



The Voice



Centennial Celebration

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Special points of interest:

- Heifer Project: Janet Coffman shares with us a wonderful plan for global missions.
- Pastor Park reflects on the season of Lent.

This year marks our 100th anniversary. At this historic juncture we reflect on the past. Who were the people that shaped AUMC's legacy? Moreover, what path shall we charter for the future?

We share a rich history

of togetherness, community, and friendship. Our close ties to one another are dear and special. If anything is to be cherished from this year's celebration, let it be our appreciation and thanks to God for granting us a place where everyone is welcome, and the love of

Christ is shared. Happy



AUMC from Marin Ave.

From the Pastor's Desk, Pastor Sam

It's Spring! The gloomy Albany weather seems to give way to more bright sunlight. That's wonderful. I've been waiting for it badly for some time! But it's not just the weather that makes me feel better. My heart is very much filled with hope and expectation.

First of all, it's the season of Lent. Just as the misty cloudy weather clears from spring sunshine, our souls can also become cleaner and brighter as we reflect on ourselves through the words and prayers in this spiritually rich season. **Let us set aside some time each day to read**

the Scriptures and try to have conversation with God in prayers. Usually, Christians have been encouraged to do or "not to do" certain things during the Lent as a part of their spiritual discipline. That is good. But whatever we do, **the important thing is that we need to reflect deeply on who we are and where we are in our journey.** Our focus should be on spiritual renewal; we want to dust off our souls and rebuild our relationship with God. **God wants us to be happy and hopeful. For that, God is always ready to help us.**

Second, I am excited that we will celebrate our church's 100th anniversary this Spring. I am looking forward to this event. We will worship God and give thanks to Him for what Albany United Church has been about for the past century in this community. Personally, I want to hear the stories of different people and what this church has meant to them. I then want this to be an opportunity for us to envision our new future.

Spring is a time for a new start. Lent is a special journey towards the celebration of resurrec-



Heifer Project, Janet Coffman



Heifer International, Ending Hunger, Caring for the

Lent is a time of preparation for Holy Week and contemplation of God's gracious gift of his son Jesus Christ. It is also a time at which we can acknowledge God's many gifts to us by freely giving our time and resources to others less fortunate than ourselves.

Most persons in the United States have sufficient resources to purchase a wide variety of nutritious (and not so nutritious) foods. Many people in other countries do not. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, 854 million people in the world are undernourished and their numbers are growing. Starvation and famine are only the most extreme examples of undernourishment. Many persons are chronically undernourished. Their bodies do not obtain sufficient vitamins and minerals which leads to low birth weight, stunted growth, physical weakness, cognitive disabilities, greater susceptibility to illness, and premature death.

The United Nations Children's Fund estimates that under-nutrition contributes to the deaths of some 5.6 million children every year

This Lenten season our congregation will have a special offering for Heifer Project International. This organization works with communities around the world to end hunger and poverty and to care for the earth. It was founded by Dan West, an American relief worker who served in Spain in the 1930s following the Spanish Civil War. He came to believe that providing milk and other foods was insufficient to help people recover from the devastation of war. He hit upon the idea of sending cows to countries in need. Recipients would breed their cows and give calves to other families who would in turn give calves to yet another set of families. The cows would provide families with nutritious food and a source of income. The first shipment of heifers was made in 1944.

Today Heifer Project International operates projects in 50 countries around the world. In addition to heifers, the organization now supplies families and communities with many other types of animals. Participants receive training in animal husbandry and sustainable agriculture. Heifer Project also sponsors soil restoration and reforestation projects in areas in which poor land management practices have depleted nutrients in the soil and/or caused erosion. Every project is tailored to the unique needs of individual communities. Current initiatives include projects to provide chickens to Afghan refugees in Pakistan, goats in Sichuan Province in China, water buffalo in Cambodia, cattle in Mexico, llamas in Peru, beehives in Ghana, pigs in Uganda, and funds to repair damaged shrimp boats belonging to fishermen in areas of Louisiana that were devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

Please contact Janet Coffman, Chair of the

"Can you envision a world without hunger?"



Give the ultimate gift.

Centennial Reflections from our Members

Charlie Wildeman

What led you to AUMC?

Jesus and the Holy Spirit, of course, but I also came to hear Tara Trueblood preach. It turned out Lauren started her first Sunday on January 1st.

Also, since I have been interested in outreach to University Village for a long time, AUMC is very nearby.

Ella Joyce

What events shape your memory of AUMC?

The ministry and congregation were wonderful. You could feel the Spirit when you entered. I was honored to be the lay leader the year we burned the church mortgage. It was also an honor to serve with the Bishop that day. I enjoyed singing in the choir, teaching a Junior Sunday School class, directing the Sunday School choir, serving

as lay leader for three pastors.

Ellene Brodie

Name the specific people, places, or things that are significant to AUMC.

Jerome Blank; many former Pastors; the Clay Berling Family; Marge Keck family; Anita Dean; Ella Joyce; Gladys Miller; Mary Latimer; Kwi Hsi Wa & family; Michael Gumbmann; Warren Spare; Helen Kronick; Steve Lee & Family; Mark Timken & Family; Kevin Foley & Mary Al-

Marjorie Keck

What are your hopes for the future of AUMC?

That AUMC would find programs of interest to draw people to the church. There are many single parents in the area—and also many older residents. One idea is an oral history project, because the city of Albany will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2008. AUMC was the first church in Albany and perhaps there are some who still have vivid memo-

Kidz Corner, Stuart Briggs

Our children are showing remarkable talent inside the classroom. They grasp new concepts quickly and exhibit joy and enthusiasm while learning.

One of my major hopes is to provide children and youth with a venue to realize their fullest potentials in arts and drama. Children wait for adults to provide them with opportunities to truly shine and perform.

I recall as a child my own sense of self-drive. I was able to memorize entire po-

ems and scripts overnight. Children are sponges, soaking up new information constantly. They are in the process of forming worldviews and perceptions. Their formative memories of church will have a lasting impression on them.

I observe our children play after church. Our building becomes a wonderful maze of discovery, as they zip up and down the halls and down the staircases. How can we harness their bundles

of energy into works of profundity?

Some children tend to be shy in front of an audience. Still kids, when given lots of encouragement and guidance, can amaze even themselves.

I appreciate Sam, Hannah, Joseb, and John for their willingness to participate in our Christmas program. They read the Christmas narrative beautifully.

I'd like to optimize the space we currently have to adapt to the sensibilities of our chil-

"How can we harness their bundles of energy into works of profundity?"



Simon, John, Joseb, and Hannah at coat give-away at a park

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Who We Are as a Faith Community

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

All God's people are welcome!

*God's blessings of grace, love, strength, and peace to
all who come here.*

Official AUMC Website coming soon!

You may also visit www.umc.org



Update on Special Holiday Offerings



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the congregation's special offerings for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Both offerings were carried out jointly with Zion Korean Presbyterian Church. Our congregations donated 254 pounds of food to the Alameda County Community Food Bank during our Thanksgiving food drive. A total \$750 was given for the offering at our joint Christmas pag-
eant. We gave \$400 going to the Oakland Elizabeth House, a transitional home for homeless women, and \$350 to Shimtuh, an organization that helps Korean women in the East Bay who are victims of do-