



UNTO YOU

August, 2011

“Itinerating”

By Charles Martindell

I have a unique opportunity in the early days of August this summer. I get to talk to some of the North Carolina United Methodist Churches about life and ministry in Alaska. I should say that Karen and I have a unique opportunity to do this, because Karen is also participating fully in our presentations. This isn't the first time that I have “itinerated” from ministry here, but I still feel like I am a relative newcomer to Alaska. So I find myself trying hard to not come across as some kind of Alaska-expert. Is everyone familiar with the term “itinerate” when it comes to Alaska United Methodist pastors? It means we visit in other parts of the U.S. and share about what is happening in ministry in Alaska. The goals of itinerating include several things. One is that as a “missionary conference” in the United Methodist Church, the clergy who serve in Alaska are members of a different conference and are “on loan” to Alaska for a year at a time to serve in one of this conference's churches. It helps to “tell our stories” as part of how future Alaska United Methodist clergy are identified. Sometimes the goal is to raise funding for the ministries or building projects (etc.) that are happening somewhere in the Alaska conference. Another goal is to simply say “thank you” and share updates with people who have helped us in the past. It is this goal that is most of all behind Karen and my itineration to western North Carolina. We'll speak at the church where Jack Koontz is from, as well as several other congregations in that region- many of which have sent people as part of Jack's construction teams who have been coming to Alaska to serve in support of many of our ministries for over 20 years. Many of us can remember and are still so very thankful, for the construction projects that Jack and his teams have brought to Homer.

What has surprised me most of all about “itinerating” is how spiritually renewing I find it to be! On a personal level, the experience has caused me to reflect on my sense of God with us here, and that has been good for my soul. We use everything from a Power Point slide show, to a vile of authentic ash from the 2009 eruption of Mt. Redoubt to share about what it is like to live and serve God in this amazing part of the world. We share some of the stories that so many of you have shared with us, about homesteading and the changes and challenges/blessings you've known over the years. The way this church and community has shared themselves with us helps us know how to share with others. More than anything else, I think that is what “itinerating” is all about.

August 7th – Rev. David Beckett, Conference Superintendent

Our guest speaker on August 7th will be David Beckett. His sermon that day will be “What Does a Healthy Church Look Like?” Following the Fellowship Hour after church on August 7th, Dave will share a presentation about the behaviors of healthy churches. All committee chairs and church leaders, as well as any interested person are encouraged to attend.

Other Special Guest Speakers this Summer

On July 31st, Erin Cline will be the guest speaker and Erin's sermon will be “To The Edges”.

On August 14th, Rev. Leila Disburg (Conference Director of Connectional Ministries) will be our guest preacher. Thank you to everyone who is helping lead us in vital worship over these special Summer Sundays!

Final Push Project Update

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the efforts of our Final Push program to bring the Building Project to full completion. Only a few more items remain to be completed. The most significant of those is the new siding on the exterior of the church. We are getting closer to having enough funding on hand to move forward with this next part of the push, and that is due to the faithful contributions of so many. Here is where things stand to date:

Goal to be raised by the church (by September 2013):	100,000.00
Total Committed to date:	61,309.00
Total Given to date:	58,153.00

Active Parenting Classes Offered

On Mondays July 25th, August 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd, 6:30 to 8:30 in the Church Knitting room, Sherry Stead is offering the Active Parenting series to help parents of children 8 to 12 with some of the keys to raising responsible children who are able to resist negative peer pressure. The church's Witness Committee has helped to underwrite the start up fees to this course and the cost for the book is \$15. If anyone needs help with that expense to be able to fully participate in this excellent study, please contact the pastor. Help pass the word and plan to attend if this sounds helpful to you. Contact Sherry if you have any questions (235-1320).

