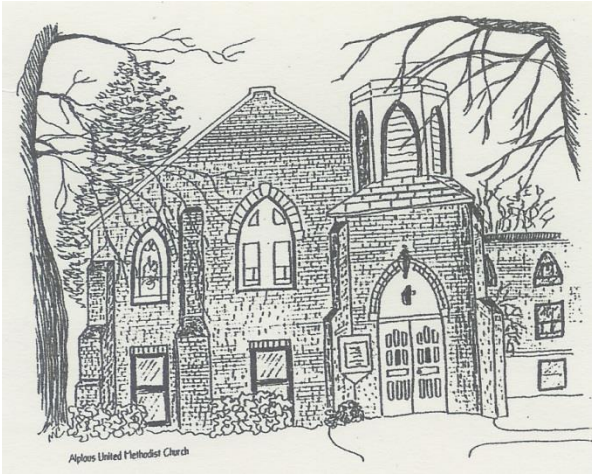




The Alplaus United Methodist Church Muse



The Alplaus United Methodist Church's Mission and Vision:

Our vision for the AUMC is to be a viable, active, open church that supports both individual members and the community with a loving, spiritual atmosphere.

Our mission is to worship, serve, pray, and play by connecting with the community and each other.

Pastoral Letter

It's great to be home! Kylie and I had a great getaway in January – cruising in the Caribbean with Mickey. We are refreshed and rejuvenated and ready to hunker down for the rest of the winter. MANY thanks to Dan Trask for keeping the heat going in the parsonage while we were away. Julie and the animals thank you too!

We are starting something new! Come and gather together for some warm-hearted family movies. On select Friday evenings, we'll be showing family movies in the sanctuary. We're starting January 30th with "The Lego Movie" and continuing February 20th with "Frozen". These showing will be free and we'll also have some popcorn – invite your friends and neighbors to come together and watch a movie. Do you have a suggestion for future months? Perhaps "The Sound of Music", "How to Train Your Dragon", "Monsters Inc" or "The Muppet Movie"? We hope to see you soon! Special thanks to Don Herrick who taught me how to work the sound system for movies!

We are continuing with our book discussions, on Tuesdays at 6:30pm in the parsonage. We're reading Bonhoeffer's *Meditations on the Cross* – small and deep, offering many questions and thoughts for discussion. This is not a closed group, if you are interested, come. We'll also be talking about what to do next so if you have a topic or a book to suggest, let me know! Other continuing items include pastoral visits. If you would like me to visit you, let me know! If you or a friend feel like it's been too long since you celebrated communion and would like me to bring communion to your home, just let me know. I've been out and visiting some and expect to continue! As we reach the bitter cold of winter, after the celebrations of Christmas and New Year, we still long for light and warmth. I do hope that the opportunities of gathering for movies, discussions and visits will help you to connect to your community and to the love and warmth of faithful life. I look forward to seeing you this winter!

Blessings,
Pastor Kristi

**Lay Leader**

This is right on the nose...read it slowly...I don't know who wrote it, but I am guessing it was a senior!!! I first started reading this & was reading fast until I reached the third sentence. I stopped and started over reading slower and thinking about every word. This is very thought-provoking.

AND THEN IT IS WINTER

You know...time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams. But, here it is...the winter of my life and it catches me by surprise...How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that winter was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like. But, here it is...my friends are retired and getting grey...they move slower and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than me...but, I see the great change....Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant...but, like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd be.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore...it's mandatory! Cause if I don't on my own free will...I just fall asleep where I sit!

And so...now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did!

But, at least I know, that though the winter has come, and I'm not sure how long it will last...this I know, that when it's over on this earth...it's NOT over. A new adventure will begin!

Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done...things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime.

So, if you're not in your winter yet...let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly! Don't put things off too long!

Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether this is your winter or not! You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember...and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one.

Live it well! Enjoy today! Do something fun! Be happy! Have a great day!

Remember...It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.

Live happy in this year and every year!

Lastly, consider the following: today is the oldest you've ever been, yet the youngest you'll ever be so - enjoy this day while it lasts.

~Your kids are becoming you...

~Going out is good. Coming home is better!

~You forget names - but it's OK because other people forgot they even knew you!!!

~You realize you're never going to be really good at anything.... especially golf.

~The things you used to care to do, you no longer care to do, but you really do care that you don't care to do them anymore.

~You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV blaring than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep".

~You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch.

