

August/September 2011



New Hope Methodist Presbyterian Church

New Hope News

Pastor's Ponderings

The first winter of Dennis and my arriving in Alaska we made our way to the ceremonial start of the Iditarod. Amazing is not strong enough of a word to describe our experience of walking among the teams of dogs and their owners and staff before the race. We couldn't get over the excitement of the dogs, the power that was in them. We watched as one by one the dogs were hitched to the tow line, each in their respective place based upon their ability. Only when the last dog was in place, all linked together, was the musher ready to get behind the sled and begin the race.

We have a race of our own that is about to begin. The school year is upon us and with that a real need for you and me to be a team with one goal before us working together for that great finish in Christ, fulfilling that goal to make disciples for Jesus Christ. It is that simple. How do we do that? By worshipping together and providing worship that is inspiring, uplifting, strengthening. By being in fellowship together through coffee hour, small group activities, our annual events. By studying the scriptures and getting to know personally and as a whole group a deeper, richer sense of Christ's call upon us and the meaning of his word for us. By praying for and with one another. By showing up and participating in the life of the church. By serving those around us who are in need. By stepping up when we see a deficiency and helping be a part of its remedy. By stepping up when we see a strength to make it all the more strong.

We need you to be an active part of our team at New Hope. Christ needs you to be an active part of his body to help it, us, move forward and bring life into people's lives that are lifeless right now. That is making disciples for Jesus Christ. That is making a difference in another person's life which in turn makes a difference in our own which brings the kingdom of God into the here and now.

So though you may have become comfortable with doing other things than church this summer, stretch out those limbs of yours, start jumping with excitement and anticipation as we begin the race of a faithful kind together to the glory of God.

Blessings,
Pastor Karen



Denominational Connection 101

Our Connection Through the Alaska United Methodist Conference

Each year the connection between New Hope Methodist Presbyterian Church and the Alaska United Methodist Conference begins face to face during our annual meeting/charge conference with Rev. David Beckett, our United Methodist Superintendent. This meeting allows the congregation and superintendent the opportunity to discuss the events of the previous year and plans for the coming year as we share the experiences of other churches in Alaska.

New Hope Church is one of the 28 churches across Alaska which join together to form the Alaska United Methodist Conference. The Conference has challenged our congregation to develop a vision of what our church will be in the year 2020 as we continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Each church is encouraged to shape their ministry to their community.

The Alaska United Methodist Conference meets annually. The statewide conference supports missions and ministries of Nome UMC, Unalaska UMC, Willow UMC, Birchwood Camp (Chugiak), Eagle River Camp (Juneau), Alaska Children's Services (Anchorage), Samoan UMC (Anchorage) and Ketchikan UMC.

Our Conference is one of 62 Conferences in the United States making up the five Jurisdictional Conferences. We are a part of the Western Jurisdiction which covers the western states. The Jurisdictional Conferences meet every four years to elect bishops and provide program ministries for their areas. The 73 Central Conferences are located in Europe, Africa and the Philippines and perform the same functions overseas. The next meeting will be in 2012.

The General Conference is the legislative body of The United Methodist Church and meets once every four years to set national and world-wide mission goals, refine structure, and establish financial goals. The next meeting will be held in 2012. The current "Four Areas of Focus" are:

-Leadership Development

-Ministry to the poor

-Church growth

-Global Health

The word "Conference" refers to the understanding that God has chosen us to be part of a connected community, one that confers, one that decides together, one that holds each responsible to the other, and one that seeks to do together what can best be done together. Within the legislative branch of conferences, each level is served by an equal number of clergy and elected lay members.

As part of this connection, we join with 40,000 local churches and 5 million members of a worldwide group of interconnected diverse communities of people who believe in making the love of Christ real in our actions.

(Next month will discuss our Presbyterian connection)

Sunday School is Back!



Join us in the sanctuary August 28
for the fall restart of Sunday School at New Hope:

- "Sunday Sing-along" begins at 9:30 am in the sanctuary.

Let's start our day with voices of all ages praising together.
Bring an offering for our new Sunday School Missions Project and pennies for
the birthday bank (if it's your week)!
(Instruments welcome too.)

- Classes will begin at 9:45 am, for all ages, from babies through adult.

