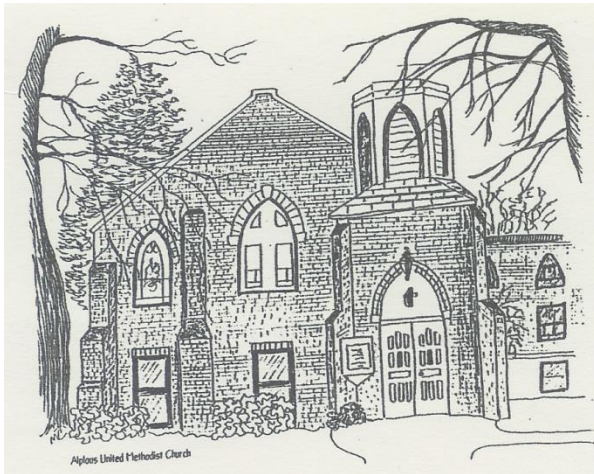




## The Alplaus United Methodist Church Muse



### ***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**

### ***“Doing Community Ministry in the Small Church”***

I read this article this week and thought that it pretty well covered what I have talked about since I came to Alplaus. The author, Joy F. Skjogstad, is a consultant who works helping churches develop programs to meet community needs. This material is excerpted and adapted from **7 Creative Models for Community Ministry** by Joy F. Skjogstad. Copyright © 2013 by Judson Press.

*Sometimes I interact with small congregations that assume that any significant community ministry effort is beyond their reach. They often keenly feel their limitations as they work to keep internal church programs going with limited staff and volunteers. So how could they ever engage the community in any significant way?*

*With the right approach, it is possible for a small group of people to make a big impact. It will take focus and clarity about what you are trying to accomplish, but the small church can make a big impact in the world through partnerships, creative use of resources, and a focus on relational ministry. Small congregations have unique strengths that can result in strong and effective community ministry.*

***Focus.*** *A small congregation has to be more disciplined about not “biting off more than it can chew.” Identifying just one thing to focus on (tutor kids at the local public school, collect diapers, sponsor a community garden) may well help you be more successful, as you will have clear outcomes in front of you. I think sometimes there is a temptation for larger churches to make ministry efforts bigger and more complex than they need to be. Internal ministry programs may have many bells and whistles, so we think we need to do that with work in our community as well — right? Wrong! Sometimes simpler is just what the community needs.*

***Relationships.*** *Another advantage of being small is that your church may be better at relational ministry than larger churches, and it is the relationships that you can build with people in your community that will make the greatest impact. People who are drawn to attend smaller churches are often there because of the “family” feel; in your small congregation, you can really get to know each other, go deep in your relationships, and bear one another’s burdens. A pastor of a rural congregation in West Virginia told me that his small church is “a place of gathering, celebration, and common community. We still celebrate each person’s birthday here!” Carrying that affinity for relationship into the community may well help you make a greater impact than if you brought hundreds of volunteers or thousands of dollars. Everything you’ve learned within your own congregation about really listening to one another and devoting time to relationships will bless your community in myriad ways.*



**Partnerships.** *Small churches often have no choice but to partner with others to carry out ministry, and partnerships, if done well, can result in exponentially greater impact in the community. You aren't limited to the gifts and perspective within your own congregation; you can seek others who make up the other half of what you don't have. Particularly when working on complex community issues when all kinds of people, expertise, connections, and resources are needed to move forward, the small church can truly shine as one piece of a more complex partnership puzzle. Recently, I worked with several smaller churches that were developing partnerships with public schools. We started with a goal of recruiting just ten volunteers from each church, and they met that goal. Next people from the church started going into the school every week, learning about the needs of students, interacting with teachers and other staff, and making an impact by being faithful. A small group of people who are willing to keep at it can make a big difference!*

**Ownership.** *In a small church, members may also feel a greater sense of ownership for the ministry. Without many paid staff, it is up to church members to develop the vision and the plan, find partners, and enlist other church members to get involved. You can't just look around and say, "Pastor So-and-So is going to do that." In a small church, when you look around, you might only see yourself and a few of your friends. If you don't do it, no one else will! This strong ownership by lay leaders can help ministry be sustainable over the long term, long after paid staff members have moved on.*

**Accountability.** *Finally, those in small churches may be better able to hold each other accountable for following through on ministry goals and commitments because you are small. If just a few of you are working on a project and two of you don't show up, it's pretty obvious who isn't holding up their end of the work! It is harder to be anonymous and go back on what you've agreed to. It is harder to give up when your friends are on your case!*

*Small churches are all too aware of the challenges facing their ministries — the limited funds, only a small number of church members, and a building that needs work. But even in the face of such challenges, your small church may be able to start some very powerful community ministries. Take stock of what you do have rather than what you don't have, and build on those assets. Be creative about finding partners, raising money, and securing in-kind donations. And most importantly, keep going. Some of the most successful community ministries programs are small and focused and don't require lots of money and people.*

Doesn't that describe us?! Isn't this how our centennial celebration community day worked? We know how to do this. We just need to step up and do it.

*Pastor Coil*

### **Lay Leader**

*Trust in the LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART and lean not on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5*

Apples... This is as good as it gets!!!

