

The Messenger

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

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May 2011

Editor: Colleen Schutte

Dear Friends,

“Well, we’ll be able to work on that once we get Easter out of the way.” That’s what a fellow staff-member at a church where I worked at one time said at a staff meeting during Lent. Did you get that? Go back and read it again...or here, don’t bother to go back, here it is: “We’ll be able to work on that **once we get Easter out of the way.**”

Once we get Easter out of the way? But isn’t Easter the point?! Everything else fills in around it, including Christmas! (Gasp! Bite your tongue!) No, it’s true, not from the point of view of Target or Walmart I know, but from the Christian perspective, for church people, it is. A baby born in a barn, warmed by the body heat of animals, lullabied by angels, visited by shepherds and kings, that’s a wonderful story. But it’s one that pretty much everybody can handle. A man rising from the dead? Now that’s a different story altogether! That’s where, if you push people on it, the crowd thins out in a hurry.

And when I pointed out to this colleague what s/he had said, s/he was honestly horrified. “Did I really say that?” Yes. I played back the tape. S/he never really got over it. Okay, that’s not quite true, but it was a sort of Aha! moment for all of us. It’s stuck with me since. And, if you think about it, isn’t that central to what Easter proclaims?

This Jesus who is a pain in the neck to the authorities, and becomes a danger in their estimation as his following grows, who does not exercise proper respect for the ways and traditions of his people and thumbs his nose at those who challenge him on that score, finally succeeds in drawing enough attention to get himself killed. And that’s that. But it’s not.

The stories start to come in, the claims that he’s been seen, that he’s shown up where his scared-to-death followers are hiding out, so that they’re not hiding out anymore, nor are they going back home or going fishing or fading away. He’s back, and now so are they! And they are far more energized, articulate, and willing to face the music, whatever it is, than they’ve ever been before! And what does that say?

You can’t get him out of the way! He won’t go! This Jesus who was passionate about connecting justice and religion, peace and faith, prayer and life, will not quit. The God he apparently is so full of will not shut up, will not go away, will not be killed or buried or silenced or stopped!

Consider that as you think you’re going to go back to life as it was – the Risen Christ is in your way. As you balance your checkbook, consider how to spend what you’ll make in the weeks ahead, plan your summer – the Easter One is standing right in front of you. As you listen to the debate over a national budget that would boost spending on weapons and war, while leaving in place tax reductions for the wealthiest, and would then reduce funding for crucial programs to lift and support the people who need it – see the prophet from Nazareth shaking his head while he stands in the middle of the debate!

He’s there – speaking and challenging in the name of the God to whom it all, we all belong! He’s risen – to every occasion – and he’s not going away! Deal with it! Happy Easter!

Shalom,
Jeff

Parish News

Hospitalized Recently . . .

Edith Laird—now home

Congratulations to . . .

Megan Burkhammer and G.J. Schmidt on the birth of their daughter on March 23.

Happy Birthday to . . .

Marilyn Graczyk, who will celebrate her 80th birthday on May 14th.

Sympathy to . . .

Dave and Marsha Campbell on the death of Dave's brother, Richard, on March 24th.

Paula and Duff DeReamer and family on the death of Paula's niece in a car accident on April 16th.



In your prayers, remember LaVonne Ahlstedt, Luella Beto, Dave & Marsha Campbell and family, Duff & Paula DeReamer and family, Lowell

Gess, Barb Glanville, Marilyn Graczyk, Edith Laird, Tami Noding and Dan Olson.

The Northstar District Prayer Connection:

Apr. 27-May 3—Trinity UMC of Hoyt Lakes

May 4-10—Hubbard UMC

May 11-17—Kabetogama UMC

May 18-24—Kelly Lake UMC

May 25-31—Litchfield UMC

Worship Attendance

	2011		2010	
	8:00	10:30	8:00	10:30
Mar. 27	58	123	88	148
Apr. 3	69	100	155	202
Apr. 10	72	114	57	93
Apr. 17	93	135	81	125

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Parish Worker: Jocelyn Olson

Secretary/Treasurer: Colleen Schutte

Director of Youth & Children's

Ministries: Michelle Ferris

Custodian: Denise Dropik

Organists: Kay Hoffland, Kirk Landman,
Gale Maxwell

Choir Director: Kirk Anderson

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

Monday through Friday 9:00-1:00

Colleen – Mon-Tue-Wed-Thu-Fri

Jocelyn – Mon-Tue-Wed

Michelle – Tue and Thu – 9:00-4:00

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 may be times when someone is in the office later than 1:00 p.m.