September 11, 2001...

or 9/11 as it quickly became known, our country and the world changed forever. Under attack from terrorists we quickly took the defensive and then the offensive in fighting back. Thousands of our men and women military have given their lives in that battle. Families have sacrificed their loved one's presence and family stability for that battle. Our fire and police departments have worked overtime to ensure safety and a minimum of damage when chaos has arisen in our communities or homes. We've all been effected. How is it that your life changed because of those attacks?

This year as we touch the tenth year anniversary of that life changing day, all are invited to be in worship with us.

At New Hope, like so many other congregations around the nation, we will hold a special worship service that morning remembering that day ten years ago, honoring those who have sacrificed since then and reclaim the power of our God to move forward with hope and grace into the years to come.

It will be a special time together as we bow our hearts before God humbly asking for strength and courage in the midst of such heartache.

Please, come join us and bring your friends.



Super Summer Sunday

“Building on the Foundation that Will Never Fail” –You are invited to bring friends and come to New Hope this Sunday for morning worship at 9:30am and then to share a meal (provided by fellowship) and enjoy a class!

Choose from:

Building a Beanbag with our Quilter's Group:
Learn to sew and enjoy a game using the beanbag you create!



Building with Wood:

Our men's group has a wood project for those who would like to hammer away.

Building our Support for our Troops:

Bring items to be mailed to our military personnel serving overseas.
Priority Flat Rate packages will be put together and sent with love.

Bring addresses of anyone you would like us to remember.



If possible, please contact Jenna Hulst at 385-1006 or jbhulst@gmail.com prior to Sunday so she will know how many boxes to have available.

A list of common items requested by soldiers include:

Baby Wipes Phone Cards Magazines Books Movies Tooth Brushes Mouthwash
Pringles Crackers Cookies Beef Jerky Comic Books Travel Size Games
Deck of Cards Memory Cards (i.e. PSP's) Memory Sticks Suntan Lotion Drink Mixes
Underwear Hard Candy Blue and Black Pens Notebooks Sun Glasses
A multi-tool or really good folding knife Disposable Cameras Blank Writable CD's
Travel Size Packets of Laundry Detergent Powdered Drinks, especially Gatorade
Crossword Puzzles, Word Searches, Soduku

ALSO- a special request from Ryan: they recently moved to a new location that has computers with internet access (no personal internet like before). The computers with internet access have the ability to access SKYPE, but they don't have any headphones with microphones or webcams. So if anyone has any of these lying around that they don't use (new or used), please feel free to donate them to the troops.

Being able to see their families is more important than you could ever know.

Annual Church Auction and Children's Harvest Party

Saturday, October 22nd

5:30pm



Welcome Back!

Welcome back friends and family of New Hope! Welcome back! Wow. Did we have summer already? It feels like it went by SO quickly. And here is Fall right in front of us. All around us. However you spent your summer, and I hope it was a memorable one, welcome back. There is so much that is going on at New Hope this Fall and we want you back and in with both feet so we, altogether, can have some fun, find the richness of Christ's Spirit among us because we have made the effort to be there, to live as Christ wants us to live; in community and reconciled to the glory of God while making disciples for Jesus Christ.



From the Worship Committee

The Fall Season is upon us and it is time to move from vacation mode. We are looking forward to the return to the 11:00 Service on August 28th and seeing many of our members who have been on vacation. That day we will be recognizing our Sunday School and Church School teachers and the children will be painting the sanctuary windows. Hope you will join us!

With the Fall, we looking forward to the return of our choirs – Traditional Choir, Bell Choir, and Contemporary Choir. In order for that to happen we need voices for the Traditional Choir, ringers for the Bell Choir, and a guitarist and keyboard player for the Contemporary Choir.

If you are interested or have questions about the choirs, contact Marji 488-0446 or marji@northpolepeonies.com.

Deborah Cotton is looking for volunteers for liturgist, ushers, greeters, and communion servers for the Fall Season. You can sign up at church or email her at bisonbeck@yahoo.com. Everyone's help is needed for these tasks.

