‘I was a stranger and you welcomed me’
CUMC opens comfortable quarters to work campers from afar
by Mark McGowan

When members of the Our Master’s Center congregation unlocked the doors Sunday, June 22, they found a hand-written note attached to a small pile of supplies stacked next to the stairs.

“Cliff and Congregation,” the note read. “Thank you for your generous hospitality in making housing available to us … and playing with Ruby. We hope to stay in touch! Blessings.”

Messages like that are becoming plentiful for Christ United Methodist Church, says Cliff Gillette, director of facilities and administration, now that both centers are open for hosting work campers.

The Alpine Center first became an overnight destination in 2016 after the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church sold its Hilltop Ministry Center property in Roscoe.

Losing access to Hilltop left Rockford Work Camps, a project of Rockford Urban Ministries, in search of new places for work crews to sleep, shower and eat as they help to better Rockford’s neighborhoods, food pantries, homeless shelters and environmental protection areas.

“The head of Rockford Work Camps came to me and said, ‘Hey, do you have a place?’ We found them an office in the Trinity Building,” Gillette says. “There already had been a commitment in 2016 to take some campers in, and in 2017, we opened it up for additional work campers to use our Centers.”

Youth leaders and pastors from across the country contact Rockford Work Camps in search of projects for their youth groups.

In 2016, utilizing Trinity’s two big rooms provided the young laborers, usually 15 or 25 per group, with shower facilities but without a kitchen or dining room to prepare and eat breakfast and dinner.

“In 2017, I asked the youth director a question,” Gillette says. “I said ‘Since the work campers generally come in the summer, a May-through-August thing, do we use the youth room during summer, and if not, could I utilize that area for the work campers to stay?’ ”

Projects include demolishing and renovating housing and providing services to neighborhood soup kitchens, food banks, pantries, homeless shelters and youth outreach programs.

Jeff Brace, at Rockford Work Camps, a faith-based, non-profit organization that provides volunteer labor, handles “all the work,” Gillette says. “They set up the projects and we host the work campers.

(Work Campers continued on Page 5)
Soul Food
“He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul”
(Psalm 23:2b-3a).

As the summer season is winding down and fall is gearing up, I pause to think about the practices that are feeding my soul these days. I share them with you here to invite you to reflect upon what is feeding your own soul.

Every morning, I spend some time in devotional reading and prayer. This is challenging for me, as I am not a morning person; but I learned that if I don’t do devotions in the morning, the day gets away from me. I have used a variety of devotionals, including Jesus Calling by Sarah Young, Just Prayer: A Book of Hours for Peacemakers and Justice Seekers by Alison Benders, and Celtic guides to daily prayer by J. Philip Newell. Currently, I’m praying through the classic My Utmost for His Highest by Oswald Chambers (which includes a reading for each day of the calendar year). It’s a very old-fashioned perspective with theology that alternately thrills me and infuriates me, but I love Chambers’ emphasis on knowing Christ and having the mind of Christ—not being swayed by the opinions or fashions of others. Reading scripture devotionaly (not for a sermon or Bible study) is also important spiritual food.

In addition to daily devotions, weekly journaling is a key spiritual practice for me. Friday is my day off, so Friday mornings I have a ritual of walking the dog, making breakfast, and taking a long time writing in my journal. Sometimes I am recording events that have happened, sometimes I am spewing emotions on the page in the hopes of coming to clarity, and sometimes there’s a specific issue that I want to bring before God. If I stay with the journaling long enough, it is remarkable how the clarity emerges, and my perspective shifts, becoming freer and more hopeful. I keep all my journals and am blessed to look back upon earlier times, remembering how God worked with me through a particular season. These journals are not filtered; they will never see print; they are only for private use. Such unfiltered writing helps me be honest before God.

A third key practice is a monthly event: my clergywomen book group. God has blessed me with wonderful friends, and every month I gather with four other United Methodist clergywomen to discuss books and support one another. It is Christian conferencing at its best—we reflect upon situations at our churches, encourage and challenge one another, and share theology. This summer we’ve been reading The Book of Forgiving by Bishop Desmond Tutu and his daughter, Rev. Mpho Tutu. It has helped us share about our own experiences of needing—and offering—forgiveness. This group keeps my soul watered and my brain stimulated.

These practices are important for my own soul—I do them to be close to God and to listen with more openness and trust. I do them also to strengthen my capacity to serve as your pastor. God has blessed me with disciplines of daily devotions and weekly journaling; God strengthens me with my monthly clergywomen group. What is feeding your soul these days? If you need ideas, don’t hesitate to check in with me. A richer spiritual life is a gift for each day—and for eternity.

Yours in Christ,

Jane
Saturday, September 8, 2018 at 11:00 a.m.
On the Lawn near the Grace building at Alpine Center

Bring your dog, cat, horse, bird, hamster, goat, frog, chicken, lizard, etc.

- Pets must be on a leash or in a carrier
- Free photo booth with a professional photographer
- Following the blessing, please stay for refreshments for humans as well as your animal companions.
- A watering station will be provided for the animals
- In case of heavy rain, this event will be cancelled

Welcome to Christ United Methodist Church!

Alpine Center
(MAILING ADDRESS FOR BOTH CENTERS):
4509 Highcrest Road
Rockford, Il 61107
Phone: 815-399-5910
Office Hours: Monday—Friday
8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Sunday Worship Services
Blended Worship Services:
8:00 and 9:30 a.m.
Celebration Service:
11:00 a.m.

Our Master’s Center
5973 Darlene Drive
Rockford, Il 61109
Phone: (815)399-5910

Sunday Worship Service
9:30 a.m. Child care is available

Rev. Jane Eesley, Senior Pastor
jeesley@christumc.cc
Rev. Deanna Mede, Associate Pastor
dmede@christumc.cc
Rev. Dan Lee, Associate Pastor
dlee@christumc.cc

The Flame is a monthly publication of Christ United Methodist Church, available by mail or online at www.christumc.cc.