A few years ago a group of salesmen went to a regional sales convention in Chicago. They had assured their wives that they would be home in plenty of time for Friday night's dinner. In their rush, with tickets and briefcases, one of these salesmen inadvertently kicked over a table which held a display of apples. Apples flew everywhere. Without stopping or looking back, they all managed to reach the plane in time for their nearly-missed boarding.

ALL BUT ONE!!! He paused, took a deep breath, got in touch with his feelings and experienced a twinge of compassion for the girl whose apple stand had been overturned. He told his buddies to go on without him, waved good-bye, told one of them to call his wife when they arrived at their home destination and explain his taking a later flight. Then he returned to the terminal where the apples were all over the terminal floor.

He was glad he did. The 16-year-old girl was totally blind! She was softly crying, tears running down her cheeks in frustration, and at the same time helplessly groping for her spilled produce as the crowd swirled about her; no one stopping and no one to care for her plight.



The salesman knelt on the floor with her, gathered up the apples, put them back on the table and helped organize her display. As he did this, he noticed that many of them had become battered and bruised; these he set aside in another basket.

When he had finished, he pulled out his wallet and said to the girl, "Here, please take this \$40 for the damage we did. Are you okay?" She nodded through her tears. He continued on with, "I hope we didn't spoil your day too badly."

As the salesman started to walk away, the bewildered blind girl called out to him, "Mister...." He paused and turned to look back into those blind eyes. She continued, "Are you Jesus?" He stopped in mid-stride, and he wondered. He gently went back and said, "No, I am nothing like Jesus - He is good, kind, caring, loving, and would never have bumped into your display in the first place."

The girl gently nodded: "I only asked because I prayed for Jesus to help me gather the apples. He sent you to help me, so you are like Him - only He knows who will do His will. Thank you for hearing His call, Mister." Then slowly he made his way to catch the later flight with that question burning and bouncing about in his soul: "Are you Jesus?"

Do people mistake you for Jesus?

That's our destiny, is it not? To be so much like Jesus that people cannot tell the difference as we live and interact with a world that is blind to His love, life and grace. If we claim to know Him, we should live, walk and act as He would. Knowing Him is more than simply quoting scripture and going to church. It's actually living the Word as life unfolds day to day.

You are the apple of His eye even though you, too, have been bruised by a fall. He stopped what He was doing and picked up you and me on a hill called Calvary and paid in full for our damaged fruit.

Please share this, if you feel led to do so.

Sometimes we just take things for granted, when we really need to be sharing what we know....Thanks.

The nicest place to be is in someone's thoughts, the safest place to be is in someone's prayers, and the very best place to be is...in the hands of God. Thank you to great friends for sharing this story with me, I hope you enjoyed it too.

Lisa Beretz, Lay Leader  
(518) 330-9277 or [LLBeretz@gmail.com](mailto: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>
Mar 2	Exodus 24:12-18	Psalm 99	2 Peter 1:16-21	Matthew 17:1-9
Mar 9	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7	Psalm 32	Romans 5:12-19	Matthew 4:1-11
Mar 16	Genesis 12:1-4a	Psalm 121	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	John 3:1-17
Mar 23	Exodus 17:1-7	Psalm 95	Romans 5:1-11	John 4:5-42
Mar 30	1 Samuel 16:1-13	Psalm 23	Ephesians 5:8-14	John 9:1-41

**Prayer List**

Anne and Deontae Kwiatkowski	Ginny Smith	Dorothy Ziegler
Lu Diel	Terry Gleason	Rev. Dr. Brolin Parker
Claudia Lewis	Alice Lewis	Janice's family
Bill Broland	Betsy Hyatt	Jack Leveille
Marci Kraut	the Kriss family	Ginny Bopp
Tom Griffiths	Dot and Lou Euvrard	The Fahrenkopf family



**March Birthdays and Anniversaries**

March Birthdays

3 Berkley Davis  
 14 Yvonne White  
 21 Julia Wither  
 23 Elysia Bechand  
 29 Alice Lewis  
 31 Peter Trask

March Anniversaries

none

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

	<u>Our Presence</u>	<u>Our Gifts</u>
January 5	22	\$1,367
January 12	32	\$1,990
January 19	12	\$467
January 26	37	\$486

**Comparison of expenses and income**

	For January	Actual year to date	Expected year to date (budgeted)
Expenses	\$6,754	\$6,754	\$6,133.33
Income	\$4,310	\$4,310	\$4,166.67

The first month of the year is always tough. There's income still coming in from last year and several annual payments that we make in January.

**United Methodist Women**

The UMW will meet Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 12:30pm. Mandy will present a program on Gothic cathedrals and churches using a DVD loaned by the Burnt Hills Bible study group. Shirley Sutphen will be the hostess. Thank you to Sandi for preparing the 2014 UMW program booklet for us.

**Community Luncheon**

The Community Luncheon will be held Tuesday, March 11th in Fellowship Hall at noon. We had a nice turnout for our Valentine party last month so put the date on your calendar and we will see you in March! Bring a dish to share if you can. There will be Bingo.

