

The Messenger

United Methodist Church – 2210 Sixth Avenue East, Alexandria, MN 56308

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December 2011

Editor: Colleen Schutte

Dear Friends,

I was feeling a bit wobbly. It seemed my heart was trying out some new rhythms, ones that I could not get in sync with, and did not appreciate. Now I like variety in ways. But where my heart is concerned a regular thump-thump, thump-thump, thump-thump is just fine; regular enough that I don't even think about it. Well, I was getting some thump----thumpety-thump-thump-----THUMP!s that kept knocking on the door, so to speak. And they wouldn't go away.

As some of you know, my dad died of a heart attack at 52. So, any sort of heart stuff in our family gets our attention, and dials up the anxiety pretty quickly. Still, I really don't like going to the doctor. Nothing against doctors. I'm happy to see them in church. I just don't care to visit them in their little rooms with the various needles and shiny metal instruments. But, with a little prompting and some mild threats from Julie and Trystan ("I'll tell your mom and your sister!") I made the appointment.

A little EKG, a little blood (needles!), and then getting attached to a portable monitor for the weekend (bet you didn't even notice the extra cords and wires last Sunday morning, did ya?), and hopefully I'd find out what was going on.

Sure enough. I have PVCs. Yup, that's right. No, it has no association with the plastic pipe that goes by the same letter designation. PVC in this case means Premature Ventricular Contraction. Pretty impressive, huh? That's what I thought. This should get me out of something for sure! (Sorry, dear, can't haul that heavy thingy up the basement steps, my PVCs might kick in. Thanks for the invitation to be on that high-stress, no-pay committee, bishop, but my PVCs just won't allow it. And, the thought of moving throws me into a conniption of premature ventricular contractions!) This would be better than Uncle Joe's double-detached slipped disc!

No such luck. They are quite common, not dangerous if you're reasonably healthy and don't have heart disease. They're just a nuisance. And it's up to the PVC "sufferer" to determine if they're enough of a nuisance to be treated. It figures. A nuisance. Not that I want something dangerous. No, I'm not interested in that. I want to **be** dangerous.

I want us to be dangerous, not just a nuisance, which is how I think the church is often perceived. I want us to be a serious threat to the continuing practice of warfare and torture. I want us to endanger hunger and homelessness and poverty. I want us to make greedy, cruel people seriously afraid that they're going out of business for good! I want politicians who are in it for the money or the power or the ego-boost to look our way and shudder and curse, "Drat! (That's how they curse you know.) Those Methodists! Can't get away with anything as long as they're around!"

One of the pieces I read in preparing for last Sunday said that central to the work of the church is to "keep alive the dangerous memory of Jesus." The writer was making the case that Jesus, in his loving, self-giving, truth-telling, compassionate fierceness threatened the ugly, cruel, greedy, hateful, thoughtless ways and people of his time. His people of this time still should, don't you think?

Shalom, Jeff

Parish News

Confirmation Class...confirmed on Oct. 30:

Jocelyn Gettel Brittany Stanbra
Walker Merten Dayton Stanbra
Madalyn Winger

Congratulations to:

Ben and Sarah Erie (and Grandma Mel Hanson)
on the birth of their daughter, Nia LeeAnn, on
on October 26, 2011.

David and Amanda Galbraith, and big sister
Desiree, on the birth of Caleb LeRoy on Nov. 4th
(and to Grandparents Dennis & Susan Brede).

New Members:

Kyle and Kayla Nelson, and sons Everett and
Wyatt have joined Alex UMC. They have
Transferred from St. Mary's Catholic Church.
They live at 8571 Centennial Dr, Garfield,
56332, 834-2095.

Baptized:

Bryson Scribner, son of Jeremy and Ashley
Scribner, was baptized on November 13th.
His sponsors are Peter and Amber Hentges.