Editor—Linda Kuntz
Features Writers—Don Black, Mark McGowan, Beth A. Palm
Contributing Photographer—Joe Whinnery
Director of Worship Arts—Jody Warren

Christ UMC Facebook Pages
Christ United Methodist Church page
https://www.facebook.com/cumcrockford
Christ UMC Children’s and Family Ministries page
https://www.facebook.com/Christumcchildrensministry
Christ UMC Student Ministries page

Check out our website at:
www.christumc.cc
UMW Circle Schedule

The United Methodist Women invite all women of the church to their circle meetings. Visitors are welcome and encouraged! To learn more about each circle, contact Audrey Johnson at 815-519-7822. Some circles do not meet in the summer.

Harmony Circle—Tuesday, September 11

The September meeting will be held at the home of Marilyn Rothermel on Tuesday, Sept. 11, at 9:30 am.

The group will be starting a new book called “A Love Worth Giving” by Max Lucado. Are you finding it hard to love, hard to forgive someone? Patience is an endangered species to you? Kindness is a forgotten virtue? If so, you may have forgotten a step—an essential first step. Please join us for this study. If you’re interested, call Jo Hellmich at 815-639-3074.

Rebekah Circle—Wednesday, September 12

Rebekah Circle will be back together again on Wed., Sept. 12, 9:30 a.m., in the Alpine Fellowship Hall and kitchen. We’ll put together some new recipes in a jar for TLC and then plan our program year. This is an informal meeting. If you’d like to visit for the day or to check out Rebekah Circle, please join us. Questions? Call Gennie Schultz, 815-877-3405, or Mary English, 815-397-4883.

Martha Circle—Wednesday, September 12

Martha Circle will join members of CUMC at Wesley Willows for the clergy quarterly visit in the Arbor Chapel on Wednesday, September 12 at 11:45 a.m. After the service, we will enjoy a light lunch at a cost of $7.00, then hold a brief, welcoming meeting. Just come, bring a friend, and enjoy good food and good fellowship as we make plans for the coming year. Reservations should be made to Judy Schultz (815-398-8940) by September 9, and non-residents should have payment when you come.

Questions? Please call Wilma Porter 815-877-3465 or Donna Simmons 815-877-5381.

Caravan Circle—Wednesday, September 19

Everyone, please join Caravan Circle on Wednesday September 19, at 9:30 am when we welcome Stephanie Grimm from The Haven Network. She is Director of Family Services for The Haven, which offers supportive services to grieving families who have lost an infant either before or after birth. Please join us at Our Master’s Center for program, refreshments by Deb Whinnery, devotions by Sandra Chhatpar, and a short business meeting. You don't have to be a member of Caravan Circle to join us.

UMW District Meeting

Program on Human Trafficking

Saturday, September 22 at Beth Eden UMC

The Rockford District UMW district meeting will be at Beth Eden UMC, 3201 Huffman Blvd., Rockford, on Saturday, September 22. Registration is 8:30-9:00 a.m. After worship and the business meeting, the speaker will be Lori Johnson, co-founder of RAASE (Rockford Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation). The title of her talk is "Eradicating Human Trafficking Through Awareness, Intervention, and Aftercare."

For more details and a registration form, pick up a flyer at your circle meeting or at the September 10 general meeting.

UMW Greeting Card Sales

September 9 and September 23

The UMW will be selling handmade cards on September 9th and the 23rd in Alpine Fellowship Hall.

We would like to thank the person who gave us a very large box of assorted envelopes! It came at a time when we really had a need for them.

There is also a need for cards to recycle in the category of friendship, sympathy and thinking of you.

Many thanks for all of your donations!

Wanted: Lunch Hostess for Out to Lunch Bunch

Anyone currently interested in the Out to Lunch Bunch could fill this slot. We need a hostess for September, usually the last Thursday of the month. You choose the restaurant, make reservations and publish the information in the Flame or bulletin. Without a hostess, we will not be meeting in September. If you can help or for more information, call Donna Kirk at 815-633-8056.
Work campers story (continued from cover page)

Given the room’s proximity to the Coffee House, small kitchen and dining room nearby, he says, “everyone said, ‘Sure! Not a problem.’ ”

Seven groups stayed there this summer. Gillette hopes more will come next year.

“Jeff and I meet each group when they arrive, give them a tour and show them our facilities. It’s neat to see their excitement with the youth room set-up. We get big accolades for our building being the way it is, and they’re very appreciative for this type of accommodation,” he says.

The visitors to the Our Master’s Center, meanwhile, were a “pass-through group. They were coming from Minnesota to Indiana, and we were half-way, so we found a place for them. They were delighted with the accommodations.”

The group utilized the upstairs lounge, where the travelers watched TV and relaxed on comfy couches. They chose to sleep in the naturally cool basement, where they also enjoyed access to a kitchen and dining room in the Fellowship Hall.

Because Our Master’s is without showers, they used the facilities at the YMCA, a place where Rockford Work Camps sends many of its visiting volunteers.

While opening the doors obviously provides a great provision to the travelers, the benefits are mutual.

On the practical side, work campers pay per person per night, a residence fee collected by Rockford Work Camps and passed to the host churches.

“We had one group that left us an additional check for $150,” he says, adding that the Our Master’s group added $50 to their note of thanks. The host fees received are of great benefit to offsetting our summer building costs.

On the unexpected side, however, a group from Garner UMC in Garner, Iowa, tendered an almost priceless service. They were staying in the Alpine Center “when we had those storms that just kept coming and coming.”

Rainwaters created backups that flooded carpeted and tiled spaces below the youth room, where the church offices once were housed and now are used to store furniture and office supplies.