**Coffee Hour**

Please consider signing up to host coffee hour. Currently the calendar in Fellowship Hall is blank! Maybe join up with a friend to share the responsibility of providing food and cleaning up. If you are doing any baking please consider making an extra batch to keep in the freezer for those weeks when no one has committed to hosting. Thank you to all who make coffee hour come together each week!



**Church Directory Updates and Corrections**

We will be including changes for you to update in your own copy of the directory within each Muse as we learn of the changes. Please remember to let us know when you move or have a change of any kind.

# **CORNER BEEF & CABBAGE DINNER**



**Saturday, March 15 from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.**

*Alplaus United Methodist Church*

*1 Brookside Ave., Alplaus*

**PRICES:**

Adults (13+): \$10 ♦ Seniors: \$9

Kids (5-12): \$5 ♦ Under 5: Free ♦

FAMILY PKG. \$25 (2 adults & 2 kids 5-12)



WALK-INS WELCOME &  
TAKEOUTS AVAILABLE  
INFO: 518-399-6000



DINERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BRING A NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEM FOR THE SICM FOOD PANTRY

The Alplaus church is handicapped accessible ♦ [www.alplausumc.org](http://www.alplausumc.org)





**Kids Pages**

# Love Your Enemies

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." Matthew 5:43-44

The activity is based on Matthew 5:43-48



*Find the hidden words. The words have been placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. When you locate a word, draw a circle around it.*

K	O	M	G	Y	N	E	I	G	H	B	O	R	G	B
J	C	I	H	S	O	P	L	N	S	Y	W	P	R	R
I	K	S	D	W	H	I	I	O	W	X	C	E	E	O
K	F	A	T	H	E	R	R	D	E	Q	W	R	E	T
U	F	E	V	I	L	M	P	R	A	Y	P	F	T	H
R	L	O	V	E						P	J	E	P	E
E	E	C	M	D						G	D	C	X	R
W	K	M	F	F						Q	Y	T	S	S
A	K	S	J	M						E	N	E	M	Y
R	Y	R	V	Q						R	I	S	E	I
D	N	B	O	F	O	B	X	F	P	A	G	A	N	S
L	E	Y	U	O	E	G	O	O	D	T	T	J	C	U
H	V	K	L	Y	L	U	J	P	Q	K	T	N	L	I
K	R	W	N	U	K	B	N	K	O	S	U	N	A	E
D	R	W	N	G	P	H	A	T	E	C	B	M	C	Q



FATHER	NEIGHBOR	PRAY	PAGANS	PERFECT
LOVE	REWARD	EVIL	HATE	GREET
RISE	SUN	GOOD	BROTHERS	ENEMY

## Alplaus United Methodist Church – March 2014 Events Calendar

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
<b>2</b> Transfiguration Sunday <b>9:15am Sunday School</b> <b>10:15am Church Communion Worship Service</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 7 pm Scouts 7 pm Ash Wednesday Service at Scotia UMC	<b>6</b> 1–3pm Knitting Group 7pm Choir	<b>7</b> 6:30pm Bridge	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> 1st Sunday in Lent <b>Girl Scout Sunday</b> <b>9:15am Sunday School</b> <b>10:15am Church Worship Service, SICM Food Collection Day &amp; Church Council meeting after coffee hour.</b> Daylight Saving Time Begins!	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Noon – Community Luncheon	<b>12</b> 7 pm Scouts 7 pm Lenten Study at Scotia UMC	<b>13</b> 1–3pm Knitting Group 7pm Choir	<b>14</b> 6:30pm Bridge	<b>15</b> <b>5-7pm Corned Beef dinner</b>
<b>16</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent <b>9:15am Sunday School</b> <b>10:15am Church Worship Service.</b>	<b>17</b> <b>St. Patrick's Day</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 7 pm Scouts 7 pm Lenten Study at Scotia UMC	<b>20</b> 12:30pm UMW 1 -3pm Knitting Group 7pm Choir <b>SPRING BEGINS! April Muse article deadline!</b>	<b>21</b> 6:30pm Bridge	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent <b>9:15am Sunday School 10:15am Church Worship Service. 2-7pm Conference Road trip Workshop at Saratoga Springs UMC.</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 7 pm Scouts 7 pm Lenten Study at Scotia UMC	<b>27</b> 1 -3pm Knitting Group 7pm Choir	<b>28</b> 6:30pm Bridge	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent <b>9:15am Sunday School</b> <b>10:15am Church Worship Service.</b>	<b>31</b>					

Pastor Carl's schedule – In the office: Monday 10-4, Tuesday 12-5, and Thursday 9-11.

Alplaus Methodist Church  
1 Brookside Ave.  
Alplaus, NY 12008  
(518)399-6000  
AlplausUMC.org

First Class Mail



MARCH 1, 2014



Articles for the April newsletter must be submitted to [alplausmuse@gmail.com](mailto:alplausmuse@gmail.com)  
no later than **March 20<sup>th</sup>**.

Thank you!

If you would like to receive your copy of our monthly Muse via email, please let me know at [lberetz@gmail.com](mailto:lberetz@gmail.com) and put "Muse" in the subject line.