Publication Date for the next *Messenger*:

is the last week of May. Articles submitted for the June issue need to be in the office by NOON on Friday, May 20th.

MAY VOLUNTEERS

Liturgists:

8:00 May 1, 8, 15—Heidi Ryan May 22 & 29—Shawn Reilly
10:30 May 1, 8, 15—Roy Good May 22 & 29—Carolyn Randall

Ushers:

8:00 – Bill & Arlana Langner, Char Schroeder
10:30 – Duff & Paula DeReamer, Scott Schlapkohl, Kim Tryggeseth

Acolytes:

	8:00	10:30
May 1	Kirsten Hastings	Brynne Pass & Jack Nelson
May 8	Calley Richardson	Francesca Jost & Ethan Scribner
May 15	Madeleine Evans	Jack Nelson & Emma Reilly
May 22	Evan Gettel	Robb Erlandson & Ethan Scribner

Greeters:

May 1	8:00—Brad & Kayla Brunkow	10:30—Kathleen Haining
May 8	8:00—Mike & Julie Shaughnessy	10:30—Betty Jene Heieie & Caryl White
May 15	8:00—Ted & Geri Zabrosky	10:30—Arlue Beheng
May 22	8:00—Gary & Heidi Becker	10:30—Jim & Luverne Adams
May 29	8:00—Rod & Dotty Tabor	9:30—Chuck & Sharon Holm

Coffee Servers:

May 1 Dave & Karen Morgan, Gary & Chris Schuldt
May 8 Jay & Deb Mercier, Bob & Bea Swenson
May 15 Mike & Audra Bartell, Brad & Kayla Brunkow
May 22 Jerry & Joyce Hamelau, John & Sue Helgeson
May 29 Dennis & Susan Brede, Roy & Connie Good

Organists:

May 1 – Kirk Landman
May 8—Gale Maxwell
May 15—Kirk Landman
May 22—Gale Maxwell
May 29—



Alex UMC served 140 guests at the April Community Breakfast and guests loved that it was the same day as the Easter Egg Hunt!

Thank you to those who donated their time, talent and otherwise to support the breakfast, including Brenda Bollen, Shirley Bruckner, Tom & Linda DeWitt, Sue & Toby Helgeson, Julie Hansen, DeeAnn Kraemer, Jackie Lybeck, Dave & Sarah Nelson, Mel & Dave Nomsen, Mike & Jocelyn Olson, Bruce Pohlig, Carolyn Randall, Shawn Reilly, Betty Springman, Marti Stember, Kelli Stember-Tung, Amanda Winther, Maggie Flenner, Aaron & Brenda Thomson, Sally & Andy Vano, Sue Merten, Samantha Winther and Mary & Jerry Wilkens. Many, many people stepped up to donate and help and if your name is accidentally missing, please know you are appreciated. Thank you all so much!

The next Community Breakfast will be May 14th. Watch for sign up sheets in the narthex if you'd like to help or donate food items.





SPRING SALAD LUNCHEON
THURSDAY, MAY 12TH
11:00 am—1:00 PM
Cost: \$6.00

Sign up sheets to bring salads, bars or to help will be in the narthex.

MCC (Mission Collection Center). . . A nice, new box has been donated to hold the MCC items you bring to church. The box is on a shelf in the narthex. If the lid is closed, just open it and place the items inside. The following is a list of items collected: *Box Tops for Education, Labels for Education, LOL caps, Milk Save Five for Schools, Pop Tabs* for Ronald McDonald House, *coins/cash* for Kissy Eye Hospital in Sierra Leone, *Eye Glasses & cases* for Kissy, *used or new greeting cards* (whole cards, no longer just fronts) for Alexandria Senior Center. Thanks for saving and sharing these items rather than discarding them.

On May 8th a special offering will be received for Native American Ministries Sunday. Special offering envelopes will be included in the bulletin, or you may mail your contribution to the church office with "Native American" noted in the memo section of your check.