“It was still raining Tuesday. They couldn’t go out and work, and, apparently, three of them had disaster training,” he says. “They pitched in and worked there all day, pulled up carpet, squeegeed and cleaned up everything in a day-and-a-half. That happened to be just a perfect timing thing. I couldn’t believe it, and it saved us a lot of money.”

“Our church quilters decided that everybody who came would get a quilt – 2 feet by 4 feet – and so they made one for every group. The night before they leave, I visit with them, give them the quilt and we take a team picture,” he says.

“When the group from Portage United Church of Christ, Portage, Michigan, went back to their church, and they had their Youth Sunday, like we do, they had the quilt hanging from the lectern, ‘They sent me a picture,” he adds (see picture above).
Fellowship News

Scrapbooking Group

Scrapbooking/Stamping is scheduled for Saturday, September 15 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Dining Room. Stay for all day or just a half day - whatever fits your schedule. Not everyone in our group scrapbooks. Some are stamping or working on other projects so join us for a fun day of crafting! If children will be joining us, it’s requested they be at least middle school age.

Please bring a snack to share and your own beverage. Bring money for a sandwich if you don’t bring your own lunch.

A look ahead to the coming months, scrapbooking is scheduled for Oct 20th and Nov 17th. No scrapbooking in December. For more information, call Mary Hicks, 815-742-1136.

WOWS
Widows Or Widowers and Singles
Open to all single women age 65 and over

In September:
On Wednesday, September 19, at 12:00, the WOWS will have lunch at Baci’s Kitchen, 2990 N. Perryville Rd. To make a reservation or if you have questions, please call JoAnn at 779-210-7200.

In October:
On Tuesday, October 9, at noon, the WOWS will have lunch at Red Lobster, 5827 E. State St. To make reservations, call Sharon Watts at 815-398-3541 by October 5.

First church bridge of fall
If you enjoy party bridge, bring your partner and join us for dessert and bridge on Friday, September 21, at 6:30 p.m., at the home of Ed and Mary Anne Rounds, 4223 Westfield Dr., Rockford 61101. Usually there are two or three tables and the game goes until 9:30-10:00.

Please call Ed and Mary Anne, 815 877-2968, by Mon., Sept. 17, to reserve your place at the table.

CUMC Senior Fellowship Group
Friday, September 21 at noon
Come and join this group for seniors for a wonderful homemade lunch and fellowship with your friends. Watch for your postcard in the mail for information about our after-lunch program.

Please call the church office at 815-399-5910 to make your reservation by Monday, September 17.

Movie Night on Sept. 28
Wonder

In a time when we’re all aware of the harm bullying does, here's a movie that gives us something to think and talk about without having a depressing ending. Wonder (2017; PG for thematic elements including bullying, and some mild language) is about a boy born with a genetic facial deformity. After being home schooled for four years, Auggie (Jacob Tremblay) is going to school in the fifth grade. He's going to learn how to get along in the real world. His parents are played by Julia Roberts and Owen Wilson.

We'll gather at 6:15 p.m., on Fri., Sept. 28, in the Sacred Grounds Coffee House (door #5 at Alpine Center) for munchies and conversation. The movie starts at 6:30 and lasts about two hours. There will be an intermission and a discussion afterwards. This free evening of entertainment and fellowship wraps up by 9:30.

Questions? Call George and Mary English, 815 397-4883.
Coins for Rainbow Covenant giving in September

Our Rainbow Covenant coin offering in September will go to McCurdy Ministries.

- Located in Espanola, NM
- For 100 years McCurdy was a mission school
- In 2012 McCurdy Charter School (public K-12) opened on the McCurdy campus
- McCurdy ministries became a community center whose purpose is to help students and families succeed in school and in life
- Programs include preschool, after school, summer camp, mental health counseling
- Includes 40 acres and 40 buildings so Volunteers in Mission are essential in maintaining the campus
- VIM (Volunteers in Mission) also share the good news of God’s love through their programs

College Addresses Wanted

Are you a college student or are you sending one off to college? We are seeking each student’s current address for our church records. They and their mailbox will be remembered by their church family in some fun ways this year! Even if your student is in Rockford, let us know their current contact information. We would like to make sure we can keep in contact with our college-aged students.

Please contact Linda Kuntz with the student’s current contact information: Snail mail and email address to our church office, 815-39-5910 or lindakuntz@christumc.cc. Thank you and blessings to all our college students as they begin a new year!

A Note from Jenny Thomas, Former Youth Development Director

I wanted to extend my deepest gratitude to this congregation. I came here almost seven years ago and have experienced nothing but love and support. You welcomed me despite my past and gave me the opportunity to grow. Working at Christ UMC has been one of the best periods of my life. This youth group and I have been through thick and thin together. I consider our youth to be “my kids.” This job has helped me become a well-rounded adult. I have learned patience and perseverance. I learned how to listen and how to teach. Teenagers are so much more than what the world says they should be: angsty, entitled, selfish. I did not experience that at all in the five years I worked with teens. I see intelligence, self-awareness, altruism, responsibility, and respect. I see young people being molded by their experiences with the people around them; friends, families, teachers, trusted adults, church members. As I move onto the next chapter in my life, I have full faith that each and every one of our youth is destined for greatness. They just need an ear to listen and a voice to encourage. That is what this congregation provides, and I thank you for being an amazing church.

Information Meeting For Montessori Tutors

Thursday, September 6, 9:00 am, Alpine Conference Rm.

Mark your calendar if you're interested in becoming a tutor one hour a week at the Maria Montessori School (in the former Marsh Elementary School building). New volunteers from our church are needed. If you're already a tutor, this meeting is for you also. This is an ongoing program of our church. If you have questions or need more information, contact Karen Weedman at 815-791-3079.