~You tend to use more 4 letter words ... "what?"..."when?"... "what?" . ???



- ~Now that you can afford expensive jewelry, it's not safe to wear it anywhere.
 - ~You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless"?!!!
 - ~What used to be freckles are now liver spots.
 - ~Everybody whispers.
 - ~You have 3 sizes of clothes in your closet...2 of which you will never wear.
 - ~But Old is good in some things: Old Songs, Old movies, and best of all, OLD FRIENDS!!
- Stay well, "OLD FRIEND!" Share this with other "Old Friends!" and let them laugh in AGREEMENT!!!
- It's Not What You Gather, But What You Scatter That Tells What Kind Of Life You Have Lived.

Blessings,
 Lisa Beretz, Lay Leader
 (518) 330-9277 or LLBeretz@gmail.com

Lectionary

These are listed with the idea that you might care to read the scriptures before attending church each week, especially if you will be the liturgist and especially the psalms, which we seldom read in worship.

| | <u>Hebrew Scripture</u> | <u>Psalm</u> | <u>Epistle</u> | <u>Gospel</u> |
|---------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 2/1/15 | Deuteronomy 18:15-20 | Psalm 11 | 1 Corinthians 8:1-3 | Mark 1:21-28 |
| 2/8/15 | Isaiah 40:21-31 | Psalm 147:1-11, 20c | 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 | Mark 1:29-39 |
| 2/15/15 | 2 Kings 2:1-12 | Psalm 50: 1-6 | 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 | Mark 9:2-9 |
| 2/18/15 | Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 | Psalm 51: 1-17 | 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 | Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 |
| 2/22/15 | Genesis 9:8-17 | Psalm 25:1-10 | 1 Peter 3:18-22 | Mark 1:9-15 |

Pampered Chef party

Our 3rd annual Pampered Chef party will be Feb. 28 at 1pm. Come watch the demonstrations by our Pampered Chef consultant, Barb Porter, as she acquaints us with the products. There will be food to share, good company to entertain you, and prizes given out. Bring along some friends to share in the fun. If you plan to have 5 or more friends with you, please reserve a table so you can sit together. Call Barb Trask (399-6454) to make your table reservation. Bringing a friend entitles you to a prize, as does collecting \$100 or more in outside orders (people not attending). If you received a catalog at church, be sure to share with neighbors, friends and co-workers. The catalog can also be viewed online at: www.tiny.cc/AlplausUMC15. Please turn in all orders on Saturday, Feb. 28. Payment will be by check or charge. Checks should be made out to Alplaus UMC. Be sure to add shipping charges and then sales tax of 7%. Think about future events you need a gift for (birthdays, anniversaries, next Christmas, etc.) and do your shopping here at our party. We hope to see you all at this event!



The United Methodist Women

There will be no meeting in February. Looking forward to seeing you in March!

Community Luncheon

We will have a special Valentine's Day themed luncheon this month. It is scheduled for February 10th at noon. Bring a dish to share if you can and also invite a friend.

Prayer List

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Jack Leveille | Ginny Smith | Dorothy Ziegler |
| Barbara Hutchins | Dan Trask | Lu Diel's family |
| Claudia Lewis | Alice Lewis | Janice's family |
| Terry Gleason | Jeanne Story | Residents of nursing homes |
| Bill Broland | Mary Jackson | |
| Marcie Krout | Anne, Emily, and Deontae Kwiatkowski | |
| Gordon Neufeld and family | All victims of disasters and violence | |

Sunday School News

We only met twice in Jan. due to the various holiday weekends. Since Dec. was so busy with preparations for our pageant, I postponed reading a special book that makes a connection between Jesus and Santa until Jan. The book is entitled A Special Place for Santa. It starts out with Santa Claus worried that people have forgotten the real reason for celebrating Christmas as they hustle through the commercialism of it. Then it gives an abbreviated history of the kind acts the real Saint Nicholas performed and how that name evolved into Santa Claus. God assures Santa that he has been performing good deeds all of his life, which is what God/Jesus want us to do. It ends with Santa kneeling in front of a crèche in a church, giving him a special present. In the box(present) is a list of all the loving things people have done for one another during the past year. We talked about how Santa gets to carryout Jesus's desire: to be nice to one another and do special things for other people. The children enjoyed the book. From there we have been discussing special qualities of Jesus. One week we learned he is our light showing us the way to behave. We made special luminaries to go with that theme. Then we learned that Jesus is our shepherd. We got to pretend we were sheep who got lost and had to find our way back to the fold (with blindfolds on). Feb. will also be a short month for classes due to the short month and the holiday weekend. We will not meet Feb. 15 since that is during the President's weekend holiday.