We will have several special services this Fall, we hope you will join us for all of them.
– Marji Illingworth, chair



*May today there be peace within.
May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.
May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.
May you use those gifts that you have received and pass on the love
that has been given to you. May you be confident knowing you are a child of God.
Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise
and love. It is there for each and every one of us.*



AUGUST

3rd ~ Sherry Camarata
6th ~ Mike & Pat Thurman
9th ~ Brenda Wolverton
Jackie Pananen
10th ~ Ryan Keller
12th ~ Chris Illingworth
13th ~ Lori Buzby
Cliff Pananen
16th ~ Jim Hunter
Adam & Jenney Hughes
19th ~ Jenney Hughes
22nd ~ Jeff Samuel
25th ~ Willy & Francie Cork
28th ~ Pam Hughes

SEPTEMBER

1st ~ Rita Trometter
Willow Hulst
Jimmy & Danae Rice
3rd ~ Brenda Keller
4th ~ Linda File
5th ~ Jim Cavanaugh
7th ~ Garry Keller
8th ~ Jim & Brenda Wolverton
9th ~ Lucille Reese
Cathy Miller
12th ~ Lonnie Norris
Micheal & Candace Albin
13th ~ Tim Bengs
19th ~ Mason Wolverton
21st ~ Lenny & Diane Jewkes
25th ~ Victoria Genter
30th ~ Cathy Johnson

"It's not Fall yet."

I said to myself as I look across the street and see a yellow splotch of leaves in a tree in my neighbor's yard. August 10th is not fall in the interior of Alaska, but if you look hard, you can see all coming. Then I mentally take stock of the things I want to get done before winter, and what resources (time, talent, and money) will be required to get them done. My mind continues to wonder and I digress further thinking about the Trustee's meeting last night. New Hope's Mission for North Pole, the State, and beyondI think of people that have helped make New Hope and her Mission possible. Work Teams, Volunteers in Mission, and people in our congregation, for one Sunday or regular attendees, all contributing to God's plan for New Hope. Stewardship Sunday is October 30th. It's not the end of October yet; but if you look hard, you can see it coming. New Hope needs your Time, Talent, Money, and Prayers to continue and strengthen her Mission.



From the Trustees...

- ◆ We would like to give a big thank you to Bill Page. Who has been doing our yard work all summer. Thanks Bill!
- ◆ The furnace and boilers have been cleaned and are ready for winter. Our new service provider is Kraft Heating Services.
- ◆ All the church's belongings that were being stored at Tim Beck's were moved back to the church by Lyman Benshoof and Don Elgin. Thank you!
- ◆ Financially the church is doing fairly well. All monthly obligations are being met with the exception of the mortgage payments and apportionments to the Methodist and Presbyterian denominations.

The next Trustee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 13th at 6:00pm

Giving/Generosity As a Way of Life for Christians

"...I want you to experience the blessings that issue from generosity." Phil. 4:17

Robert Schnase says in Practicing Extravagant Generosity, p. 31: "The practice of generosity describes the Christian's unselfish willingness to give in order to make a positive difference for the purposes of Christ."

Perhaps it comes down to who do you think provided what you have, you or God but a Christian understands that what we have really is a gift from God. Or at least that is a fundamental given within the Christian faith. We may be part of what we have coming to be but it is because God has initiated it and given it to us. Because what we have begins with God, it is all the more appropriate, even important, that we return it to God in an attitude of gratitude, of generosity. For which God blesses us which encourages us to give more and on the cycle goes to the glory of God and the growing of God's kingdom of which we are a part.

In a society that is so 'me and my', this concept of generosity comes with great resistance and even condemnation. We at New Hope have been criticized that we are 'always asking for money or donations for something' as though there is a point at which that should stop. Even Jesus said we would always have the poor among us, let alone the personal, national and global disasters that happen, wars and crises that bring up need.

The Church Council wants you to know that we do get it in terms of the 'care giving fatigue' that happened a year ago. We backed off from asking so much and are trying to remain aware so that we don't reach that point again. And, the world continues to cry out, disasters keep happening, both personal and global, and God calls us to be faithful and generous to God's kingdom.

As you reconnect with New Hope this Fall, look around, consider what you can do to give back to God and help the church in its ministry and then share yourself as our membership vows say, "through your prayers, presence, gifts and service."

Extravagant Hospitality

Have you ever known someone who really knew how to be hospitable? They have attended to the beauty of the space. They smile a generous welcome. They immediately make you feel comfortable and safe. They open their home or space with graciousness and help you find your way through that space with ease and peace.



Every time someone comes through the doors at New Hope that needs to be our gift to them. Whether a first time guest or longer time member/ attendee they need to experience extravagant hospitality being invited in, welcomed, comforted, offered peace and safety.