Published by the United Methodist Church
of Alexandria

Telephone (320) 763-4624

Pastor: Jeffrey Hansen

Secretary/Treasurer: Colleen Schutte

Custodian: Denise Dropik

Organists: Kirk Landman and Gale Maxwell

Nursery: Amanda Winther & Amber Krienke

Office Hours

Jeff – Tuesday (3-5 pm)

Thursdays (10-12 noon, 3-5 p.m.)
by appointment at other times

Office is Open

Monday through Friday 9:00-1:00

Colleen – Mon-Tue-Wed-Thu-Fri

Worship Attendance

	2011		2010	
	8:00	10:30	8:00	10:30
Oct. 23	55	91	59	95
Oct. 30	56	153	63	195
Nov. 6	63	83	65	122
Nov. 13	56	86	54	115
Nov. 20	81	79	55	100

Please call ahead if you wish to come in to the office. There are times when we are not in the building, even though we are working. We recommend that you call to see if the person you wish to meet with is in. There also are many days when someone is in the office later than 1:00 p.m.

Publication Date for the next Messenger:

is the last week of Dec.
Articles submitted for the
January issue need to be in
the office by NOON on
Tuesday, December 20th.

As of Oct. 1st the anticipated
amount needed by 12/31 to
pay all 2011 obligations: **\$93,000.00**
Received through Nov. 13th: **\$39,972.42**
Amount needed by Dec. 31st: **\$53,027.58**

DECEMBER VOLUNTEERS

Liturgists:

8:00 December 4 & 11—Jeff Reed December 18 & 25—Adrian Ledermann
10:30 December 4 & 11—Sue Helgeson December 18 & 25—Bruce Jordan

Ushers:

8:00—Linda Cole, Scott and Vicki Johnston
10:30—Chuck Bollen, Kim Tryggeseth, Dave Nelson, Chris Springman

Greeters:

Dec. 4	8:00—Aaron & Brenda Thomson family	10:30—Arlue Beheng
Dec. 11	8:00—Jerry & Jeanne Miller	10:30—Marge Jenson
Dec. 18	8:00—Bob & Bev Vikander	10:30—Jean Bristow
Dec. 25	8:00—no worship service	10:30—Connie & Betty Springman

Coffee Servers:

Dec. 4—Ron & Kathy Reiber, Curt & Betty Sax
Dec. 11—John & Margaret Schroeder, Mike & Julie Shaughnessy
Dec. 18—Heather Cogger, Scott & Sheila Cummins
Dec. 25—?????

Organists:

Dec. 4—Gale Maxwell
Dec. 11—Kirk Landman
Dec. 18—Gale Maxwell

Nursery Workers:

Dec. 4 & 18—Amanda Winther Dec. 11 & 25—Amber Krienke

From Church Council:

Due to decreased staffing levels and the need to protect our staff and parishioners, we have deemed it necessary to implement the following Safe Sanctuary Policy Procedure. The Safe Sanctuary Policy calls for church entrance doors to remain locked unless there are two people present in the building. Those people can be staff, congregation members, or other users, but must be two people. If you are coming to church at a time when we normally have someone present, give a quick call to the office and ask them to watch for you...or better yet, if you have a cell phone, program the office number in (320-763-4624) and call when you arrive. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience, but the safety of persons in our church is our primary consideration and concern.

FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE: The Trustees are securing quotes for a security system with the intention of installing it in two phases as funds become available. The first phase would be an intercom, with camera, located at the Youth/Education wing west entrance. The monitoring station for the system located in the office, will allow staff to determine who is at the door using the intercom/camera, allowing them to make a determination if the door should be unlocked. Again, we regret the inconvenience this causes, but safety is our primary concern. It is our hope that this phase can be installed for approximately \$2,000.

The second phase would provide motion detectors and door contacts which would trigger an alarm should entry be made when the building is un-occupied and locked. This would avoid anyone entering the building to find any unauthorized intruder. Again, we anticipate an additional cost of about \$2,000 for the second phase.

If you are interested in helping to fund the installation of the security system, note "security system" in the memo portion of your check or on your donation envelope.



In your prayers, remember LaVonne Ahlstedt, Luella Beto, Del Blair, Linda Caron, Lowell Gess, Barb Glanville, Marilyn Graczyk, Kathy Kelly, Virginia Ketter, Edith Laird, Mel Nomsen, Helen Paulson, Carolyn Randall, and Char Schroeder.