Pill Bottle program

In developing countries, medicines – when actually obtainable – are often dispensed into hands, pockets, leaves, or any other available container. Donations of clean, unlabeled plastic pill bottles help the poorest of the poor in many ways.

Pill bottles of all types are accepted: prescription or over the counter, large or small, with or without child proof caps. Placing a nickel, dime, or quarter in each bottle helps with shipping costs. There will be a container in Fellowship Hall in which to put our bottles.

Coffee Hour

Please consider signing up to host coffee hour. A new signup sheet is in Fellowship Hall waiting just for you!

**Fulfilling our Promises - our presence and our presents**

| | <u>Our Presence</u> | <u>Our Gifts</u> |
|--------|---------------------|------------------|
| Dec 7 | 28 | \$2,311 |
| Dec 14 | 26 | \$11,123 |
| Dec 21 | 43 | \$2,205 |
| Dec 24 | 54 | \$159 |
| Dec 28 | 19 | \$1,020 |

Comparison of expenses and income

| | For Dec | Actual year to date | Expected year to date (budgeted) |
|----------|----------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Expenses | \$5,763 | \$66,985 | \$73,600 |
| Income | \$17,733 | \$59,329 | \$50,000 |

2013 was a good year, as we finished it in the BLACK by a little over \$4,300. This was the first in many, many years that we did better than break even.

However, 2014 was not so good. Our expenses for the year were nicely \$6,000 under budget, but still \$7,600 higher than income for the year. Even considering the \$4,300 surplus from 2013, we had to dip into our savings (Trust & Bequest Funds), in the amount of \$3,300.

So far for 2015, we have a draft budget put together of about \$73,500; that is about \$1,000 higher than the budget was for 2014. While we generally do not spend the entire budget, we expect our expenses to be in the range of \$68,000 to \$69,000. Anyone who wishes to review the budget is welcome to do so, as there is no surplus or slush in it. Most expenses are fixed (salaries ~\$35,000, conference costs ~\$10,500, insurances ~ \$3,000, utilities ~ \$15,000), leaving only about \$10,000 for programs and much needed maintenance.

The recent commitment/pledge cards received so far add up to only \$42,000. With potentially \$10,000 to \$12,000 income from non-pledged donations, dinner profits, gifts and other unplanned sources, we will still be short by approximately \$14,000 to \$17,000. This shortage has to come from our small T&B savings, which is getting depleted faster all the time.

In the past two years we have spent over \$25,000 on building repairs and upkeep out of the T&B funds. And we expect to be spending well over \$10,000 in 2015 to keep our facilities in minimally good condition. (NOTE: these are NOT budget expenses, but Capital Expenditures that must come from savings).

Please keep all of this in mind throughout the coming year and try to adjust your giving appropriately to help out. Remember that "God calls us to be faithful with much ~ allow God to show you that God will be found faithful as we increase our faithfulness and generosity".

In what ways is God calling our congregation to be generous? "When we trust the Lord with **ALL** we have, miracles are possible". "God can take **little** things in our lives, things that seem relatively insignificant, and multiply their impact beyond what we could have imagined". What gifts are we holding back because we think they are "too little"? "God can multiply even our smallest gifts in ways that allow people to be restored".