A Book Study on "Wisdom Jesus" will begin the 1st week of May. If you are interested in participating, please call the church office as soon as possible. Date and time to be determined.

Reminder. . .that UMC has books for sale that are excellent buys for vacationers, graduates, brides, thank you gifts to share when visiting friends, or whatever occasion. *Our Favorite Recipes* and *Helpful Hints* are available on the shelves in the narthex.



May 8th is Mother's Day and also Blanket Sunday. For a \$5 donation to Church World Services Tools of Hope and Blanket Program, you will receive a chain of prayer beads to honor someone special on Mother's Day. To learn more about Church World Services Programs, visit their web: www.churchworldservice.org.
- Missions Committee



RUMMAGE Rummage Sale Results. . . Thanks to everyone who donated, purchased and/or helped in any way with the Annual Spring Rummage Sale. It was wonderful to have so much help setting up, working the sale and cleaning up afterwards. Proceeds from the sale (\$1,000) support mission work of the United Methodist Women. In addition, the sale offers affordable clothing and miscellaneous to many, plus an opportunity to recycle our abundance rather than discard items we no longer use. This spring the Caring and Sharing Room, Someplace Safe and the Senior Center benefitted from items which did not sell and The Epilepsy Foundation picked up the remaining items on Monday morning.



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.



PLEASE NOTE: The curbs along the sidewalk by the church will soon be painted yellow. Reminder: Please do not park in the handicap designated areas unless you have a handicap tag, and when dropping off or picking up at any of the curbside doors that you not leave your car unattended. Vehicles are not to be parked along the yellow painted curb as this marking designates our no parking fire lane. Thank you!



If you have a passion for mission work, then you'll want to read [Glorious Witnesses For Africa](#). Dr. Lowell Gess is a member of the Alexandria United Methodist Church and is a missionary, true disciple, and now...an author! His book tells of the wonderful growth of Christianity and United Methodists in Africa. It is also full of stories of other "beautiful missionaries". This book is for sale for \$10 in our narthex (\$15 if you'd like it mailed to someone). Half of that money will be given to our church in Alexandria and the other half will be sent to Kissy United Methodist Eye Hospital in Sierra Leone, Africa. Purchasing and sharing this book with others is a wonderful way to show your missionary compassion!



On April 1, 2011, Equal Exchange raised it's prices on the 2 pound bulk bags of whole bean coffee. The reason for this is that costs are skyrocketing—most notably the price of organic, fairly traded, coffee beans. **Why are prices going up?** There is a decreasing supply and an increasing demand for coffee beans across the board. Global warming and the resulting climate change are wreaking havoc on coffee production. Coffee plants rely upon periods of rain followed by sunny dry spells in order to flower, produce cherries and ripen. Without these regular "seasons", harvests around the globe are down. At the same time, demand for organic, fairly traded coffee has continued to rise, not only in the traditional consuming countries like the U.S., but increasingly in producer countries as well. The situation is further complicated by speculation in the commodities market. Traders are buying up supply and coffee contracts, assuming that prices will continue to increase. This becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, as less supply and fewer contracts are available. Coffee is at a 14 year high and still rising. **For right now.** . .our price for the 2 pound bulk bean bags will remain the same until our supply runs out. After that, there will be an increase of \$1.00. The smaller bag prices will not see a change in pricing.



All Church Potluck on Sunday, May 1st, following the 10:30 worship service. Bring a dish to share and join in the fellowship! If your last name begins with N-P, please plan on hosting (set-up, beverage prep and clean up). See you there!!!



Adult Fellowship Spring Fling. . . Tuesday, May 17th at Broadway Ballroom—supper served at 6 pm. Menu: sliced, slow roasted turkey and stuffing with natural gravy OR sliced roast beef in natural gravy—house salad with vinaigrette dressing, fresh baked bread with butter, baby red potatoes with sautéed onions, antiqua vegetable blend, cup vanilla ice cream with chocolate or caramel topping. This will be a plated dinner at round tables—\$12 (includes tax, tip, room, etc.) Program: Sue Walker will play a variety of music!!

