who likes good food. Consider inviting friends that may enjoy it. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board so that our hostess is prepared for your attendance.



EVENING OF ENTERTAINMENT RESCHEDULED

Save **Friday, May 15**, for the Third Aldersgate Evening of Entertainment. This date gives you a couple of months to plan and practice for your part in the program. See **Kathy Savage** if you have any questions. This event is too much fun to miss!

SECRET SISTER REMINDER:

"A true friend is the most precious of all possessions and the one we take the least thought about acquiring."

~La Rochefoucauld

How blessed we are to have become better friends with each other and with our Secret Sisters this year! Why not send your Secret Sister a quick greeting this week and let her know you treasure her and are praying for her! Also, look for more info soon about the REVEAL BREAKFAST coming up in April. What fun it will be to see who has been your precious friend this past year!

GREETER COORDINATOR NEEDED for the 9:30 AM service. Someone is needed to find greeters for each Sunday. If you are interested in doing this, please contact Dave Roza at 621-8162.



WE ARE BEGINNING THE SEARCH for a new part-time Christian Education Director. If you know anyone who might be interested or have suggestions, please call the church office.

Aldersgate Men's Group

2009 March Madness

Basketball Contest

The Aldersgate Men's Group annual March Madness function is kicking off again for the college basketball enthusiasts. Even if you're just a casual follower of the sport, you will find it enjoyable. This is a fun contest open to **ANYONE** in our church family where we try and guess which teams will be successful in the upcoming post-season tournament. There is no cost to enter...yes, we mean free!

The competition occurs over a three week period which runs in parallel with the actual tournament and concludes with a fellowship outing at the church where we watch one of the semi-final games and enjoy some snacks. Details on how to enter and competition rules will be posted on the bulletin board near the main entrance.

Brief Overview: The NCAA will select the initial 65 teams that comprise this competition. From this pool of teams, your job is to guess which teams will still be in the hunt for the championship after each week's competition has completed. Points will be awarded each week for every team you correctly guess that wins both its games.

Prior to the first week, you will select 16 teams from the original 65. Prior to the second week, you will select 4 teams from the remaining 16; Prior to the third (and last) week, you will select the champion.

Food Fest – What sporting event would be complete without getting together, watching one of the games and doing some serious snacking. We are tentatively setting Saturday April 4 for this activity. We will convene in time for the first game which usually starts around 6PM. Everyone who attends is asked to bring a snack or dish to pass. This is open to everyone, even if you did not participate in the competition.

See Rich Keller for any questions.

ALDERSGATE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

WOMEN'S DIVISION DIRECTOR & CONFERENCE UMW PRESIDENT TO LEAD MARCH GENERAL MEETING

"Talk the Walk" is the title of the conversation Carmen Vienes and Valerie Clark will lead us in at the next General Meeting. They presented this program last summer at the School of Mission as a Focus Group exercise and all those attending found it both interesting and informative. Talking through a variety of scenarios for potential misunderstandings between people of different backgrounds helps us all to see situations from the perspective of others. The program will follow supper. As we decided at the November meeting, we will also be taking up our annual Thank Offering for missions rather than waiting until the end of the year. We recognize that we should be thankful all year round!

Everyone interested is welcome. All UMW meetings are open. Join us in the Ide Family Life Center for a soup, salad, and dessert supper at 6:15 PM that costs just \$3.00 payable at the door. We do ask that you sign up in advance so that we can be prepared for you.

READING CIRCLE

When My Name was Keoko is a novel about the life of a young Korean girl when Korea was under Japanese occupation. The Japanese attempt to suppress Korean culture even included forcing people to change their names. This book, the Reading Circle selection for March, was written by Linda Sue Park, a local author whose young adult books have received national awards. Copies of the book are available in the church library. It's a quick, if somewhat unsettling read; so it's not too late to pick up a book to read it before the meeting. The group will meet on Thursday, March 5, at 1:00

PM in the Church Library. Members take turns serving refreshments each month. New members and visitors are always welcome at Reading Circle. For more information, contact Frances Crabtree (392-0772).

