



# UNALASKA

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

... serving Unalaska and the greater Aleutian Community in the name of Christ

September/October 2009

### HATS, YARN, AND GLOVES!

Regularly, we receive packages that contain a surprising assortment of items. We are always thrilled to see how God is going to use these things.

Recently, we received three large boxes of yarn. A friend of ours who regularly sends us these special boxes is



now known in her local church for mailing boxes to us. When an older member of the congregation passed away, the family sought ways to gift her assortment of yarn. They thought of our friend, and we

now have a large supply of yarn, something that is not easy to come by here, but is incredibly useful for crafts, and various other projects that we do with our children.

Last week, we received a box of gloves and hats. Within a few days, a call came for gloves and hats for nine boys and girls in the community who needed them. The need was nearly perfectly filled with the box we had just received!

We want to thank God for using the special people who take the time to pass along these blessings to us!

#### Prayer Point

Thank God for the ways that we can all be blessed unexpectedly!

### ALEXANDRIA HOUSE UPDATE

#### Prayer Points

Please pray for God's continued presence and guidance as we discern the next steps.

Anyone who has been part of a building project, or launching a new ministry knows the one cardinal rule—be patient, it takes time!

On September 2, the planning commission of the city of Unalaska met to discuss the condi-

tional use permit necessary to open the Alexandria House. There were impassioned stories and concerns shared—with little disagreement that this shelter needed to be available on this island. The problem was the location. The site that was chosen is in the middle of the oldest section of town. Many of the residents expressed concerns about safety, traffic flow, and the effect the shelter might have on the historic nature of the neighborhood. In light of these concerns, the commission did not pass the request.

Alternative options are being explored for potential locations. Please continue to be praying that a new location can be found, and that planning for this necessary service might go well.

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## KITS AND CABOODLES

### Prayer Point

We thank God for the ways we have been able to help people in crises, and for those who share with us in this ministry.

Over the past few years, we have developed a few 'kits' that individuals or churches can send to assist us in our ministry. These are used to help fisherman and processing plant workers who find themselves without work, without food, and without the comforts most of us take for granted. The following are the lists of those kits—these will also be posted on our website, [www.UnalaskaUMC.com](http://www.UnalaskaUMC.com) along with a broader explanation for how they are used.

### Food Boxes for the Hungry:

- 6 packs Top Ramen and/or Cup of Noodles
- 1 box oatmeal packets (about 10 packets)
- 1 box granola bars (about 10 bars)
- 7 cans of any combination of the following: *chili, beefaroni, ravioli, soup, stew, sardines, oysters, corned beef hash, other prepared canned food*
- 1 box pilot bread
- 1 jar peanut butter
- 1 jar jelly or honey

- 6-pack or 4-pack fruit or apple-sauce
- 1 small bag rice or 1 package spaghetti & 1 jar sauce
- 1 box “*real fresh*” milk

### Kits for Crews:

- Disposable Cameras
- Playing Cards/puzzle, word search books
- Phone cards
- Duffle Bags
- Mechanical Pencils
- Expandable Plastic File Holders

### Personal Care Kits:

- Wash Cloth
- Small towel
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Single-sized laundry soap
- Tooth brush
- Tooth paste

## PARTNERS IN MINISTRY

### Prayer Points

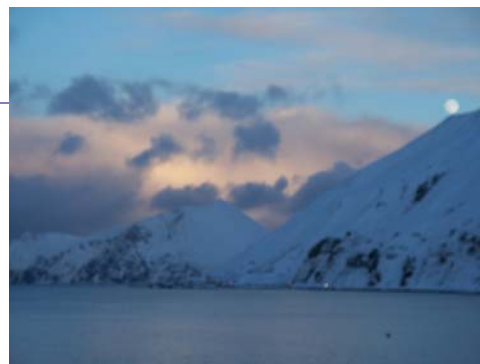
While you support us through your giving and prayers, please know that we continue to lift up your congregations and ministries!

