



ALPHA

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

February 2017

MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST, TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITY
ALPHA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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211 S. SCANDIA ST., PO BOX 607, ALPHA, IL 61413

Volume 2017 Issue 2

Greetings friends!

February is an odd month. At a glance it usually includes Black History Month, Groundhog Day, Mardi Gras, Ash Wednesday (but it's in March in 2017), Valentine's Day (or Singles Awareness Day), Lincoln's Birthday, and Presidents' Day. For many people, it's when our ambitious new year's resolutions are abandoned, the winter blues kick in, and tax season begins. But, here's the kicker: it's only 28 days long! You can't fit in all the activity of 30 or 31 days into 28 or 29 days can you? Something has to give.

Yet, maybe the less-ness of February is an opportunity for God to address our own personal restlessness that can accompany this "cabin-fever" time of year. St. Augustine prayed *"You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."* In Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus invites us: *"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* Jesus invites us to only carry what we were created by God to carry. Many of us are carrying too many demands or "supposed to be"s and most of them are probably not our own to begin with. Truly, Jesus calls us to humbly submit to his Lordship and unburden ourselves at his feet.

Indeed, February reminds us, we just can't do it all. Even Jesus didn't try to do it all. He didn't heal everyone he came into contact with. He didn't preach in every town or village from Galilee to Jerusalem, and he didn't respond to every challenge from his critics. No, he frequently retreated from the crowds to go be with his Father in prayer and solitude. Jesus kept a limited number of people in his own social network too. Yes, he preached and taught crowds in his public ministry, but his target audience was his twelve disciples, and among them, he reserved protected time for Peter, James, and John.

Moreover, he seized upon the pre-dawn hours to meditate on God's Word, to listen to the Holy Spirit, and pray to his Father in heaven. Did you hear that: the pre-dawn hours? Pastor and leadership coach, Carey Niewhof is a huge fan: *"Morning people have discovered there is a distinct benefit to starting early: nobody bothers you. When I'm up at 5:00am, no one calls me, texts me, or tries to fight for my attention. Because of that I actually do my best work with almost zero interruptions. It's a little like beating rush hour traffic."*

See, before dawn, Jesus could focus without interruption on God's Will for his everyday life, before the "rush hour traffic" of crowds and critics. Now, I know that not everyone is a morning person, but whether Jesus wanted to be or not, by his early 30s, he had become an "early bird" and his pre-dawn discipline of prayer in solitude fueled his soul and sharpened his mind for each day's challenges. Today, we can learn from Christ's example for us how to cultivate our own priorities.

Since February is a month of less-ness and restlessness for some of us, let's start giving more attention to our own morning routines. So if you don't have a morning discipline, now is your chance to establish one. What will be YOUR morning routine that gives your best attention and focus to God to pray, read Scripture, and listen to the Holy Spirit to determine your main priorities ahead of time? Ask Jesus to help you decide in advance: **1) what you will and won't do today, 2) who you will and won't meet with today, and 3) when are the best times for you to do what is most important today.** If you start early enough, you might even complete your important tasks before "the rush hour traffic" of phone calls, emails, texts, and "hey, when you get a minute..."s.

When I start my days with God as my first appointment, my prioritized tasks tend to fit on a post-it note. If I rush into the day without giving God the first fruits of my time, I tend to try too hard, tackle too much, and have less results at the end of the day. Yes, God keeps me on track. Establishing clear priorities with a shorter "to do" list enables us to feel more accomplished and less disappointed at the day's end, and ready to enjoy our time with our loved ones, the most important people on our appointment calendar.

What about you? If you have one, what is your morning routine like? How do you give your best time to God before you give it away to everyone and everything else? Does the idea of beating “rush hour traffic” to get your most important work done appeal to you? Do your priority tasks for the day fit on a post-it note or a spreadsheet?