MORNING CIRCLE

Pamela Graham of Alternatives for Battered Women will be the speaker at the March 17 meeting of the Morning Circle. This important local organization is currently the recipient of a UMW Conference Grant. For many years now ABW has been providing shelter and other services for women and children seeking asylum from their abusers. This meeting is an opportunity to learn more about their work and perhaps about what support we can provide.

Meetings of Morning Circle are held in the church parlor and begin at 11:00 AM. They are open to anyone interested in the topic. Bring a light lunch. Beverages and dessert are prepared by our hostesses of the month. For more information, call Gege Dunn (663-9235) or Bobbie Eckert (225-9582).



CHURCH WOMEN UNITED SPONSOR WORLD DAY OF PRAYER ON MARCH 6

Church Women United in Rochester & Vicinity will celebrate the annual World Day of Prayer this year at Bethany Presbyterian Church, 3000 Dewey Avenue. Registration will begin at

9:30 AM. Those attending will have a choice of two Bible studies that will start after a welcome at 10:00 AM. After a (bring your own) Brown Bag Lunch at noon, the program will close with a worship service. The guest speaker will be the Rev. Imani Dodley, Pastor of Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. The Church Women United Choir will provide the special music. This year's service was written by the Women of Papua New Guinea and World Day of Prayer USA Committee. The registration fee is \$3.00. No advance sign up is necessary. Please see the notice on the Opportunities Bulletin Board for more information.



COMMUNION BREAKFASTS – APRIL 4

The Genesee Valley District Communion Breakfasts will be held on Saturday, April 4 in five locations: Elba, Garland, Hilton, Livonia, and Webster United Methodist Churches. The Communion Service will begin at 8:30 AM with breakfast to follow. The cost is just \$5.00. A freewill offering will be received at the service for Mission Giving (toward the District Pledge to Mission). There will be a sign-up sheet for going to Hilton, Garland, or Webster on the Opportunities Board in early March. The deadline for registration is March 28. Give your \$5.00 breakfast money to Betty Hild, the UMW Treasurer, so that we can write one check for each location chosen.

RUMMAGE SALE & CRAFTS SALE SCHEDULED FOR 2009

The annual Rummage Sale has been scheduled for the second week-end in June: Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, June 11-13. That means that everyone can start bringing in

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UMW CONTINUED

donations to the Ide Center on June 1. We moved to the second weekend in order to avoid a conflict again with the Women of Faith Conference, which is to be held in Rochester on the first weekend. It is not too soon to begin sorting out cupboards and closets to set aside for the Rumage Sale all those still-useful clothes and household items that you no longer need.

We are also looking for the names of additional vendors for the Second Annual Crafts & Collectibles Show on October 16 & 17. If you know of vendors who would be interested, please give their names and addresses to Gretchen Hughes (865-2822 or fghughes76@frontiernet.net) so that their names can be added to the mailing list for brochures. This would be a good show for those who may be just starting out as well as experienced vendors.

OTHER UPCOMING DATES:

March 9 – Sew ‘n Sew’s at 1:00 PM in Room 1.

April 7 – Meal in the Upper Room at 6:30 PM beginning in the Sanctuary

April 18 – Prayer Partners Morning Tea at 9:30 AM in the Ide Center

April 30 – Book Review Luncheon with Charlotte Ridley reviewing “Little Heathens” at 1:00 PM in the Ide Center

May 9 – Mothers, Daughters, & Friends Banquet, gathering at 5:30 PM in the Ide Center, eat at 6:00 PM



Dear Sally Stewardship,

What is the Endowment Fund? How does it work? Who gives to it?