Northstar District Prayer List:

- Nov. 30—Dec 6 - Thief River Falls UMC
- Dec. 7-13 - Vergas UMC
- Dec. 14 –20 - Verndale UMC
- Dec. 21-27 - Central UMC in Verndale
- Dec. 28-Jan 3 - Villard UMC



The balance in the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund is getting low. If you would like to make a contribution to this fund, over and above your normal giving, please mark “Disc. Fd” in the memo section of your check. Thank you!



Volunteers needed for Christmas Eve Worship Services

Needed at both worship services on Christmas Eve (5 & 7 pm): Liturgists, Ushers, Advent Reader / candlelighters, Communion assistants, Greeters. Call the church office if you can help.

Holiday Schedule

Sunday, December 25th
ONE Worship Service at
10:30 AM



Adult Fellowship—6:00 pm,
December 13th at Holiday Inn.
Jefferson Carolers at 7:00 PM.



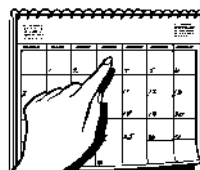
First Sunday Potluck
All church potluck on Sunday, December 4th, following the 10:30 worship service. Bring a dish to share and join in the fellowship. If your last name begins with A-C, please plan on hosting (set up, beverage prep, and clean up.). See you there!!

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

- ♥ Dennis & Susan Brede for the donation to complete the playground project.
- ♥ Arlue Beheng, Carol Meyer and Shirley Bruckner for their help in washing the windows and screens in the Fellowship Hall. Working along side Denise and with her able direction, they knocked out this project in record time and then enjoyed a cup of coffee.
- ♥ Those who contributed to the new thermostat project which has been installed and is working great—Helen Glade, Merle Olson, Roger & Bev Parks, Carolyn Randall, Jim & Luverne Adams, Diane Strehlow, Mark & Lorene Pitcher, Kathleen Haining, Don & Connie Mehesan—and to Audra Bartell for the donation of the new thermostat!
- ♥ The Hayes and Schutte’s for donations to the security system project.
- ♥ The Dropiks for the donation of the white board in one of the classrooms.

Elden’s Card Program

\$24,100—amount purchased through Nov. 13th
\$23,550—amount sold through Nov. 13th
\$1,177.50—amount generated for General Fund
Please consider purchase a card(s) for use at Elden’s Foods—we have \$25, \$50 and \$100 cards—and using them when you shop at Elden’s. They make great gifts, too! Cards are available on Sunday mornings between worship services—or at the church office, Mon-Fri from 9 am to 1 pm. What an easy way to generate some income for our church!



Reminder. . .the monthly calendar is now part of the web page: www.alexumc.org. On the left hand side, click on “calendar”...you will be able to choose which month you wish to view and/or print. We have the whole year on there (as much as we have right now). Be sure to check the calendar frequently as things may be added or changed.

Mike Shaughnessy gave a presentation during worship on November 13th. We asked to publish it in the newsletter:

I'm Mike Shaughnessy

Julie and I have been members of Alexandria United Methodist Church for 6 years. I am on the Finance committee and she is on the Trustees. No, I am not a paid employee of Elden's.

Alexandria UMC is my church and our church and your church. It is our building, our staff, our worship, our service, & our programs.

Just like many of us at home, our church has a mortgage, electric bills, heating bills, phone bills, things to buy, and things to repair, which we have to pay for every month. Some of us even have our bills paid automatically by the bank every month.

In addition we and our family spend our hard earned money at the video store, at Red box, Netflix, the movie theater, plays, concerts, a health and fitness club, football, basketball, or hockey games for entertainment, and we usually have to pay for that.

Our church is not just another form of entertainment, as each Sunday and throughout the week we come here and experience enrichment, growth, support and much more. But like a movie or game we somehow need to pay for and support our church. The **church's** bills and costs are **our** bills and costs. When Julie and I got married 43 years ago, I changed from Catholic to Methodist. We were told about pledging to support the church. Initially our reaction was "we don't believe in pledging", "we don't know how much we can afford", "we can't afford to pay on my starting salary", and "we don't come every week, we will pay whenever we come".