It is a truth in every church that people have at one time or another stopped coming to church for a period of time and then felt too embarrassed to return worried about an ‘inquisition’ of questions as to where they have been. Whether it has been as simple as they overslept a few times and got out of the ‘habit’ of coming to church or as complicated as being hurt or angry over something done or said that time has finally healed, it is our job as Christ’s body, the church to make sure we are doing no less than welcoming in our sisters and brothers in Christ, simply glad for their return.

Whether you are one who has ‘overslept’ and been away or you know of someone who is ready to come back but doesn’t know how, consider yourselves invited/invite them back, and let the rest of us be that warm heart of embrace that passes no judgment or inquisition but provides a hospitable space in which to be and grow in the heart of Christ.

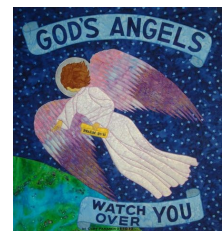
CALENDARS BY DESIGN

Did you know that we are in the midst of a fun and dynamic project and fundraiser? A lot of people don’t and we don’t want you to miss out.

Cliff and Jackie Pananen have been working hard this summer on selecting twelve designs plus one for the cover from the years of Christmas cards that Cliff has designed to become a calendar for all of us to buy and use or give away as gifts.

The calendars will sell for \$14.00 each and be a wonderful collection of art and scripture / thoughts shared from over the years.

Did you know that in the early years (beginning 1974) Cliff and Jackie designed cards that were done by silk screening? The process of which took up all surfaces in the house and all hands of the family? Or in some middle years when cut out the cards became pin wheels or origami? So check your Christmas lists and be sure to include enough for everyone there as well as yourself. Make checks out to New Hope MPC. The first run of calendars should be in our hands by the end of September.



New Hope Church School

New Hope Church School is a non-profit preschool and ministry for young children and their families. It is our goal to support and assist parents in the North Pole community in the all-important task of raising children. We offer a religious education program to help children learn and thrive in a safe, healthy and Christ-centered environment.

During the week, the church is filled with active feet, busy hands and many giggles. Preschool has begun. We have an amazing group of teachers and over forty students with terrific families. It will be an exceptional year.

For the month of September, we're studying the weather and the world. We will be recording the daily temperature as well as learning the names of the continents –maybe even the oceans.



Our attribute is honesty and our Bible story is about Adam and Eve.

The Church School Board met last month and decided to continue our Sunday luncheons. We will only have four – mark your calendars, you don't want to miss them. Our first luncheon will be September 18 with a menu of chili, corn bread and hot dogs (for the younger ones).

The other dates are November 20, January 15, and March 4.

Food, fellowship and helping the preschool – it's a great combination.

Preschool Open House a Success!

On Tuesday evening, August 16, while schools around the area were having their open houses, New Hope Church School was having its' own. What an amazing night it was. We began with 40 students registered and by the end of the evening had 42! Parents and students alike were very pleased with the school. Thank you to the Board members who were in attendance and for your help.

Our BIG thanks go to Terri and Ken Austin who have worked tirelessly ALL summer to transform the school into a beautiful, inviting, hospitable space for these children to learn.

God bless you!

And God bless the children and families who are a part of our school this year.

OFFICE AND WORSHIP INFORMATION

August 21 Sunday Worship Service: 9:30am

Beginning August 28th 9:30am Sunday School

11:00am Worship Service

Church Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday

9:00am – 1:00pm

Pastor Karen's Office Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

10:00am to 12:00pm or by appointment

Tending the Garden
to
Share Spiritual Fruit
with the World

We're on the web:

www.newhopempc.com

New Hope Methodist Presbyterian Church

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North Pole, Alaska 99705

(907) 488-9191

We Do Make a Difference...a Letter of Thanks!

Dear Friends of New Hope,

Thank you so much for the generous donations you make to the food pantry and to the students that I work with at the High School.

The students loved the sack lunches that were prepared by you and delivered to the school by Irma and Joe. Thank you so much –the students ate some of the food immediately, others took theirs home and returned with some of it on Monday. For many of the students the sack lunch was all that they had to eat on Friday. Thank you for being part of feeding them.

May God continue to bless you in all good ways.

Sincerely,

Hunter and the more than 60 students that you feed on a daily basis through your donations of time, talent and treasure.