~Just Heard of It

Dear Ms. Heard,

You have probably just heard of it—accidentally no doubt—because the Endowment Fund Investment Committee has deliberately been keeping a low profile while our focus has been on the capital campaigns to build our addition and to pay off the bonds that made the building possible.

Aldersgate does indeed have an Endowment Fund. If you are not familiar with the concept, endowments come from gifts of assets to a non-profit organization. By retaining and investing the original gift, income from the investment can provide an on-going source of funding for the organization. Usually the purposes for which that income can be used are limited.

The endowment fund for Aldersgate was founded in 1991 with a \$2000 bequest from a member. In 2000 another member who was moving away gave \$15,000 with the specific request that the income be used for mission initiatives. The current committee structure was then established to manage the funds. There have been a few additional gifts since that time. Guidelines require 10% of the income from the principal to be reinvested in the fund, and the remaining 90% may be used by the Church Council to support church projects in the appropriate categories.

Currently the Endowment Fund is divided into four areas from which a donor may choose: a General Purpose Fund; the Missional and Outreach Fund; the Building Fund, which is primarily for capital improvements or major repairs; and the Scholarship Fund. Each year the Endowment Committee reports to the Church Council on the available funds. In recent years the mission funds, for instance, have been used to assist a refugee family and to support youth mission trips.

As of December 31, the General Purpose Fund had \$7438, the Missional and Outreach Fund had \$15,166, the Building Fund \$1500, and the Scholarship Fund \$1500 for a total of \$25,604. About two-thirds of the money is in a money market fund and the remainder in a conservative stock fund, both managed by Vanguard.

The members of the Endowment Fund Investment Committee are Ken Sisson, Kathy Pearson, and Myrle Johnson. They would be happy to answer your questions or to talk with you about making a gift to the fund from your current assets or perhaps through your estate. Such a gift becomes a lasting legacy that will help renew and sustain God’s work here at Aldersgate.

I hope this information is helpful. I’m glad you asked. It gave me a chance to check on a topic I hadn’t thought about for a while! Like those who gave those original donations, I am now--

*Thinking about Aldersgate’s future,
Sally Stewardship*

MISSIONS NEWS

ALDERSGATE GOAL SET FOR GREECE HABITAT

At its February meeting, the Church Council endorsed the recommendation of the Missions Committee that we set of goal of **raising \$6500**, which is 10% of the cost of building the fourth house at 119 Whitney by the Greece Churches Habitat for Humanity coalition. We have actually already contributed **\$1829.50** toward that goal from the Thanksgiving Pie sales, the Christmas Offering, and individual contributions.

As an early project to encourage individual and family contributions, we distributed **Habitat Coin Boxes** after each service on UMW Sunday. Please keep the boxes in a handy location in your home so that you can drop your change in the box on a regular basis. You won't miss the small amounts you add to the box each time, but they will add up to a helpful donation. Then we ask that you **return the boxes** on the **Sunday after Easter**, April 19. If you were not in church on UMW Sunday, additional boxes will be available on the Mission Counter or from the Church Office for as long as they last.

Additional fundraisers and opportunities to make contributions will be planned for the year. In addition, we will continue to participate in the group projects sponsored by the coalition. Building Habitat houses is an effective way to address the needs of our neighbors.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Aldersgate will join with United Methodist congregations around the world for a special offering to underwrite the administrative costs for the United Methodist Committee on Re-

lief. It is this offering on **March 22** that makes it possible for them to promise that all other gifts to UMCOR projects go to those projects in full. No part is needed to cover home office expenses. The core work of UMCOR—responding to disasters, fighting hunger, alleviating poverty, providing relief supplies around the world, and offering hospitality to immigrants and refugees—gets 100% of the money donated for those purposes.

Any funds gathered from this offering beyond what is needed for “doing business” are directed to projects not otherwise fully funded by designated gifts. Because of your giving, UMCOR is also able to attract matching funding from other charitable organizations.