Finally we started pledging 39 years ago at one of our former churches in Denver. I think it was only \$5.00 a week, way back then, as I was going to school, but gradually we increased our pledge every year as we could best afford it. At least once or twice we decreased it when our income was way down.

As we got more involved with our church family, and close friends, and close friends' families, we gave more as we felt more a part of that church. Finally one year it just became a line item in our monthly budget, and we just sent the check every month if we were there or not, and then finally we just used monthly bank electronic (automatic payment).

No one likes to ask, talk, or even think about that part of money. I certainly don't and I certainly don't know anything about anyone else's ability to contribute, and I am certainly not bragging about how much we contribute because it probably isn't enough.

But I am asking you to support our church. Pledge if you possibly can, increase your current pledge if you can. If you still feel that you can't pledge, provide us with an **estimate** of your annual, monthly, or weekly offering. Please make some personal commitment to support our church, even if it is what you consider a minimal amount per week. Every dollar helps. If there is any way you can commit to an automatic bank electronic payment that is even better as it really helps our budget to receive the money flowing regularly throughout the year. Our church can't reasonably function on a pay as you go status, like the movie theater, and health and fitness clubs have regular monthly dues.

How serious is this? We have cut our planned budget for next year, 2012, \$50,000 from the planned budget for this year, 2011. We have had to reduce staff and programs through attrition, and elimination. The Pastor Parish Relations Committee will be providing you more details on this soon. Our planned budget at this time is approximately \$331,000.

Our pledges as of Thursday 11/10 are \$157,000 or 47% of what we need to pay salaries, our mortgage, church programs, and all our monthly bills and expenses. We have only received back 82 of 306 pledge cards sent out (including youth), that is 33 less pledges than last year.

Yes, money will roll in throughout the year from those who don't believe that they can pledge and partially solve the gap, but that makes it awfully hard to pay those bills and salaries each month and afford new or even existing programs. Some months members of the finance committee have to meet to decide which bills get paid, and which get delayed, because we don't have the money to pay all our bills.

Someone told me that this presentation would be like "preaching to the choir", but if you look up here in the sanctuary, there isn't a choir. We can't afford one.

I am asking for your help. Please support our church the best that you can.

Thank you.

(From Finance Committee—If you have not already returned your pledge card, or if you wish to increase your pledge, or make an "estimate" of how you can help Alex UMC, please tear off and send in the card on the next page as soon as possible.)

**Step Forward
For 2012**

Intention for 2012

In gratitude and celebration of God's blessings, I/We estimate/pledge that I/we can give \$_____ per year/month/week (circle one)
(circle one)

We have already turned in a pledge card for 2012, but wish to increase our 2012 pledge by adding \$_____ per year/month/week for 2012.
(circle one)

In addition to the gifts above, I/we will support Alexandria United Methodist Church with our time and talents.

We chose to designate our giving as indicated:

\$_____ General Fund

\$_____ Apportionments

\$_____ Mortgage Payment

Name _____

Please Print

Signature _____

The recent Fall for Birds seminar held at Alex UMC was a smash hit for the attendees. They all were very appreciative of the speakers and are eager for another session next year. We were disappointed that we didn't have more people in attendance, but in view of the fact that we raised nearly \$170 for the Food Shelf from the Silent Auction and around \$150 for our church, we are grateful.

Thanks to our members that brought treats and home baked bread: Arlue Beheng, Helen Glade, Brenda Thomson, Linda DeWitt and Kathleen Pohlig. Thanks go out to Margaret Anderson, LaDonna Anderson, Helen Glade and Donna Phillips for serving lunch and cleaning up afterwards. Thank you to Carrie LiBaire, for your personal donations and all the planning. We appreciate the members of the Alexandria Garden Club for their assistance and the donations to the Silent Auction which were received from several Douglas County Master Gardeners.

Lastly, thank you to the congregation of the Alexandria United Methodist Church for your willingness to share your facility with the community.