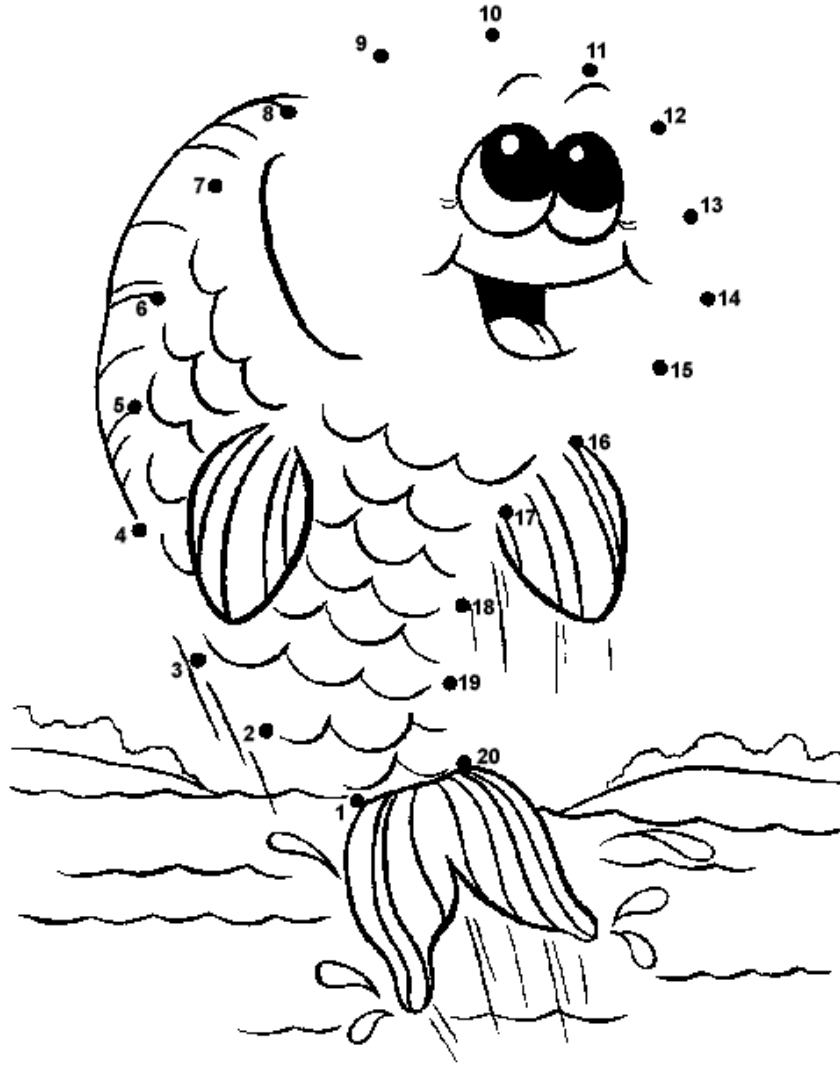
Thanks to ALL of you,
Your Finance Team



Kids page

Fishing for People

Connect the dots to complete the image.



Jesus called out to them, "Come, be my disciples,
and I will show you how to fish for people!"
Mark 1:17(NLT)

Sermons4Kids.com

Alplaus United Methodist Church February 2015 Events Calendar

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| 1 4 th Sunday after Epiphany 9:15am Sunday School 10:15am Church Communion Worship Service. Church Council meeting after coffee hour, at the Parsonage. | 2 7pm Fire Commissioner meeting Groundhogs Day | 3 | 4 6:30pm Cub Scouts 7pm Scouts | 5 1 – 3pm Knitting Group 7pm Choir | 6 6:30pm Bridge | 7 |
| 8 5 th Sunday after Epiphany 9:15am Sunday School 10:15am Boy Scouts Sunday Worship Service, SICM Food Collection Day | 9 7pm Fire Commissioner meeting | 10 Noon – Community Luncheon | 11 7pm Scouts | 12 1 – 3pm Knitting Group 2:30pm Cub Scouts 7pm Choir | 13 6:30pm Bridge | 14 Valentine’s Day |
| 15 Transfiguration Sunday No Sunday School 10:15am Church Worship Service | 16 7pm Fire Commissioner meeting Presidents Day | 17 | 18 6:30pm Cub Scouts 7pm Scouts 7pm Ash Wednesday service | 19 1 – 3pm Knitting Group 7pm Choir | 20 6:30pm Bridge 6:30pm Movie Night in the Sanctuary. March Muse article deadline! | 21 7am-noon Boy Scouts Breakfast Fellowship hall |
| 22 1 st Sunday in Lent 9:15am Sunday School 10:15am Church Worship Service | 23 7pm Fire Commissioner meeting | 24 | 25 7pm Scouts | 26 1 – 3pm Knitting Group 2:30pm Cub Scouts 7pm Choir | 27 6:30pm Bridge | 28 1pm Pampered Chef Party Fellowship hall |

Pastor Kristi’s schedule - In the office: Wednesday 9-12 and Thursday 11-1.

Alplaus Methodist Church
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(518)399-6000
AlplausUMC.org

First Class Mail



FEBRUARY 1, 2015



Articles for the March newsletter must be submitted to alplausmuse@gmail.com
no later than **February 20th**.
Thank you!

If you would like to receive your copy of our monthly Muse via email, please let me know at
llberetz@gmail.com and put "Muse" in the subject line.