Whether it is providing shelter, food on the table, access to health care, a well or a fuel-efficient stove, your dollars are at work around the world the year round. Keep in mind that, unlike most other disaster relief organizations, UMCOR stays on the job until the job is done. Our mission trips to New Orleans, for instance, are an example of that principle at work.

Please give generously on March 22. [Your gifts change lives.](#)

FROM OUR MISSIONARIES

Over the years we have had a number of missionaries visit our church. We recently heard from three of the United Methodist missionaries we have met in the past.

First is **Meri Whitaker** to whom we have made a commitment to raise \$2500 toward her support each year as part of our covenant relationship. She is assigned to Cookson Hills Center in Cookson, Oklahoma. Just after Christmas she wrote:

“The day was cold and a brisk wind was blowing. I waited among the trees as the family passed by, the dried leaves crunching under their feet. The casket was set in place and the funeral director played a song on a scratchy CD. I cried quietly as they lowered Thomas Blackbird into the ground and we all filed by to drop a handful of dirt down into the hole. The Cherokee call this the last handshake. As I stood shivering I was reminded once again why I am here in Cookson doing the work that God has called me to do. Thomas was a regular participant at the Cookson Hills Center. He came from a poor background and spoke very little English but he came to us because he felt loved and affirmed as a child of God. He knew that he could count on Cookson anytime life got hard for him. Thomas was a traditional Cherokee and yet on the day that he died I received several phone calls from family and friends saying that they really wanted me to be present for the services. Times like these are when I know that we continue to be effective as we work to serve the last, the lost, and the least of Cherokee, Adair and Sequoyah Counties.”

Dr. Chris Hena is now working in Kazakhstan. This past year she has encountered difficulties with the government that remind her of her days as a medical student in the former Soviet Union.

“We won a court case against us over some medications that we received. False accusations against our work by a local physician in one of the villages almost led to the refusal of the government granting me a work visa. After presenting the facts and much prayers, the charges were dropped and I received my work visa in December for another year.

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Missions continued

"In September we hosted a work team from Granbury, TX They saw first hand the kind of work we do in the community with our patients. Needless to say, they were very impressed with our community health workers. We also took them to a rehab center—alcohol and drugs, where they met young men and women recovering from their situation. At the center the work team heard stories of how God was working amongst the people living there. . . . On a sad note, the local authorities closed the center three days ago—illegal religious activities. What a shame!

"VBS had to be cancelled last year due to the new regulations by the government. Not sure we will be having one this summer. . . . The soup kitchen was also scheduled to start this January, but we are still working on ways that will meet the requirements of the government, and also meet the needs of those that will be eating. Things are becoming so complicated, but, you know, this is the time that we need

to keep our focus on what we've been called to do."

Robert and Elaine Landis went to Red Bird Mission in Kentucky as single teachers in 1962. They married and have served there for almost 47 years. Along with family news, Elaine wrote:

"Our coal company is going strong. [They live in a former Mary Helen coal camp.] There are around 300 people employed mining underground and strip mining on the top of the mountain. For months CSX has been repairing the railroad tacks so the coal can be hauled out. Mary Helen is getting to be a congested area with constant traffic in and out. A gate with a new guardhouse for the mines is being put in at the bottom of our hill. It will make it easier for people coming to the church to get on the correct road. We are glad to see people working here.

We are still troubled over the number of people whose income is minimum wage or those who have no income. At Christmas time be-

cause of generous gifts from friends we were able to assist 11 families associated with our churches to have a Christmas for themselves and their children. The drug trafficking has slowed down. Many people are receiving help in recovering and a lot of the dealers have been arrested. But families are still suffering because of economic issues, as thousands of people across the nation are caught in the crisis.

Our churches are doing well, with both churches [Crank's Creek and Mary Helen] showing signs of growth in number and spiritual development. People are coming into a knowledge of Jesus not only as Savior, but as Lord of their lives. After being here for over thirty years, it is exciting to see babies grow up and take leadership in the church."

