



UNALASKA

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

PO Box 121, Unalaska, AK 99685 907.581.1280 (phone & fax)
UnalaskaUMC@aol.com Rev. Daniel P. Wilcox, Pastor
www.UnalaskaUMC.com

Greetings friends!

It has been a bit since we've written, and so much is going on. We hope that you have had a blessed summer, that the fall has offered some times of respite in busy-ness, and that you prepare excitedly for the coming welcome of the Christ child.



VBS Participants make paper balloons

We have had an exciting few months, especially in our children's ministry. In August, we held VBS for around 40 kids. Our theme was 'Lift Off: Soaring to New Heights with God.' We spent the week with crafts, Bible stories, and activities that taught us all what it was to grow with God and love each other. One of the challenges was that we were doing this without the aid of a work team. It was great to see how people came from across the community to help.

As we began Kids Night Out this fall, we started using a new curriculum that helps us in our planning and keeps us focused on the larger picture of each Biblical story, and challenges us to see the characters in the story as real people. The first month, we talked about God's creation, and how God created a good world for us to live in because he loves us. During October,

we continued in Genesis and explored how God gave people choices—and how so often we make bad choices, but God still loves us. As we move into November, we start with Abraham, and how God calls us to be in relationship. We are now getting more than 50 on a regular basis, with a number of new faces—both kids and helpers.



Children 'Lift Off' during VBS

It continues to look as though God brought Methodists to Unalaska to care for children. As we have the constant reminder of our history here, in the Jesse Lee Home, we sense the connection over the past 125 years that there has been a Methodist presence here. What greater calling can there be than to help to "train children in the right way?"

In the past few months, we have faced one of the regular challenges of living with a very fluid population. Between June and July, we said goodbye to roughly a third of our congregation. As the college students left in August, we added another three to that number. Others move into the community, and

many have visited, with several joining us on a regular basis. We enjoy getting to know new people, but it is sometimes bittersweet as we recall those who have left. Some people here have difficulty in getting to know others because people so regularly do move on, and the closer we grow the harder it is to watch them depart.

Perhaps in the church of Christ we have the best option to offer— "Above all, clothe your-



A few of the kids of Kids Night Out

selves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.”



The Wilcox family in July, with the van borrowed during our itinerary (Thanks Jen & Warren!).

In this passage from Colossians 3, Paul reminds us in all things to ‘clothe yourselves with love,’ reminding us the very basis upon which our faith must rest. Paul speaks of life together—how to live as broken humans while in community together. Yet, even when we are separated by miles, (both with those who have left, and with you our partners in this great venture), we can be thankful because we are bound—as the Body of Christ through the love of Christ.

Our human hearts naturally experience feelings of loss, disturbance from the disruption of community, and struggle with being hurt through vulnerability. If we ‘let the peace of Christ rule in [our] hearts,’ separation is instead seen as temporary, the community of the Body is eternal, and love conquers fear, pains, and loss. Thanks be to God that we are part of such a community and members of so great a body!

As always, we at Unalaska United Methodist Church want to thank you for the generosity and love shown in the gifts sent here for the sake of the ministry and mission to which we are called. At times, people have asked—is there something more that we can do? We have prepared a ‘Wish List,’ which is inserted. This includes items needed for our children’s programs, items for our ‘Kits for Crews,’ project, (used when a boat is damaged or lost and the survivors are stranded here in Unalaska), as well as a few other items which could help us here. On the same insert, please note a few additions to our Advance numbers. As we enter a new quadrennium, we have re-defined existing project numbers, and added a few.

On a personal note, I would ask for prayers for my father, Paul Wilcox. In July he was diagnosed with stage IV leiomyosarcoma, a rare cancer that effects soft tissues. He has now gone through the first several rounds of chemotherapy and we await the results of follow-up scans. He has done quite well with the treatments. In addition to prayer, we would invite you to join a petition requesting a declaration of a National Leiomyosarcoma Awareness Day, which would bring attention to this rare and deadly form of cancer. The petition can be found at www.petitiononline.com/NLMSDay.



Paul Wilcox reading to Esther, Jaden and Lydia

We hope your holiday season is a time of blessing, of time spent with family, and an opportunity to recall the amazing gift presented to us in the Christ child!

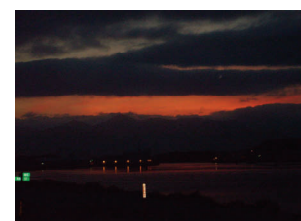
Unalaska Understandings

Last time . . . What are growing on our tires in this picture?

Answer . . . Ice crystals that form in extreme cold—these are forming on the tire of a rental car we had while in Anchorage in February.



New Question—> What is the significance of the color of this sunset? _____>



Correction: In a previous ‘Unalaska Understandings,’ we said the name of the off-shore processing boats were mother ships. We have since learned are considered factory ships. Mother ships are used in whaling—which doesn’t happen here.