A Word of Thanks

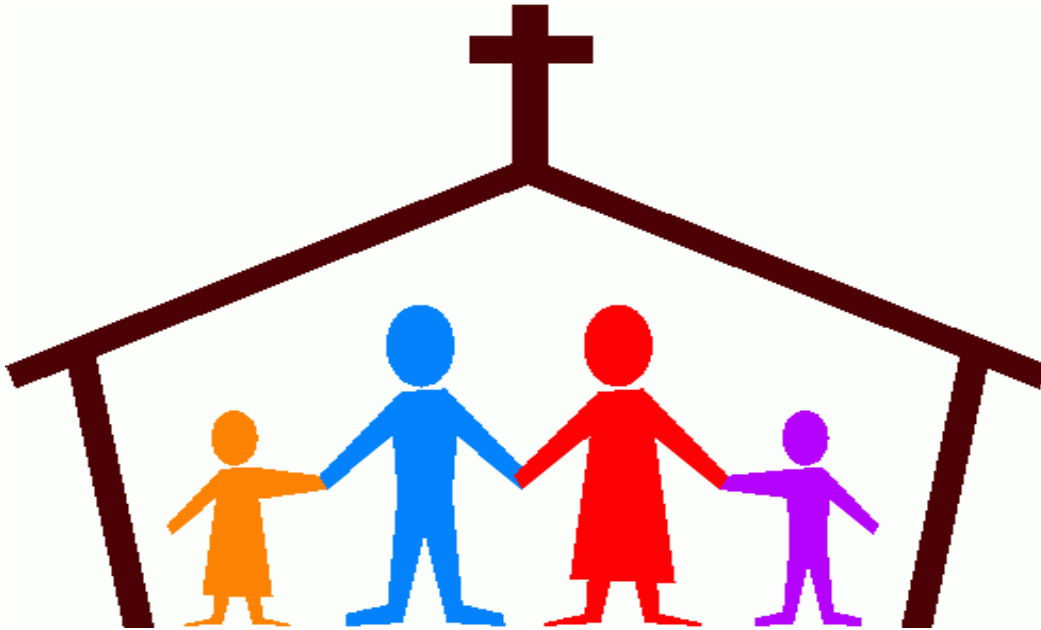
Dear Friends in Mission:

Thank you for your gift in support of the UMCOR projects: “Global Undesignated UMCOR support” and “Japan Emergency (Tsunami/earthquake relief)”. Because you gave, UMCOR is able to “Be There” and “Be Hope” on your behalf. UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) programs provide food for the hungry, help farmers grow plentiful and nutritious food, and support people left destitute by natural disasters and war. You can find out more about UMCOR's work by visiting our website at <http://www.umcor.org>. Please let us know if you have questions and/or concerns, as we welcome the opportunity to speak with you. The Gift Processing Unit can be reached at 212-870-3611. Your recent gifts will bring hope to those who need it most.

Grace and Peace, Roland Fernandes, General Treasurer United Methodist Committee on Relief, General Board of Global Ministries

Church Financial Update

The church Finance Committee continues to manage the church's regular (not Building Committee) Budget. So far in 2011, our expenses have been close to what has been projected, while our giving is pretty typical to this point in the year. All bills and all Denominational Apportionments (Mission support) are fully paid and are up to date. As is often the case during the summer months, we go through any reserve funds that are available for ministry. If we continue to give as we are able and live out the stewardship of joyful giving in response to God, there will be enough to fulfill God's call to ministry in the Homer community. Particularly encouraging is all the 2nd mile (extra efforts) giving that happens through the Homer United Methodist family. Emergency needs in the lives of our loved ones close to home, as well as world-wide outreach to places far away who are trying to recover from natural disasters of many kinds... all of these have received tangible signs of God's love in part because of what this church continues to do! We can all celebrate the signs that God is with us, that Christ lives in our hearts, and that the Spirit is using the commitment of this church to make a difference in lives around the world.



Children's Church Open House on Sunday, Sept. 4

Following the 11 am worship service on Sunday, Sept. 4, there will be an open house for children and parents to come and see the new classroom for the 2011-2012 church year. A calendar of upcoming lessons and "what to expect" will be shared. Children's Church is provided each Sunday during worship for children in grades K-5 (with the exception of the first Sunday of each month when we celebrate communion together.) Children's Church will begin the following Sunday, September 11. Please come and join us downstairs in the first room off of the Orange room.