This is just a sampling of the stories our missionaries have to tell. Please keep them in your prayers as they reach out to others in the name of the Lord around the nation and the world.

Church Council Report

Aldersgate Church Council met on Thursday, January 15, 2009. We started with a special Charge Conference that commenced to recommend Philip Vitullo as a candidate to be ordained in ministry. We also recommended that Zuni Simons be appointed for local lay speaker.

Worship Committee reported that 60 new Bibles will be placed in the sanctuary in the near future with the funds coming from the Memorials Fund.

In lieu of Quarterly reports to the Church Council, committees will now only present Annual Reports. These should be given to Candy Metzger in writing at the beginning of January. If there are concerns before annual report time, these should be brought to the Church Council.

The Nominations Committee will be meeting in January and there is a need for members of this committee as well as members to fill several open positions throughout the Church. We look forward to everyone prayerfully accepting an opportunity to serve when called. Volunteers to serve are most welcome!!

At the March 19 Council meeting, 7:00 o'clock, we will start with a time of Leadership Strategic Planning session. This will be in lieu of our Saturday morning meetings and all who attended those sessions and anyone else interested in Church leadership is invited to attend as we continue to work on our mission of "Transforming Lives and Serving Christ with Joy".

SERVING IN OUR WORSHIP SERVICES IN MARCH

SCRIPTURE READERS

	9:30 AM	11:00 AM
3/1	George Shukitis	Nancy Young
3/8	Rodger Burkhart	Wilma Shaughnessy
3/15	Marissa Peck	Nancy Brehm
3/22	Scott Wagner	Nancy Bader
3/29	Cori Loudon	Mary Sims



USHER SCHEDULE

	9:30 AM	11:00 AM
3/1	Sammy Hanko	Amanda Farrell, Chase Tyler
3/8	Edward Carstens	Rebecca Lindeman, Ryan Lindeman
3/15	Brianna Kephart	Nick Spicer, Mike Spicer
3/22	Allison McHugh	Renee Tibbles, Caleb Thompson
3/29	Usher	Usher

	9:30 AM	11:00 AM
3/1	Al & Myrt Holmes, Dan & Jan Rothfuss,	Tom & Zuni Simons Terry & Nancy Young
3/8	Al & Myrt Holmes, Susan DeVincentis, Evelyn Welker	Walt Dunn, Candy Metzger Scott Wiley, John Cochran
3/15	Al & Myrt Holmes, Dan & Jan Rothfuss	Dean & Jackie Hogestyn, Gary Hogestyn, Denise Furey
3/22	Al and Myrt Holmes Hal Wagner, Scott Wagner	Vince and Laura Acciaio Eric Bock, Colleen Tyler
3/29	Al and Myrt Holmes Joan Michlin, Larry Van Allen	Nancy Bader, Walt Dunn John and Karen Best

OUR CHURCH STAFF IS HERE TO SERVE

Anne O'Connor, Pastor	621-4799 aoconnor@aumcgreece.org
Gerald A. Wolter, Pastor of Visitation & Membership Care	621-1904 hgwolter@frontiernet.net
Kim Hines, Youth Minister	352-4321 khines@aumcgreece.org
Jane Guitson, Christian Education Coordinator	544-7787 jguitson@rochester.rr.com
Candy Metzger, Administrative Assistant	663-3665 cmetzger@aumcgreece.org
Tamara Ruiz, Organist	truiz@aumcgreece.org
David Rogenmoser, Choir Director	drogenmoser@aumcgreece.org
Kevin Brown, ACWT Worship Leader	kbrown@aumcgreece.org
Debbie Simm, ACWT Administrative Leader	dsimm@aumcgreece.org
Lea McQuown, Custodian	
Evelyn Welker, Housekeeper	
Robin Fox, Nursery Attendant	

Aldersgate Web Site: www.aumcgreece.org

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