Carol Meyer



Grandkids or other young ones coming to your house during the holidays? Do you want to offer them Octopus Dogs or Cat's Eye's to eat? Maybe you can follow up by making Slime or Bubbles! Check out page 269 of Our Favorite Recipes published on behalf of the Alexandria United Methodist Church in 2009. If you are more traditional, there are 700+ recipes for many tasty treats in this book that has been selling for \$12 and is now on sale through the end of the year for only \$10.

A wonderful companion to Our Favorite Recipes is Helpful Hints, which has been reduced in price from \$7 to \$5 for the remainder of 2011. Purchase both books for \$14. One or both of these books would make wonderful Christmas gifts for anyone on your list—not just grandmas!

Parents Dec. 2011 update. . Cleona. . sparkle in her eyes; more strength; cut dad's hair; trimmed his finger nails; loves to be pampered. Reo...sometimes quiet; sometimes talkative and jokey; keeps wood fire in garage; ever the helpmate to mom. Delores (neighbor)...excellent caretaker; comes Mon-Sat; several hours each day; noon hot meals, groceries, medicines, etc.; will do anything for them. Kevin, our son...took them to Dad's (88 year brother's) funeral Mon 14; dad honor bear. That afternoon 4 pm their doctor came for their check up. Said, "Doing well for their ages." Muriel (99) goes to church with sister-in-law; out for the day with Kevin & Chuck...to her farm, visit old neighbor; visit Cleona & Reo; eat dinner at restaurant. Appreciate continued prayers for them. God Bless you all church families, Chuck and Brenda Bollen

GRATITUDE - HONOR - MEMORIAL OPPORTUNITIES

\$25.00	Weekly bulletin sponsorship
\$60.00	Mailing monthly Messenger
\$15.00	Biodegradable paper cups (200)
\$4,000	Security System
\$175.00	Bulletin Board Repair
\$1275	Repair Boiler Pump (which will help save on utility costs)
\$780.00	Water heater replacement in parsonage (\$400 received)

The above are special giving opportunities for those who wish to contribute toward a specific project. Contributions in any amount are appreciated.

From Trustees: Bulletin boards need to be remodeled and added for a cost of \$175 for materials. We are looking for a volunteer(s) to help Deb Parrott with re-corking the boards in the Fellowship/Kitchen hallway. New boards are to be installed in the hallway by the computer library and in two of the classrooms (one has already been installed). If you are interested in helping to fund the bulletin boards, please note "bulletin boards" in the memo section of your check or on your donation envelope.



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|--|---|---|
| <p>1 Marlene Olhausen</p> <p>2 Dave Campbell
D'Vee Christopherson
Gerald Fearing</p> <p>3 Brad Brunkow
Grace Evink
Jaime Jost
John Phillips
Kim Stender
Sandra Wittkamp</p> <p>4 Abby DeReamer
Maggie Flenner
Bette Olson</p> <p>5 Linda DeWitt</p> <p>6 Darren Evink
Michelle Greengo</p> <p>7 Sammy Kakac</p> <p>8 Jeff Primus</p> | <p>9 Lisa Bowen
Amanda Galbraith
Elaine Schoening</p> <p>10 Zach Thomson</p> <p>11 Erik Melia
Becki Pender
Sarah Reed</p> <p>13 Elle Heydt</p> <p>14 Jay Mercier</p> <p>15 Travis DeWitt
Carter Erlandson
Joyce Hamelau
Richard Keepers
Greyson Mogler</p> <p>17 Jocelyn Gettel
Lollie Greengo
Steve Luchau
Jocelyn Olson</p> <p>18 Greg Phillips
Dotty Tabor</p> | <p>21 Will Hergott
Mason Mogler
Ted Zabrosky</p> <p>22 Holly Glade</p> <p>26 Merry Luchau</p> <p>27 Cora Bumgarner
Emily Merten
Bill Riggs</p> <p>28 Tanner Cogger</p> <p>29 Darianea Meyer
Gary Schuldt</p> <p>30 Nathan Brunkow
Kathryn Erickson
Pauline Hoiseth</p> <p>31 Justin Meyer
Curt Sax
Megan Westerberg</p> |
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