Some of these examples from Scripture seem like post-it note sized priorities:

In Psalm 27:4, the Psalmist’s priority is: *“**One thing** I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.”*

In Luke 10:41-42, Martha is busy, while Jesus is Mary’s priority: *“But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only **one thing**. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.”*

In Mark 10:21, a rich young ruler’s priorities are challenged: *“Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, “You lack **one thing**; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.”*

In Galatians 2:10, Paul recalls the first church schism, when he and Barnabas are called to preach to the uncircumcised (Gentiles), while Peter, James, and John are called to remain among the circumcised (Jewish Christians); but they agree on their missional priority: *“They asked only **one thing**, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do.”*

In Philippians 3:13-14, Paul reveals his life’s ultimate priority: *“Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this **one thing** I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.”*

So, what is the ONE THING that matters most in your life and your ministry?

Friends, may you wake up early tomorrow morning, meet with the LORD for your first appointment, and remember your **one thing** that God created you for and calls you to. After all, it's February. We can't do it all. Nor should we.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Zack



Board Game Day

Monday, Feb. 20 (President’s Day)

9am–4pm

Pastor Zack will be hosting another board game day on Feb. 20. Bring your friends and spend the day off school trying some of his MANY board games! Lunch will be provided.

Adult volunteers are needed throughout the day. If you are able to help out, please contact the church office.

Administrative Council 2017

Chair: Lindi Kernan
Vice Chair: Mary Nice
Finance & Treasurer: Dean Kernan
Financial Secretary: Linda Lanning
Trustees: Dave Lambin
S/PPRC: Eddie Bradshaw
Outreach: Linda Lambin
Nurture: Kelli Johnson
Worship: Roger Swanson
Christian Ed Chair: Cathy Jordan
UMW Chair: Mary Nice
Men in Mission: Dean Kernan
Lay Leader: Cathy Jordan
Youth Rep.: Delainey Bradshaw
Recording Secretary: Desirae Silvis

Secretary's Hours

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday

9:00am - 1:00pm

(309)629-5161

alphaumc@gmail.com



Pastor Zack will be out of the office February 6 & 7 for residency work, as well as February 23 for a Spoon River clergy gathering. Please contact Desirae if there is an emergency.

Wednesday,

February 1

6:45pm

**Alpha UMC
Sunshiners**

All women are welcome
to attend!



MONDAY,

FEB. 20



Sunday, February 26

7:00am

All men welcome!

*Thank
You*

Alpha United Methodist Church,

I want to thank you for remembering me at Christmas. It was so kind and so appreciated. God bless each of you. Also, thank you for the work you have given me. All so kind and caring.

God Bless,

Edie Peden

February Worship Volunteer Schedule

February Ushers: Lindsi Brooks & Joella Holdsworth

February 5

Liturgist: Bob Bateman
 Acolytes: Libby Fox & Grace Althaus
 Children's Moment:
 Nursery Assistant: Need Volunteers
 Multimedia: Dean Kernan
 Accompanist: Adrienne DeSutter

February 19

Liturgist: Dale Lanning
 Acolytes: Lucas Althaus & Ty Anderson
 Children's Moment: Cathy Jordan
 Nursery Assistant: Miriam Greene
 Multimedia: Dean Kernan

February 12

Liturgist: Joseph Shepherd
 Acolytes: Libby Fox & Grace Althaus
 Children's Moment: Roger Swanson
 Nursery Assistant: Need Volunteers
 Multimedia: Dean Kernan
 Accompanist: Tia Topoluk

February 26

Liturgist: Eddie Bradshaw
 Acolytes: Lucas Althaus & Tucker Swanson
 Children's Moment: Linda Lambin
 Nursery Assistant: Lindsi Brooks
 Multimedia: Dean Kernan
 Accompanist: Tia Topoluk



February Birthdays

02: Vicki Jordan Geiger
 03: Jason Lambin
 04: Bryton Brooks
 Clint Cole
 10: Cathy Jordan
 Geri McLaughlin
 11: Ty Anderson
 22: Nicole Schmitt
 28: Brittany Kane