Shop for CUMC Quilt Group’s Quilts Online

Our quilt group has opened an Etsy shop! You can now purchase these amazing quilts any time of the year online. All proceeds from these quilts go to help the UMWW missions. This shop can be found by going to the Etsy website and searching ChurchQuiltLadies. Happy shopping!
spent her junior year of high school in Brazil as an exchange student at Dimensão Colégio e Curso.

Amy stayed with two host families during her 12 months there, becoming fluent in Portuguese. "I was 16. I was wanting to travel, to live in different places, to see the world," she says.

More opportunities for life on the road came after she graduated from USC with a degree in business, a major that made sense for the daughter of two entrepreneurs, her father a homebuilder and her mother a property title investigator.

"I went and worked for a company doing industrial manufacturing, and we rotated sites every six months. I was in Louisville, Kentucky, and Augusta, Georgia, managing a team on the floor," she says. "But I ended up getting pretty sick."

Eventually diagnosed with the autoimmune disease Dermatomyositis (DM), she became bedridden as her muscles deteriorated. During those months of pain, she learned how to "take it easy" and how to care for herself, including "what I was putting in my body."

DM also brought struggles with anxiety and depression to the surface; she traces it to the death of her father from cancer when Amy was only 20. "I was ashamed of depression," she says, "and I didn't seek help for a long time."

Yet those mental and physical complications brought two wonderful things into her life.

One is a camera, something she began tinkering with when she couldn't go to work. The other is a puppy. A big puppy.

"Right after I got sick was a really hard time in my life. I didn't have a formal diagnosis, and I needed something to love on and I needed something to love me back."

Say hello to Bear, a 120-pound Burmese Mountain dog.

"He's just like the biggest goofball. He's really a weird dog. He's not normal!" she says with a laugh. "It's like he's the jock in high school – the really attractive jock who may or may not be intelligent but just gets up and loves everybody. He never meets a stranger."

Photography, meanwhile, is not only her passion but her business.

Bone Photography - (https://bonephotography.co/) keeps the self-employed Amy busy, whether it's taking pictures, driving to shoot locations across northern Illinois and Chicago, managing her website, marketing her services, blogging on the practice of photography or preparing CDs of gorgeous images for her happy clients.

Completely self-taught on the camera, Amy learned through "trial and error – emphasis on the error" but is now rightly proud of her skills.

"It took months and months of grueling work to get the ball rolling," she says. "It was lots of social media marketing and strategic marketing, and if anyone were to ever totally master those, they'd probably already be retired by then."

Starting with the niche market of pet photography, she has evolved to weddings and senior portraits. Seniors remind her of herself – she was in high school not long ago, of course – and brides and grooms literally invite her into the celebrations of love.

"You get a front-row seat to people's love stories. The thought that I get to take photos that people are going to look at for the rest of their lives – it gives me chills," she says.

"To see people's weddings and their covenants before God is something I genuinely cannot get enough of, and all I want to do is hug my clients and love on them."

With every shoot, and with every new friendship, she knows that her own entrepreneurial instincts are on point.

"If I didn't love what I did, I'd be back at my corporate job because, truth be told, I made a lot of money," she says, "but that job did not make me happy. Photography truly does make me happy. I do what I love, and I put a lot of heart and soul into my craft."

Always available for new clients of her photography, Amy joined Brandon in becoming clients themselves this summer when they bought a house in Machesney Park.

They are enjoying the process of "blooming where they were planted," even pledging to become lifelong fans of the Harlem Huskies, who play their games next to the bike path where the young couple walk Bear.

"We love Rockford. We love the community, and I am very grateful for Rockford. It does show you that God is so funny – I never thought that I'd be out of the South – but Rockford has had a way of putting us on clearer paths and bringing us closer to God," Amy says.

Meanwhile, she adds, "Brandon and I have stood the test of time. The ages 21 to 25 are an exceptional period in someone's life. You definitely grow together. You see the good and the bad, and you see the other person evolve. I'm just so thankful that he and I are together in this process."
When did you come to CUMC? What drew you here?

I started working at Sundstrand Aerospace (now part of United Technologies) in 1978. After attending several churches over the next few years, Del Arthur invited myself and my wife Susan in 1982 to visit his church – Christ United Methodist. The pastors at that time were Bill Cull, Norm Kearney, and Dick Brewer. The style, spiritual message, membership involvement and church friendliness seemed to be just what we were both looking for. We also knew the church children’s programming would be a good place for our (future) kids to grow up.

What are some of the favorite ways you have liked to live out your faith at the church and/or the community?

Soon after joining the church, my wife Susan & I became involved with the Children’s Council under Judy Elders, and taught Sunday School together. Some years later, when Mitch Olson joined at CUMC, I started playing with the contemporary choir, and later on the chime choir formed by Kay Foss. After a few more years I became involved with the youth Sun Camp programs that were held every year at Silver Birch Ranch. As our kids grew up, Susan volunteered with Kids Klub, directing that activity for 10 years, and I coordinated the stage set-up for the spring musicals. Also during those years, I started attending youth work camps, and served as a leader and as a cook on different occasions. I currently am part of the Praise Team that plays at the contemporary 11:00 service, and the bell choir that plays once a month. I have also been trained as a Stephen Minister, and have had several care receivers. Other activities currently include serving on the Finance Committee, Thursday Morning Men’s Group and as a Monday morning money counter.

What are some experiences that have impacted your faith?

Several stand out. One is the summer Sun Camps that I attended. This was the first time I had to lead and direct small youth groups (6 – 7 kids) in a morning Bible study and devotional, discussing a daily lesson. It was quite intimidating and difficult for me at first, but soon became easier as the kids and I became acquainted. The adult leaders at Sun Camp were also all expected to take turns giving a “talk” at the evening chapel time. Every leader fretted about their turn at talking and what they were going to say. I never heard a poorly delivered message from anyone – each leader talk was always from the heart and greatly touched the campers and leaders. One of my other responsibilities was to give a devotional prior to each evenings leaders meeting. Selecting and giving the devotional (usually from Max Lucado) was challenging and rewarding.