Mark this date on your calendar. . .December 13th will be the 2011 Adult Fellowship Christmas Dinner. . .entertainment will be Roger and Doris Thompson

GRATITUDE - HONOR - MEMORIAL OPPORTUNITIES

\$ 25.00	Weekly bulletin sponsor
\$ 60.00	Monthly Messenger sponsor
\$ 15.00	Biodegradable paper cups (200)
\$825.00	New computer for office
\$255.00	Computer Installation
\$125.00	Computer Software
\$140.00	Tall Table for Narthex
\$ 80.00	1/2 of lot snow plowing
\$500.00	Shrubs for around church building



In November of 2010, Kathyne Erickson and her sewing group sent 500 dresses, 300 t-shirts and 36 pairs of shorts to Milbank, SD, to be packed and shipped to Sierra Leone, West Africa. In February, Roger and Melanie Reiners were in West Africa and helped distribute the dresses:

“Hi, Kathyne,

Sorry to be so slow in getting these pictures to you. We finally got some prints made this past weekend. The dresses are wonderful! We were able to distribute several at one clinic site while we were there. Dr. Buchan plans to carry boxes of the dresses with him as he travels on outreach to areas where the children many times do not have any clothing. He was excited to be able to bring a gift of this kind with him to the villages.

Hopefully, your group will be able to continue to make many, many more! God bless your work as you serve God by serving others in this most special way.

Sincerely, Melanie and Roger”

The sewing group meets at church the 1st and 3rd Monday during the school year. Along with the clothes they have made, they are also active quilters. In the past year they have donated quilts to Jingle Bells, Birthright, Someplace Safe, United Way, UMW, Wings and East Moe World Relief.

During the month of May we will have a collection site for the sewing group in the narthex. They could use fabric, pillow cases, notions and ric rac. Cash donations will also be accepted to purchase items as needed.

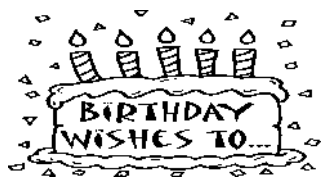
- Missions Committee

LOVE OFFERING. . This article was written by Jill Michael, the Twin Cities Mission Coordinator:

Are you living as Jesus wants you to live? The 2011 Minnesota Annual Conference theme is: "Healthy Faith, Healthy Church." The recipients of the 2011 Love Offering have been selected as our churches focus on loving God and neighbors. 1) The international project is Haiti recovery. The MN United Methodist mission teams that travel to Haiti to assist in the disaster recovery will receive money which will also be matched by UMCOR funds. 2) UMCOR's Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON) program has been selected for the national project. JFON ministry connects a national network of church-based, volunteer led immigration legal clinics to vulnerable, low-income immigrants who need a helping hand to navigate the rules and laws that affect their lives in the U.S. 3) Minnesota support will go to Recovery Ministries. A portion of the Love Offering will be given to The Recovery Church and to the Church and Society Action Team so that other congregations will be empowered to reach out to people in recovery. 4) Annually, a percentage of the offering goes to VIM Scholarships which will be given to first time participants of United Methodist mission projects. Disaster Kits will once again be collected. For current kit information, go to www.Umcor.org.

The 2010 Love Offering received over \$96,700 and 9,983 lbs of Disaster Kits. The offering was gratefully received by the Russian Partnership Church, Native American Ministries and Minnesota New Church Starts and MN VIM scholarships.

If you wish to donate to the 2011 offering please send your donation to the church office or place in the offering plate on Sunday morning by **May 22nd** (mark "love offering in the memo section).



- 1 Aleah Dokter
Abigail Evink
- 2 Cindy Schlapkohl
Colleen Schutte
- 3 Duane Erlandson
- 4 Kathy Bridenstine
Leah Christopherson
Marsha Haugen
Lynette Primus
Rod Tabor
- 5 Kayla Brunkow
Connie Good
Andrew Mogler
- 7 Blake Evans
Helen Paulson
Roger Strelow

- 11 Larry Gettel
Mike Shaughnessy
Davyn Thomson
- 13 Gavin Greengo
- 14 Ella Ferris
Marilyn Graczyk
Paul Nelson
- 15 Brenda Bollen
- 16 Chuck Hardie
Sue Lewis
Samantha Winther
- 17 Duff DeReamer
Dick Greengo
Emma Reilly
- 18 Norma Nelson
- 19 Emma Berglund
Tom DeWitt
- 21 Judy Santjer

- 22 Steve Gadbow
Bridget Mogler
- 23 Adam Vikander
- 24 Amanda Stumpf
- 25 Amanda Pring
Calley Richardson
- 26 Mavis Goslinga
Vern Steffen
Olivia Reilly
- 28 Jordan Lorsung
McKenna Meyer
- 29 Walker Merten
- 30 Madalyn Winger
- 31 Liz Doumbia
Christine Reilly



INFORMATION FOR YOU . . .