February Coffee Hour Hosts



05: Missions
 12: Kurt & Cathy Jordan
 19: Need Volunteers
 26: Need Volunteers



February Anniversary

13: Ron & Ruby Naslund



February Sermon Schedule

From Epiphany to Transfiguration 2017
Part 3 - "Forgiveness and Healing in Jesus"

5th Sunday of Epiphany, February 5th - "Healing the Sick, Raising the Dead"; Luke 7:1-7

6th Sunday of Epiphany, February 12th - "A Messenger Prepares the Way for Healing"; Luke 7:18-35

7th Sunday of Epiphany, February 19th - "A Sinful Woman Forgiven"; Luke 7:36-50

Transfiguration Sunday, February 26th - "Transfiguration and Healing"; Luke 9:28-45



February Meals:

Saturday, Feb. 4, 5 - 7pm - Free Community Meal

Sunday, Feb. 12 - Mission Meal following worship

Tuesday, Feb. 28- Humility of Mary Meal 2:00pm—Cooking@ the church, 4:15 leave for shelter

Come see what we have going on in 2017. Bring your ideas! All are welcome. We want you to be part of our team!

Baby Bottles for Life Campaign Ends Feb. 5



Please remember to return your baby bottles filled with change, cash, or a check made out to Pregnancy Resources, to the church by Sunday, Feb. 5. On this date Pastor Zack will bless the bottles before they are returned to the Pregnancy Resources Center.



Free Church Multimedia Classes begin soon!

I will be giving some free classes on Multimedia for our church during the next few months.

You will learn how to build the weekly PowerPoint presentations and control the audio board.

It is really very simple. You do not need your own laptop but it will be easier to follow along if you do.

After you are trained, you will be able to use the Church's laptop.

Please RSVP to the church office by February 15th or call me at home at 309-629-9924 if you have more questions. I would like to set up dates in late February and early March.

It would be great to have several people trained so we can each take a Sunday.

Thanks, Dean Kernan

A Poem for February...

On The First Day of February

On this the first day of February
Lord, give me extra love;
I need a bountiful supply
Sent from heaven up above.

Equip me with enough, O Lord,
To be kinder everyday;
To show more consideration
To those I meet along the way.

May I be worthy to receive,
The extra love I need;
Give me patience to be kind
In action, word and deed.

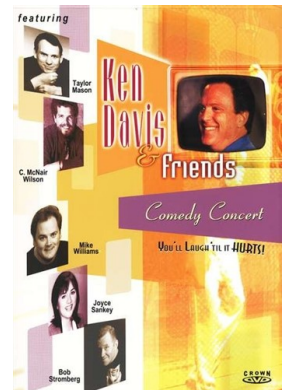


Do you have the winter blues?????

Well, come get your laugh on!!!!

Sunday, February 26, 2017 at 6pm will be Movie Night at the church featuring "Ken Davis and Friends Comedy Concert" at Alpha United Methodist Church.

Bring a dish to pass and dessert will be provided. Great family time with clean, Christian humor for all ages. Be prepared to have a relaxing night of laughing the blues away.





Happy New Year!

Most of you are now aware that it does not take a lot to get me excited. In fact, I live on the edge of easy excitability. All it takes to get my motor running are two probable twins of promise -- potential and possibility. Those two typically send me into elation mode. So now that I have confessed my impending slant toward being positive you will not be surprised that I am overly optimistic about the New Year.

A Letter from the Bishop

The year 2017 holds the possibility of becoming one of the greatest years in the history of the IGRC. I believe we are poised for a great REVIVAL. Yes, I said "REVIVAL!"

The problem with using words that have been around the theological block is that they often have connotations that carry a multitude of baggage that may not be intended or descriptive of the user's objective.

Here is what I mean by revival. A Revival is an awakening and a return to the primary call and commission of Christ by those professing to be committed Disciples. It is a return and a recovery of our first love (Revelation 2:4-5).