We are in ministry here in Unalaska because of the work of Christ and through the generosity of congregations and individuals around the country, and we are not able to do what we do without your help and prayers. Thank you.

As we began 2009, we enter a new quadrennium in the United Methodist Church, and for us, that means a few new Advance Project numbers. When giving, please refer to the following numbers to specify particular areas in which you would like your gift applied:

- 931855 — Outreach
- 3020469—Operational Expenses
- 3020461—Children’s Ministries
- 931012 or 931011—

Salary Support



For more information, check out <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/Advance/>

Look soon at [www.UnalaskaUMC.com](http://www.UnalaskaUMC.com) for the new “Partners Page,” highlighting those congregations who have shared their gifts with us, and for special gifts that churches or individuals have sent to us.



## THOUGHTS FROM LOW TIDE

### GOING FOR SECONDS

#### TO THE LORD'S TABLE

We closed our Vacation Bible School, *Paul and the Underground Church*, with a time of communion. With the number of kids who don't regularly attend church, there were likely to be more than a few who had never had the chance to share at the Table before.

As we began to invite the kids forward, there were amazing smiles on their faces. There was anticipation and excitement about what we were doing. The week had been a time of ongoing celebration and real fun. In our singing, our praying, our playing and our learning we grew in our understanding of how God loves us. Every day, the kids visited the Apostle Paul under house arrest. They were able to see the grumpy jailor, Brutus, accepted Christ by the end of the week and joyfully accepted his new post, cleaning the emperor's stables. In the light of God's love, anything can be done joyfully.

In the midst of learning about God's love, we learned also about loving each other. In a bit of a surprise, (your's truly was playing Paul), the

We leaders discussed whether or not to have communion that last day. It was the expected concerns—*would some of these kids understand its significance? Would they know what they were doing? Could they take it seriously? Was it appropriate to serve to children of such young ages? Would it lose its power in the midst of the dancing and singing?* With some faith, we went ahead with it.

You could have heard a pin drop. The smiles, joy, and whispered 'Thank you's' as the kids came forward removed any doubt that may have been there. *Take it seriously!?! Understand it? Appropriate!?! As those kids came forward, the thought struck me that none of those disciples that Jesus originally handed the bread and cup knew what they were doing either. None of them could grasp the significance, because none of them really got what was about to happen. And appropriate? Is the sacrificial love of Christ appropriate for any of us? Do any of us deserve it? When we remember it, we ought to also recall that it is undeserved, and offered only because of Grace.*

The idea that Christ's love is never appropriate struck me as several of the kids, not thinking we saw them, came forward a second time. One of them even said, 'That was really good, could I have some more?'

Do we approach the table of grace with that question often enough? "I really needed that, could I get some more, Jesus? I'd say you have no idea what my life is like, but you do. I know I have no reason to expect this, I can't pay you back, but, man, I needed that."

Thank you—with smiles of anticipation for what the Grace Giver can do—

Hanging onto the Rock,  
*Pastor Dan*

*Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

Romans 3:23-24



kids consistently said one of their favorite parts was visiting Paul & Brutus, and the folks in the underground church. We talked about how we treat each other, and how God loves us unconditionally, and how, through Christ, he saves us from our sins.

## PROFILE OF A WORSHIPPER

### **Prayer Point**

We give thanksgiving for Jim and Maggie, and for others who join us regularly, and become a part of Christ's body here.

Meet Jim and Maggie Johnson. Each year, Jim and Maggie (along with canine companion, Ms. Bonnie) travel in their little green camper van, taking the ferry from Homer, and spend the month of July in Unalaska. Maggie has cousins who live here, and Jim loves fishing. Jim spends most of the month out on a boat as Maggie calls, a "70+ year - old" bait boy. (He tends to leave with pounds and pounds of halibut, cod, and other catches, so he must do a little fishing as well).

Maggie allows herself some time to relax, but only if she can't find something to do. Two years ago, she helped prepare and run Vacation Bible School, and helped two women who had recently moved from Japan with their English skills.