Food Support Program Guidelines Changed—Beginning Nov. 1, 2010, the income and asset limits for the MN Food Support program changed; meaning more individuals may be eligible for the program—Income Limits: (gross monthly) increased from 135% to 165% of Federal Poverty Guidelines. Asset Limits: There is no longer an asset limit for the program. For more information regarding food support and other assistance programs, or for application assistance, contact the Senior LinkAge Line at 1-800-333-2433 or go to www.MinnesotaHelp.info. Information is also available through the Food Support Hotline at 1-800-657-3698.

VA Caregiver Support Line Open—On February 1, 2011, the Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) opened a toll-free National Caregiver Support Line, housed at the Canandaigua VA Medical center in New York. This support line will serve as a primary resource/referral center to assist caregivers, veterans, and others seeking caregiver information to help in the care of our nation's veterans. Calls to the support line will be answered by VA employees who are licensed clinical social workers. This support line will be open Mon-Fri, 8 am-11 pm; and Sat. 10:30 am to 6 pm eastern time. The toll free number is 1-800-264-3274.

Guidelines for extra help with Medicare Part D—Partial extra help (150%-136%) - Income guidelines: \$1,225.13-\$1,361.25 for singles; \$1,654.88-\$1,838.75 for couples - Asset Guidelines: \$12,640 for singles, \$25,260 for couples. **Full extra help (134% and less of Federal Poverty Guidelines)** - Income guidelines: \$1,225.13 or less for singles; \$1,654.88 or less for couples - Asset Guidelines: \$8,180 for singles, \$13,020 for couples.

For additional information about these topics or others, contact Senior LinkAge at 1-800-333-3274.



United Methodist Women

Unit Meeting: Thursday, May 5th, 7:30 pm at church. Program: "Finding Peace Through Action" will be led by Sherry Bruckner. Hostess: Peace Circle

Circle Meetings:

- Friends**—Thursday, May 12th, 7:00 pm at Cherry Street Books—Author/reader Brenda K. Marshall, "Dakota or What's a Heaven For"
- Joy**—Thursday, May 19th, 9:30 am at Lollie's Greengo's.
- Peace**—Thursday, May 19th, 1:30 pm

Community Events

May 5 – "A might Fortress Is Our God" join the 60th Annual Observance, 7:00 pm, at Alexandria Covenant Church, 4005 Dakota Street. Coffee and fellowship will follow. Childcare is available.

May 13 & 14 – Fellowship of Christian Athletes Annual Family Fun Run and 5k will take place at Lakes Community Church. The half-marathon will be Saturday, May 14th at the YMCA. All details and registration is at: <http://www.active.com/running/alexandria-mn/lakes-area-endurance-fun-run-5k-halfmarathon-2011>.

May 15 – The vocal ensemble LYRA from St. Petersburg Russia will perform at Calvary Lutheran Church at 4:00 pm. All LYRA members are professional musicians who sing in various St. Petersburg churches, and some are soloists at musical theatres of the city. Through their performances, they want to introduce the enormous musical heritage of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as traditions of Russian folk music to all people. Free will offering accepted to cover LYRA's expenses.

You're Invited To A Party!

Neighborhood Social/Picnic

Alexandria United Methodist Church

Sunday May 22, 2011 – starting at 1:00 pm

FREE

Brats – Polish Sausage – Hot Dogs

**With chips, beans, ice cream, popcorn and featuring
Root Beer Floats**

Live Music with Funky Gumbo



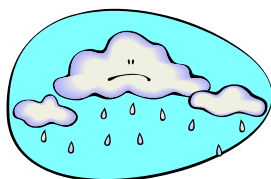
Alexandria Beetles Baseball featuring “Ringo”

Playground and the “Whopper Hopper” for the young kids



Balloons and Balloon Show for the kids

Remember – No Charge – Invite your neighbors and friends



Rain or Shine