A revival becomes necessary when we realize that we are in a state of relapse. The prodigal son had an "ah-ha" moment and the Bible says in Luke 15:17, "He came to his senses." It was his realization that his prior blessings had disappeared, because of his own negligence and that he was now in need of recovery and restoration. The situation was so far beyond the prodigal son's ability to repair and restore that he knew he had to count on the goodness and mercy that his father displayed. His father, he reasoned, provided sufficiently even for the hired hands. This boy was so bent and broken that his capacity to seek full recovery was limited.

The good news is that God, our loving parent, is waiting patiently for each of us to reach the point where revival becomes a possibility. For me, the turning point in the story of the prodigal child occurs in Luke 15: 20a. Most translations read, "And he started out." Revival cannot begin until we actually "start out." You can never get where you need to go until you get started!

A "New Year" is often greeted with a desire to make a variety of resolutions. Some folks resolve to lose weight, quit smoking, stop drinking, go to church, be nicer, or to "become a better person." All of those are worthy pledges and noteworthy intentions. Resolve, however well-intended, never meets revival until there is a turn-a-round (revival) in behavior.

"And he started out" means that the wheels towards restoration actually moved in harmony with the planned resolution. God seeing both desire and discipline was able to now become a full partner in the act of recovery. God simply being God was able to be extravagant and radical in pouring out forgiveness and love.

The year 2017 has great potential for a revival of epic magnitude within the IGRC. I believe we are on the brink of a major move of God. This new move will be triggered as individuals and congregations put Jesus back into first place. As Jesus is elevated to his rightful place and we experience personal and corporate rebirth, renewal and recovery will happen.

One of the great things about a God-sized revival is that it has an effect on communities, States, and Nations. The words God spoke to me shortly after I was assigned to the IGRC were, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people" (Proverbs 14:34 NIV).

I believe God is waiting for us, like the prodigal, to come to our senses and express our repentance and our need to be restored. My hope is that we will not wait until we are ankle deep in the pig pen before we come to our senses.

Our communities and our nation are filled with folks that are crying out for relief and hope. We cannot give what we do not have. It is only when we trust Jesus to forgive, cleanse, and renew us that revival becomes more than an unbridled resolution. Once we have experienced personal and corporate resuscitation we can share the life giving wind of God's Spirit with those around us. As the flight attendants remind us, "put your own oxygen mask on before trying to assist others."

Let me remind you of my constant prayer, "Lord, send the gentle wind of your Holy Spirit to blow upon the embers of my heart and fan me into flames for Jesus?" Will 2017 be the year?

God Bless
Bishop Frank J. Beard



February 2017



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 6:45pm Sunshiners	2 6:30pm Band Practice	3 Pastor's Sabbath	4 5-7pm Free Community Meal
5	6 Pastor out of office 6:30pm Boy Scouts	7 Pastor out of office	8	9 6:30pm Band Practice	10 Pastor's Sabbath	11 12-5pm Private Baby Shower
12 Scouting Sunday Mission Meal following wor- ship	13 6:30pm Boy Scouts	14 Valentine's Day	15 Outreach 6:00pm	16 6:30pm Band Practice	17 Pastor's Sabbath 9am-12pm Pre-K Screening	18
19	20 President's Day Game Day 9am - 4pm Newsletter Deadline	21	22	23 Pastor Zack at Clergy gather- ing 6:30pm Band Practice	24 Pastor's Sabbath	25
26 7:00am Men in Mission Breakfast	27 6:30pm Boy Scouts	28 4:15 Humility of Mary				

ALPHA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Zackary T. Glenn, Pastor

Sunday Schedule:

9:00 A.M. All Sunday School Classes Begin

9:30 A.M. Coffee Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall

10:00 A.M. Worship Service



Have you visited our website?
Dean Kernan is the creator and manager of our website.
Our Web address is alphaumc.org



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