The youth work camps also impacted my faith. One aspect was the adult leaders – to see adult leaders laying aside a week of their busy lives, dedicate themselves to others, and accomplish difficult and challenging work was amazing. The work campers always were a joy – to see them away from their routine environment, learning to do work they have never attempted before, and having to work and coordinate with other kids. Many of the kids had not used power tools before – use of the tools was a confidence builder to them. The giving of the quilts to the residents was especially powerful – often tears were shed. Parting with the residents at the end of the week was a strange mix of sadness, joy and satisfaction.

I once was asked to give a message during a Stewardship campaign. I stated that Big Bird (from Sesame Street) once said “Nobody can do everything, but everyone can do something.” This can be especially applied to church involvement at CUMC. I would encourage everyone to seek out and participate in some church activity that they are interested in– and let that become part of your ministry to others.

By Jeff Baldwin
Getting to Know Hymn; Special Program

The Music Room

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound—
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.

’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

The gift of forgiveness is often best appreciated by those who need it the most. The Reverend John Newton experienced this truth firsthand. His tombstone tells the story: “John Newton, clerk, once an infidel and Libertine, a servant of slavers in Africa, was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had so long labored to destroy. These words were written by Newton himself, a testimony to God’s transforming power. After years as a hardened slave trader, that “wretch” met Jesus Christ and abruptly turned to defend the gospel he had so long despised.

When it was suggested Newton retire (at age eighty-two) due to poor health and a failing memory, he responded, “My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior!”

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound—
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.

’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

A child from any family can be subject to "adverse childhood experiences" (ACE). This is not just about watching your brother being beat up by a gang or your mother being punched and pushed around. A child from any kind of family could lose a parent because of a disease or accident or separation or divorce. Alcoholism and other adult addictions occur in families of any income level. As Christians we care about the children in our church family and community family. The trauma they experience affects their behavior in school and their ability to learn. It can affect their futures and the future of our community.

On Monday, September 10, at 6:00 p.m., the whole church is invited to the dining room (door #6) to hear Lisa Clark help us understand what ACE is and how some area school districts are using knowledge of it to change their approach in disciplining students. Lisa worships in the 11:00 service at CUMC. She’s also the principal at Loves Park Elementary School in the Harlem School District and has presented other programs on the importance of understanding how adverse childhood experiences affect children in school and their adult lives.

United Methodist Women has a commitment to women, children, and families and is sponsoring this program for the church. It will start at 6:00 with devotions and Lisa’s presentation. There will be a time to thank Carla White-Carpenter for her 10 years as UMW president and then share refreshments. The program starts at 6:00 so that people can perhaps work it into their work and family schedule and can drive home in the daylight.
SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

8:00 a.m. Nursery Child Care is available in the Nursery Room
No Sunday School at this worship hour

9:30 a.m. Worship Hour Alpine Center
- Infants and Toddlers: Nursery Room

**All children begin in the Sanctuary and are dismissed after Children's Message
- Pre-School(4)-Kindergarten— Sunday School Room #7
- 1st Grade—3rd Grade Class—Room #1
- 4th—5th Grade Class (Room #3)

**Every first Sunday of the month, children will start their class downstairs and will come up for communion and return to their SS class.

9:30 a.m. Worship Hour OMC
- Infants: Nursery
- Pre-School-Kindergarten: Nursery
- 1st-5th Grade: Begin in Sanctuary, dismissed downstairs for Sunday School following the Children’s Message to the Sunday School rooms

11:00 a.m. Worship Hour Alpine Center
- Infants and Toddlers: Nursery Room
- Pre-School(4)-Kindergarten—Sunday School Room 7
- 1st Grade—5th Grade—Sunday School Room #1

Announcements!

September

- 2 No SS-Kids Bulletin
- 9 Rally Day and 3rd Grade Bible Presentation
- 12 Wednesday night events RESUME - JAM Night Starts, Joyful Noise, Praise Kids, Puppets, Youth Class, Adult Class, Nursery and Ministry Meal.
- 16 Youth Confirmation starts
- 30 Junior Worship/No Children’s time

https://www.facebook.com/Christumcchildrensministry
Visit our webpage at: http://www.christumc.cc/ministries/children
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 1</td>
<td>Sarah Crane, Grant Flodin, Renée Johnson, Breona Lashock, Jamie Thayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2</td>
<td>Anthony Berg, Janelle Calow, Vivian Knapp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 3</td>
<td>Joshua Roberson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 4</td>
<td>John Armstrong, Linda Bjur, Peg Giannangeli, Ron Janecek, Ann Mathers, Mary Murata, Keane Tuschen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 5</td>
<td>Jack Cullen, Vicki Lynn, Lynn Moczynski, Sean Olson, Patrice Rinaldi, Sue Sarauer, David Zimmerman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 6</td>
<td>Brenda Christiansen, Chris Vipond-Keenan, Justin Shula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 7</td>
<td>Harper Bjur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Hannah Flynn, Pam Laughlin, Kerry Lin, Katherine Lundberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 9</td>
<td>Bill Keenan, Alex Morrison, Allie Zimmerman, Gedeon Trias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 10</td>
<td>Janet Clewett, Jennifer Otwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 11</td>
<td>Matthew Herrmann, Lola Morlan, Erik Montelebre, Bob Reeves, Vicki Tuschen, Carli Janecek, Nancy Westphal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 12</td>
<td>Kay Benson, Brandon Carlson, Mary Eesley, Bill Lenters, Grace McCartney, David Poust, Ken Walker, Alyssa Watts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 13</td>
<td>Phyllis Melenas, Jill Porter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>Stu Crane, Adam Kirk, Beth Lipton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>Rich Gibbons, Joseph Gibbons, Dean Schoff, Cole Yaun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 16</td>
<td>Dave Cox, Nancy Vogel, Stephanie Yates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 17</td>
<td>Ian Knapp, Meg Pierce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>Kris Geddes, Marissa Muldowney, Harold Palm, Eric Persinger, Lynne Vass, Alyssa Meyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 19</td>
<td>John Liddell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>Laura Cooper, Mary Ann Priewe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 21</td>
<td>Mary Beth Dyke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>Kim Stender, Jessica Bielefeldt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 23</td>
<td>Donald Fraser, Bridger Fraser, Andy Palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 24</td>
<td>Zack Johnson, Jarrett Morlan, Leon Saul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 26</td>
<td>Ben Brady, Tim Edwards, Doris Fagerstrom, Charles Frey, Alison Lipton, Robert Morrison, Alan Loy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 27</td>
<td>Karon Anderson, Olivia Hagerman, Wendy Volz, Melissa Sarver-West, Alexander Woodard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 28</td>
<td>Rickie Andersen, Brian Kobischka, Jim Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 29</td>
<td>Lynn Kearney, Margie Lineback, Bob Persinger, Meredith Woodard, Elijah Woodard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sympathy to:
Barb Kaiser and family on the death of her husband, Steve Kaiser, on July 24.
Phyllis Smerke and family on the death of her husband, Ed Smerke, on August 3.
George Edwards and family on the death of his wife, Janet Edwards, on August 7.
The family of Dorothy Hull, who died on August 19, in Georgia.

