

The Antioch UMC

Epistle

April, 2015

There is a season for everything

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vineyard keeper. He removes any of my branches that don't produce fruit, and he trims any branch that produces fruit so that it will produce even more." *John 15:1-2*

Every juvenile probation department in which I worked had monthly staff meetings. All of the employees, from the Director to the receptionist, were required to attend. Each month, news was shared, policies were reviewed and procedures implemented. And everyone, from the Director to the receptionist, was responsible for the information.

That's typically how it works "on the job." We are accountable to the rules and announcements of the organization. It's what keeps everyone going in the same direction, keeps the employees safe and fruitful.

That's the church word for "productive." We Christians "bear fruit." It's very scriptural. According to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, there are 288 references in the Bible to fruit, fruits and fruitfulness.

Bishop Robert Schnase tells of a time teaching on church fruitfulness. He recalled many of the scripture verses about fruitfulness with images of vines, branches, seeds, harvest, vineyards, trees and fruits. As he was listing the metaphors someone shouted out, "don't forget pruning!" Pruning is as much a part of a fruitful harvest as is planting.

Yet, one of the most difficult things in the church is to prune the programs. To get rid of those ministries that, for whatever reason, are not productive or effective, those that fail to produce the desired or needed results. Pruning is necessary so that limited resources can be used more effectively.

So, with this edition, the Epistle is being pruned.

Julie and I began this effort over two years ago because we perceived a gap in communicating within the church, about the church. While I hope that sharing and distributing news and information is improving, the Epistle is not an effective tool for that. In short, it is not fruitful.

We will continue to use other means of sharing information: the website: antiochmethodistchurch.org; on Facebook at AntiochUMC.Lunenburg; email, as well as the weekly bulletin and announcements. My hope is that by cutting away the ineffective, those resources can be used for something more... fruitful. What that is remains to be seen.

In His Name,

Alan



HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAY TO:

Jackie Malone	April 06
Braden McDaniel	April 12
Lori Bacon	April 14
Grace Hite	April 18
Shirley Hite	April 26
Rebecca Joyner	April 27

Monthly Numbers:

Average Attendance =	49
Needed each month =	\$5,338
Received last month =	\$6,610
Budget YTD =	- \$1,189

When you miss a Sunday...

The church relies upon your financial support even if there is no worship service, or you are away one week. Please continue to give as if you were here. The ministry of Christ through our church depends on it!

The Bold & Beautiful!

That describes our new Antioch & Williams T-Shirts. The message on the front reads: "Loving God. Loving people. That's what we do." If you've not gotten yours, see Abigail Barnes. Cost is \$10 for adult S, M, L and XL - while supplies last!

Easter Thanks!

By my count, 15 people served in some capacity to make the 11 am Easter Sunday service a meaningful time of celebration and worship. Thanks to all who served, thanks to those who gave one or more of the 17 lilies, and for all those who were present to shout "Alleluia!" A special thanks goes to Chris, Sam and William Bacon and those who offered assistance, especially Earl, for the abundant sunrise breakfast.

Nursery

Following worship one recent Sunday, I peeked into the nursery to behold one of the most beautiful sights of Easter. The room was packed! There were kids on the floor and in the laps of caretakers. There were children and toys everywhere! It was awesome. Recently, we have had as many as six (that's right - 6!) infants and toddlers. Please consider serving a few Sunday's in the nursery. We are signing up now for the next several months.

Mother's Day

The children's annual "thanksgiving for moms" is May 10. For the kids, the day begins at 9:45 am with a time of crafts. Line-up for worship is at 10:45. Thanks to Tessie Bacon for organizing this year's worship.



Our children's ministry for 3 to 8 year olds is concluding its second year. Hard to believe Children's Church has been going on that long. We are taking our summer break beginning April 26, as it coincides with the end of a curriculum series. We plan to resume again in September. However, we need additional leaders. The more adults participating, the fewer Sunday's spent out of worship, so please consider how you can help. Talk with Lori McDaniel for more information.

Serving in April-May

	Nursery	Children's	Church	Liturgist
12	Julie Dawn	Brenda / Abi		Shirley
19	Joyce Lori	Susan / Diane		Earl
26				Tessie
3				Abi
10				William

We continue to Imagine No Malaria

A big thanks to Julie for an impromptu bake sale that "netted" \$160, saving 16 lives from malaria. An additional 6 lives were saved from the sale of Easter cinnamon buns. \$10.00 saves a life: one person dies from malaria every **60 seconds**, most of them children under the age of 5. If you would like to save a life please make your check payable to the church, and memo "No Malaria" or if you would like to give cash, please just give it to Wanda and let her know, or put it in an envelope marked "No Malaria."

