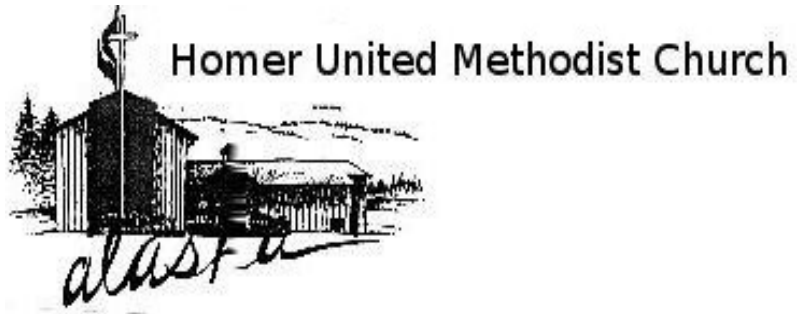


UNTO YOU

October, 2011



“Blessing of the Pets”

By Charles Martindell

“We've never done this before”... or maybe we have, and I just don't know about it. In any case, on Saturday, October 8th at 2pm, we are going to offer a Blessing of the Pets service to each other and to the Homer community. We're still finding our way with this service, and I appreciate the help we've received already (thanks to the help of some of our Alaska United Methodist churches who have held such services). But I think something special is coming together for our celebration of God's love that we know through our pets. Here's where things stand so far:

- We are working with the Homer Animal Shelter with this event. Any donations received on the day of the Blessing will be given in support of their services in the Homer area.
- People from the church are needed as early as 1pm to help with logistics.
- Bring your own pet (BYOP).
- The service will happen in the church parking lot. Mostly in the area outside of the Sun Room.
- This is a brief service. The culmination of the service will be a procession of pets brought past an altar we set up, as they come by, I will offer a prayer of thanks and for God's blessing in celebration of the gifts which our pets bring to our lives.
- Jim Hornaday has agreed to sing a song for special music.
- We plan to sing through some of the verses of the hymn “For the Beauty of the Earth”.

I want to encourage everyone of the church to come together for this effort on October 8th. Greet people you know. Meet people you don't recognize, and offer a word of welcome. Along with the obvious spiritual value of prayer and thanking God for gifts in our lives, this is a service that offers an invitational witness to our community. Every one of us is needed for that. And when it comes to opportunities to offer an invitational witness to our community, even if we've never tried it like this before, it won't only be the pets who experience a blessing!



Small Groups

We are currently organizing for small groups in the church. These groups will meet during the coming several months and the purpose is to continue to strengthen our fellowship as a church family. Sign Ups are located in the Church entry area. Here are the groups being featured:

Pot Luck groups – groups of 6 to 8 who meet once a month in people's homes to share a meal and visit together. This group might also choose to have some of their meals at church, instead of always in each other's home.

Eat-Out groups – groups of 6 to 8 who choose an area restaurant (usually after Fellowship time on Sundays) to go out to eat together.

Knitting Group – open to all knitters, this group meets at church on 2 Tuesdays each month. They enjoy knitting and visiting.

Cooking Group – groups of 6 to 8 who meet once a month in people's homes (or at church if preferred) for a Pot Luck meal that will include a demonstration of how to cook a favorite recipe that will also be a part of the Pot Luck meal.

Reading Group – groups of 6 to 8 who will choose a book to read, and then meet for desserts to discuss the reading.

Haven House would like to thank the members of the Homer United Methodist Church for the use of your beautiful space. We are very grateful for all you do. *Peg Coleman, Executive Director*

ALL-CHURCH POT LUCK Planned for October 9th

Plan to come to our next ALL-CHURCH Pot Luck meal that happens after worship on Sunday, October 9th. Everyone is invited and our theme is "Autumn Treats – Potatoes". Some fun activities to share are planned for the child in us all, and for our children of all ages! See you on October 9th.

Received from a recently visiting couple: *"We loved the whole worship service and the congregation is one that is very friendly and loving. We both felt very welcomed and enjoyed our time with your people in fellowship following the service."*

Free Community Meal – October 27th

We are celebrating that the monthly Free Community Meals have been offered for a whole year now. The response has been encouraging to be sure, and we thank the Outreach leaders and everyone who has participated in so many ways! This month's meal is on October 27th, 5:30 to 7:00. We'll have a sign up a couple weeks prior. The purpose of this ministry is threefold: To continue putting our new Kitchen and Fellowship hall in service to our community; to provide a good meal to people who may need one; to help us as a church get to know our neighbors better.

Let's Say "Welcome!" to Min Hui Cui

We want to introduce Min Hui Cui (pronounced, Min-Way-Twooey), as our Nursery Supervisor. Min Hui has lived in Alaska for the past 18 months and moved to the U.S. from China where she taught history in a college. Min Hui's caring nature and kind heart has already blessed those of us who are getting to know her. She can be greeted on Sundays, so stop by the Nursery and say hello. The Staff Parish Relations committee is delighted to introduce Min Hui to the church! We also want to say THANK YOU to Terry Mayhew who has cared for our Nursery over the past several months. Terry did a wonderful job with our children, and it is greatly appreciated!



4-Week, Wednesday Home Bible Study

We are offering this study to provide for another small-group setting to help us grow spiritually through Bible Study and discussion. Space will be limited to 7, and we'll be meeting at the parsonage. If you are interested, but are not a part of the initial group, we'll offer this study periodically so everyone gets a chance to experience a small-group home Bible Study. Topics covered will vary, depending on group wishes. Sign up on one of the Sunday Bulletin Connect slips. **ONLY SIGN UP IF YOU WILL BE IN TOWN** Oct 19, 26 and Nov. 2, 9. We'll meet 6:30 to 8:00.

The Journey - Mission Education Retreat - December 2-4, 2011 - The Inn at Tern Lake - Moose Pass, AK

The Alaska Conference United Methodist Women will be sponsoring a retreat based on the book, the journey: forgiveness, restorative justice and reconciliation by Stephanie Hixson and Thomas Porter. The authors invite readers to experience the study as a personal and social transformation where each one can discover their unique gifts for the ministry of reconciliation. The retreat will be held at the Inn at Tern Lake (www.ternlakeinn.com.)

To see the agenda and for more information about the retreat, go to:

[http://alaskaumc.org/wp-](http://alaskaumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/retreat-118-2011.pdf)

E-SCRIP Time

It's renewal and new sign-up time for the Safeway e-scrip program. Since January, Safeway has donated \$214.48 to Homer United Methodist Church based on their profit from the purchases of people who have signed up. **NONE** of this donation came out of the shopper's pocket. If you need to renew your e-scrip sign-up or would like to sign-up for the first time, please go to www.escrip.com and designate Homer United Methodist Church (group # 163942639) as the recipient.