September 1
John and Sue Murray

September 2
Laurie and Leonard Pink
Dennis and Mary Ann Priewe
John and Sue Spitzer

September 3
Ken and Marion Kern
Dave and Jane Picken

September 7
Eric and Deanna Mede

September 8
Jan and Russ Leopold
Bob and Dawn Russell
Dennis and Christine Riemer

September 10
Jo and Jim Hellmich
Kerry and Maurice Lin
Joe and Teri Reynolds
Lynn and Tony Moczykiski

September 11
Donna and Douglas Dyer
Bud and Carolyn Knodle
John and Dawn Truitt

September 13
Kim and Chris Jacobsen

September 15
Derek and Erin Kiley
Barb and Roger McKelvey

September 16
Jeffrey Smith and Amanda Kearney-Smith

September 19
Greg and Cynthia Hansen
Ted and Carol Plum
John and Teena Scheub
Mike and Kelly Steffen
Pam and John Wilson

September 20
Dennis and Elizabeth Buck

September 21
Darrin and Rachel Erickson
Chris and Wayne Peters
Tom and Martha Shula
William and Patricia Bowden

September 22
Len and Joan Hamachek
Andy and Casey Swindell
Darrell and Candy Johnson

September 23
Paul and Virginia O’Brien
Paula and Patrick Sullivan

September 24
Mary and Adam McKay
Randy Roberson and Sue Hazlewood-Roberson

September 26
Paul and Tracey Greenland

September 28
Paul and Jennifer Lundberg
Alan and Vicki Persinger

September 29
Ron and Irene Janecek

Daily Breakthrough Prayer
Please stop and pray this prayer daily at 7:07 a.m. and/or 7:07 p.m.

God of hopes and dreams and visions for the future, we ask you to send the Holy Spirit to break through into our lives and into your church. Help us sense where your Spirit is leading. Give us faith and courage to step through the doors that you open.

Amen.
Thank You

- From Mary Gummow, Outreach Committee
  On behalf of the CUMC Outreach Committee, I would like to thank you for making another School Supply Drive a HUGE success! We were able to provide 75 backpacks to children who attend the Centennial Kids Klub and the Families in Transition (FIT) department at the Rockford School District. $450.00 will also go to Centennial Kids Klub for activities and supplies. A special thank you to: Andrew Gummow, Bill Johnson, Teri Reynolds, Joan Mohrman, and everyone that grabbed a tag and shopped.

- From St. Anne’s Center
  It was such a blessing to receive the lovely floral arrangement from our neighbors (flowers that were donated from a worship service). Many residents, guests, and staff of St. Anne’s have commented about the beautiful blooms, and the bouquet truly adds a dose of bright summer cheer to our home. It is a pleasure to tell these folks that they are from CUMC! Thank you for sharing with us.

- From Wilma Porter
  Thank you once again for all the beautiful and thoughtful cards, calls, visits by Pastor Jane and others during my recent hospital and rehab session. It is a blessing to be part of such a caring church. God bless you!

- From Ken and Patti Walker
  Though we will continue to be members of Christ UMC through the end of the year, we want to thank the pastors, all of the staff, and all of you who have been so kind and helpful to both of us. We both want to especially thank those who were a part of any committee or group to which we belonged. There are so many people at Christ UMC who serve as examples by living a Christian life. Though we may be miles apart geographically, you will always be in our hearts.

- From the Stiltner Family
  Thank you for all your support throughout these months of cancer diagnosis, surgery and healing. Your prayer support and many touches of love: cards, phone calls, prayer shawl (beautiful!) were so appreciated. Words can’t express how grateful we are for such a wonderful church family. May God bless and keep you all in his tender care!

Make a Joyful Noise to the Lord!

The Choirs of CUMC will begin rehearsals soon. If you are high school age or older, and enjoy singing we hope you will consider singing with the Chancel Choir at Our Master’s Center or the Sanctuary Choir at the Alpine Center. Both choirs rehearse one evening a week and sing twice a month in worship. No special skills needed other than a love of singing. The Wesley Ringers Handbell Choir meets weekly and plays in worship at Alpine Center once a month. The ability to read music is highly recommended. See details below for the choir(s) that you may be interested in.

The Chancel Choir at Our Master’s Center rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 - 8:30pm, and sings in worship twice a month. Rehearsals begin Wednesday, September 5.

The Sanctuary Choir at Alpine Center rehearses on Thursday evenings from 7:30-9:00 pm, and sings in worship twice a month. Rehearsals begin Thursday, September 6.