This year, she spent a good deal of



time sorting books for the public library, in the 'Friends of the Library' book room. She was also at the church on regular basis for worship, and other fellowship events and would often help out by cleaning, watching kids, or lending a helping hand.

For the Wilcoxes, she and Jim were like visiting grandparents (who brought their own house). The children took to them quickly, always looking for the green camper as it made its way around town!

We frequently have people who are part of our congregation who do not live here. Others come for a time when they are stationed here, or here on regular business. Others, like Jim and Maggie, come, stay for a while, and become part of who we are. Thanks, Jim and Maggie, for your willingness to be God's Blessign wherever you go! Until next time, Peace of the Lord to you (& Ms. Bonnie too!).

## LOOKING FOR AN UPDATE

### **Pastoral Updates**

Last month, we shared some updates from many of our previous pastors. We had one glaring absence. Martha Oldham was here about eight years ago, and we missed her in the updates—mainly because we have no update. If anyone has information about Martha, please send it to us. It is important as a congregation, and as a greater community to know how those people are who have led us in the past.

### **Work Camp/**

#### **Former Member Updates**

If you were here with a work camp helping build the church, the parsonage, doing a VBS, or helping with

keeping everything running smoothly, we want to hear from you!

Please send us a picture, and update, some background on how you are doing—and we can share it as part of our sharing of the larger image of who we are.

Also, if you were formally a member here, or attended here regularly in the past, please let us know how you are doing, and what is going on in your life. We would love to hear how you are, and be able to share that with others!

### **Prayer Point**

We are thankful for the many people who have made Unalaska UMC who it is today. God has brought so many people to this little island—and we are grateful they were here!

## A VISIT TO ROME

Visit the marketplace and see the scribes, the food vendors, or the toga shop. Go along the streets and see Roman Centurions leading a prisoner, shutting down a shop owned by Christians, or simply looking intimidating! Visit Paul under house arrest, and learn about God's love. Or, you can visit an underground church—where Christians worship in hidden places to keep from persecution.



*One night the kids watched as a Roman Senator publicly frees a slave, and teaches that God's love is given freely to us.*



*Christians in the Underground Church show God's love even in tough places.*

### Prayer Point

Continue to thank God for the children he gifts us with! Also thank God for the many individuals who made Vacation Bible School happen.

Anyone of these things is what children were able to experience during Vacation Bible School this summer. Using Group Publishing's *Paul and the Underground Church*, we took the kids back 2000 years to what it might have been like for the early Christians.

Every night, they learned a passage from Romans, and what that passage said about God's love. Games introduced them to the concepts learned in the lessons they received when visiting Paul and the Underground Church. They were even able to experience the conversion of a Roman guard whose relationship with Paul moved from captor to brother in Christ.

It was an amazing week, with some pretty amazing kids. Each night we had over fifty kids, plus lots of teenage and adult helpers.

The week culminated with a program for the parents where we shared music from the week, and closed with the Lord's Supper. (For more thoughts on that experience, please see page 3,

*Thoughts From Low Tide.*)



*Family groups were identified by colored sashes, and spent the week learning and growing together*



*The Toga Shop was always a favorite!*



*Nightly visits to Paul under house arrest introduced the kids to the scripture lesson and theme of the day.*

## UNALASKA UNDERSTANDINGS . . . .



Last time . . . In this older photo (the kids are a lot older now) what is the plant Kris-Ann and the kids are walking over in front of the parsonage, and what is its significance?



Answer: This is called Scurvy Wort, or beach greens. This grows over much of the island, right above the high-tide line. It is edible, and tastes great in tossed salads. It gets its name because of its high level of vitamins. If Vitus Bering, Russian explorer of Alaska (and namesake of the Bering Sea), had known about this plant, perhaps his crew wouldn't have succumbed to scurvy as he explored this part of the world.

New Question: What is on this semi, and why does it need a police escort?



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Check us out on the web at [www.UnalaskaUMC.com](http://www.UnalaskaUMC.com)!