Pasta April

April is the month for pasta and canned sauces in support of the Lunenburg Food Pantry. The Mission & Outreach team has established an ongoing food drive to support the re-organized Pantry. As always, all non-perishable foods are accepted. We are blessed to be able to have food on our tables each evening. Let us help others in our community to be able to do the same. The donation bins will remain at the rear of the church so please place your donations in them when you come by the church or on Sunday's. Thanks for your support!

What in the world!

What's with all the mess and mud?! We are constructing handicap access to the church. Lawson Construction is performing the work. Most of us don't think twice about taking 2 or 4 steps up to enter the church or fellowship area. For those using walkers, canes and wheelchairs, those steps are barriers to overcome. There should be no barriers to worship. Work should be completed in the next few weeks. Thanks for your patience.

United Methodist Women (UMW) -

Our District Prayer Breakfast was held on Saturday, March 14 at Brian's Steakhouse in South Hill. Jane Smith, our Spiritual Growth Coordinator, had planned the program for the Prayer Breakfast, but she broke her arm and had to have surgery. She has said that she will do the program "Angels Among Us" next year. Nona Allen, pastor of the Prince Edward Charge, was our speaker – and she did an outstanding job! Her topic was "God's Grace – Welcomed by God." There was laughter; there were tears. Everyone was "touched" by what she said. The Leadership Team expressed sincere appreciation for Pastor Nona's willingness to speak to us.

There were 134 registered for the breakfast this year. Not everyone was able to make it, but we had a large crowd, anyway. Even Bob Parks, our DS, was in attendance! Ladies of Antioch UMW, if you have never attended this event, consider it in the future. The Prayer Breakfast is always a special experience.

Next UMW meeting: Tuesday, April 21st, 7:30 PM at Nancy Turner's Home (7305 Longview Rd.) All Ladies are Welcome to Attend. ☺

Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center (VUMAC)

We are pleased to announce that VUMAC received \$30,000+ from United Methodist Women in 2014. Other than the 2014 bequests and the Titmus Foundation matching grant, this was the next largest contribution. We are grateful to UMW Dimes & Dollars for Blackstone for this contribution. We hope you will proudly announce this at your local unit meetings and be sure to thank each member for their continued support of Blackstone. We couldn't do it without you!!!

It is not too early to start publicizing the 2015 Celebration Year for Dimes and Dollars on the 40th Anniversary of this important program launched in 1975 by Mrs. Ethel Born. You may read about it in her book, "Candlesticks". We praise God for all United Methodist Women and we trust this will give them incentive to continue "passing the sock" in their circles and unit meetings. Let's increase our goal for 2015 and make this the "most outstanding year" in Dimes and Dollars history. To quote Jim Bergdoll, Chr. Development Committee, "What a blessing the United Methodist Women are to VUMAC."

According to Sam McCracken, Executive Director, the last major project, the Portico, is complete. We are preparing to renovate the Wicker

Room which will become the UMW Room when the 40th Anniversary of Dimes and Dollars is celebrated this fall. VUMAC is moving forward with the completion of the rooms behind the Carroll Room and, once the funds are in, will proceed with the renovation of Rooms 202 and 302.

We have a new appeal to districts and churches for renovation of guest rooms and meeting spaces. The Elizabeth River District Board of Missions has led this off with a grant of \$6800 to renovate a guest room in honor of past discontinued churches on that district. We need to continue promoting VUMAC by inviting persons, groups, churches and districts, to participate in the activities there.



The Joke at THE END

A priest and pastor from the local parishes are standing by the side of the road holding up a sign that reads, "The End is Near! Turn yourself around now before it's too late!" They planned to hold up the sign to each passing car.

"Leave us alone you religious nuts!" yelled the first driver as he sped by. From around the curve they heard screeching tires and a big splash.

"Do you think," said one clergy to the other, "we should just put up a sign that says 'Bridge Out' instead?"

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Now on Facebook at AntiochUMC.Lunenburg

*As a community of faith,
our mission is to be the Presence of Christ.*

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