The Wesley Ringers Handbell Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings in the Alpine Center balcony from 6:00-7:15, and plays in worship once a month. Rehearsals begin Thursday, September 6. The ability to read music is highly recommended.

We also have opportunities for instrumental musicians and soloists to play special music in worship with the piano, or to accompany the various choirs.

If you want to join or have any questions about the Sanctuary Choir or special music opportunities, please contact Jody Warren at jodywarren@christumc.cc or by calling the church office at 815-399-5910 x21.

For information or to join the Wesley Ringers Handbell Choir or Chancel Choir at Our Master’s Center, please contact Richard Stiltner for more information at rstiltner@christumc.cc or 815-399-5910.

Princess Sunday,
September 16, 9:30 am 🌹
Our Master’s Center

Join us as we celebrate Queen Esther, who she was, what she overcame and how she saved the Jewish people. Nobody ever said being a Princess was easy!

Bring your tiara or wear one we provide (limited supplies available). We also have crowns for princes and kings. God has crowned us all with glory.

On September 16, we will celebrate that with tiaras!
Mark your Calendar Now!

Fall Sermon Series and Churchwide Study
“Renovate: Building a life with God” by Rev. Jacob Armstrong

Pastor Jacob Armstrong explores how Nehemiah’s goal was to rebuild the wall and gates of Jerusalem, a physical and daunting task, a DIY project for the ages! But Nehemiah also knew that as the Jewish people returned to their homeland, they would need a spiritual renovation. Thankfully spiritual renovation is not a do-it-yourself project and Renovate emphasizes how we need God’s great power in us to renovate our lives through the Holy Spirit.

This 6-week series starting September 23rd will include:
- Never too Late for a Renovation
- It Starts with Tears
- What to Know Before You Build
- When Others Don’t Like Your Plans
- Inviting Others to Come Home
- The Big Reveal

Each week the Pastors will preach on that week’s theme. The classes will be on Monday mornings, beginning Monday, September 17, in the Alpine Dining Room, 10:00 – 11:30 am and on Wednesday evenings, beginning Wednesday, September 19, in the Alpine Dining Room, 6:00-7:30 pm. Sign up sheets and book order information are available at the Connection Center at both Alpine and Our Master’s the next several Sundays. Or you can call the church office at 815-39-5910 to sign up or for help with ordering the book.

In the Renovate introduction, Armstrong says, “If I have learned anything from the story of God’s people, it is that God has a renovation in store for you. You are a spiritual house, and God is ready to start the renovation.” Grab your hammer, tool belt and Bible and get ready to Renovate!

Did You Know?

...that we are recycling the following items: used batteries, used ink cartridges, small electronics like cell phones or digital cameras, and plastic bags. Put them in the bin at Our Master’s Center or in the marked cupboard at Alpine Center. We will make sure they get recycled properly. Thank you for your good stewardship.

...In the same cupboard at Alpine Center, the UMW is collecting old greeting cards, Campbell Soup Labels, personal care items, and items for Carpenter’s Place and Shelter Care Ministries. Thank you for your support.

Did you know?

...that we have a Children’s Lending Library at Alpine Center at the bottom of the stairs to the Sunday School rooms. The majority of the books are for Pre-school and elementary age children, but there are also some for middle school youth and parents. Just fill out the card in the book, read it, and return it when you are finished. Stop by and check it out!

Upcoming Events

Sept. 8 - Blessing of the Animals
Sept. 9 - Rally Day and Third Grade Bibles Presented
Sept. 12 - J.A.M., Family Ministry Meal, Praise Kids Choir, Joyful Noise Choir, and Puppet Ministry resume
Sept. 16 - Confirmation of the Class of 2018; Thank Offering Sunday
Oct. 6 - Princess Sunday at Our Master’s Center
Oct. 7 - Fall Bash
Oct. 10 - Fall Craft Night
Oct. 21 - Crop Walk
Oct. 26-27 - Jr. High Fall Retreat
Nov. 4 - All Saints Sunday
Nov. 19 - Thanksgiving Baskets
Dec. 10,11 - Christmas Angel Gift Wrapping
Dec. 17 - Blue Christmas service
Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve services at Alpine Center
Enrich Your Christian Life: Rockford District Lay Academy
October 20-21

One of the best opportunities to learn new skills to aid in your Christian outreach and to meet active Christians from other churches is the Rockford District Lay Academy. It meets this fall October 20-21 at Brooke Road UMC in Rockford. Different classes are offered at each Academy, usually held spring and fall.

Courses offered this fall are Basic, United Methodist Heritage, Living in God’s Household, From Your Heart to Theirs, and Planning Worship.

These are brief course descriptions:
- **Basic:** Learn the importance of exercising servant leadership, developing future leaders, remaining rooted in spiritual practices, and being part of a group that holds members accountable in discipleship. Most people start with Basic but it is not required that you do so.
- **Living as a United Methodist—United Methodist Heritage:** This course explores the special gifts of theology, witness, and organization that Methodism brings to the church universal and how we got to where we are today.
- **Living in God’s Household:** This covers the importance of Scripture as divine revelation, the Wesleyan understanding of grace, and the importance of the class leader in the development of the Methodist movement. You are encouraged to look at your own faith community and see how it is (or not) a reflection of genuine Christian community.
- **From Your Heart to Theirs:** Covers the basics of public speaking and specifically how to preparing an engaging sermon. It will present traditional Bible interpretation, children’s sermons, how to find a story, use a hymnal, and move communication beyond paper.
- **Planning Worship:** This course builds on the course Leading Worship and explains the principle and practice of worship planning for a church service or a church group.

Basic and United Methodist Heritage are required to become a Certified Lay Servant, but you may take these courses without any plans to become certified. Some of the courses are directed at members of small churches who may be called on to lead worship. These courses are also wonderful training for leading devotions in small or larger groups within the church. For more information call George English (815) 397-4883.
We are currently looking for the following:

- **Individuals (male or female) or groups who make quality homemade goods to start making them to donate to the UMW TLC craft booth.** Consider discussing this with your circles, men’s groups, and friends.

- **Exhibitors—we had rave reviews last year with the changed date.**

All money made goes to missions. For general questions, please contact Diane Wilson at 815-282-6931. For exhibitors, please contact Diane Kirkland at 815-621-3118.

**TLC Women’s Clothing Resale**

As we transition from summer to Fall, please set aside clothing you no longer want. Collections at the church sites will start the beginning of September. We are looking for all size women’s clothing in good condition. Sweaters, jackets, coats, blouses, slacks, shoes, and purses are included in the sale. If you have questions, please contact Karen McWilliams at 402-880-7889.

**Volunteer Opportunities for TLC 2018**

Have you signed up to volunteer at the 2018 Tender Loving Craft Sale on October 6th yet? We’ve got all kinds of spots available and we’ll give you the job you’ve always wanted! Call Deb Laskey at 815-979-8555.

**TLC Booths**

Are you crafty? Stay local, rent a booth and join us at the 2018 TLC sale. Booth rentals include booth assistance from our volunteers! For available booth sizes and pricing, please contact Diane Kirkland at 815-621-3118.

**Tender Loving Crafts Bake and Pie Sale**

We will be needing pies, cakes, cookies, bars, etc. for our 2018 Bake and Pie sales. Baked goods may be brought to the church between 2:00 and 7:00pm on Friday October 5 and after 8:00am on Saturday the 6th. For more information, call Linda Marshall at 319-520-8539.

---

**Learn about the special session of General Conference**

In February, there will be a meeting that could bring about important changes to the United Methodist Church that would affect every congregation. Every four years, General Conference of the United Methodist Church meets to set official policy and speak for the denomination. It’s an international body of nearly 1,000 delegates. The delegates represent Annual Conferences around the world. Half the delegates are laity and half are clergy.

For several decades, General Conferences have wrestled to find agreement, or at least consensus, about policies regarding human sexuality. At the 2016 General Conference, the Commission on a Way Forward was formed. Its task was to struggle with the issue of human sexuality and the unity of the denomination. It reported to the Council of Bishops in the spring. A special session of the 2016 General Conference will be held Feb. 23-26, 2019 in St. Louis to consider the report. It’s expected that the delegates will choose one of the three plans worked out by the commission. The Council of Bishops is recommending the “One Church Plan.” The report is over 90 pages; these are extremely brief summaries of the options in the report.

1. **The One Church Plan** provides for more local autonomy on same sex marriage and ordination of active practicing homosexuals. These are now forbidden by church law.

2. **The Traditionalist Plan** seeks no change in the Book of Discipline but strengthens enforcement.

3. **The Connectional-Conference Plan** creates a system of three connectional-conferences that each annual conference can choose to affiliate with on the basis of their positions on LGBTQ issues.

You can search the Internet for more information. Use the phrase **special session of general conference umc** or try other key words.

The Northern Illinois Conference general/jurisdictional delegation will be holding listening and conversation sessions this fall leading up to the Feb. special session of the 2016 General Conference. You can choose to attend at any one of the locations:

- **October 6**
  - 9:00 a.m.—Rockford District, First UMC, 503 N. Lily Creek Rd., Freeport 61032
  - 1:00 p.m.—Dekalb District, Wesley UMC, 2200 16th Ave., Sterling 61081

- **October 20**
  - 9:00 a.m.—Chicago NW District, First UMC, 418 Touhy Ave., Park Ridge, 60068
  - 1:00 p.m.—Chicago Southern District, St. Mark UMC, 8441 S. St. Lawrence Ave., Chicago, 60619

- **November 10**
  - 9:00 a.m.—Elgin District, Barrington UMC, 98 Algonquin Rd., Barrington 60010
  - 1:00 p.m.—Aurora District, Bethany of Fox Valley, 2200 Ridge Ave., Aurora 60504
Getting to Know You: Amy Bone
By Mark McGowan

Pastor Dee Mede was preparing the Our Master’s congregation to remember their baptisms when she paused to ask a question: Did anyone in the sanctuary that cold January morning need the actual sacrament of baptism?

One hand went up.

Amy Bone, a regular worshipper who began accompanying her boyfriend, Brandon Seay, to church just a few months earlier was ready to make that commitment.

“I’d never been baptized. My family was lukewarm Christian,” Amy says now, “but it’s something that I always wanted to do, and I always felt weird about that. I was kind of waiting for a home church, or just waiting for something. I never wanted to have that conversation.”

Mede’s unexpected and open offer stirred her.

“Brandon and I just looked at each other and thought, ‘This is God. This is perfect.’ It took all the awkwardness out of it,” Amy says. “It was pivotal for me. It was perfect timing and the perfect moment. I know there is no shame in waiting. It was all really beautiful.”

The 24-year-old native of Greenwood, SC, describes her faith as “a little more hippie” but one that celebrates “the absolute beauty of Christianity.”

She and Brandon – they met at the University of South Carolina as seniors when they both attended a meeting of the Triathlon Club – regularly attended church together on campus with fellow students of their own age group.

When Brandon moved to Rockford to work 900 miles away as an applications engineer at Ingersoll Machine Tools, he became a familiar bearded face in the Our Master’s pews. Amy joined him three months later.

“Our Master’s is extremely different than how Brandon and I experienced church in college,” she says, “but the first time I went, I felt very loved. The preaching style makes us feel a little more adult – that this is life after college. We really do love it. We just feel at home.”

Home, for Amy, has been many places.
Growing up in Greenwood as a Girl Scout whose father, Tony, taught her to fish and hunt, she (Continued on page 8)