



"...if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-
think about such things." *Philippians 4:8b*

Aldan Union Church Family Newspaper

Fall 2010

THE VIEW FROM THE PEW

Where Have We Been? Where are We Going?

by Sarah Todd



Old Chapel still on S. Woodlawn Avenue

As Aldan Union Church recently celebrated a birthday of rather great significance, I have been thinking quite a bit about what it must have been like for the people who started AUC, and if they ever imagined us still worshipping and serving not far from this very spot nearly a century later. In honor of Aldan Union Church's 95th, I thought I might take us back to 1915, the year of Aldan Union's incorporation, and consider the times in which our founders lived.

In 1915:

With World War I raging in Europe, a German U-boat sinks the British battleship HMS Formidable, and later that year another would sink the ocean liner RMS Lusitania.

Congress establishes the Rocky Mountain National Park.

The United States House of Representatives rejects a proposal to give women the right to vote. (They wouldn't get the vote until 1920.)

The first stone of the Lincoln Memorial is put in place. The first photograph of Pluto is taken.

John B. Gruelle is given a patent for the Raggedy Ann doll.

Carrier Corp. is founded under the name Carrier Engineering by air-conditioning pioneer Willis H. Carrier.

The scientific theory of general relativity is formulated.

The first stop sign appears in Detroit.

Long-distance telephone service between New York and San Francisco begins. (The call cost almost \$21.)

Japanese engineer Tokuji Hayakawa, 20, invents the first mechanical pencil and markets it under the brand name Ever-Ready Sharp (This would eventually become the company we know as Sharp.)

Franz Kafka's book *The Metamorphosis* is published in Germany.

The one millionth Ford automobile rolls off the assembly line.

Ice floes trap Sir Ernest H. Shackleton's ship the >

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Where Have We Been?... (Continued from page 1)

Endurance just 80 miles (1 day's sail) short of her destination on the coast of Antarctica.

The US Coast Guard becomes a military branch.

Coca-Cola adopts the contoured glass bottle that s been familiar worldwide now for decades.

Kraft processed cheese is introduced, as well as Kellogg s 40% Bran Flakes.

The Pennsylvania Railroad electrifies 20 miles of main line track between Philadelphia and Paoli.

The Boston Red Sox defeat the Philadelphia Phillis in the World Series 4-1. (They still made out well, though; each received \$2,520, a losing player s share from the World Series.)

For those of us born in the last decades of the last millennium, it can be incredibly difficult to imagine the life our parents lived, let alone those who lived 95 years ago. We can't conceive life without the internet, without cable, without cell phones, without multiple cars in the driveway to get us where we need to go. For us, space travel has always been possible, bar codes have always been on everything, mini-vans have always been on the road, disposable contact lenses have always been available, and we've always been able to get cash from ATM machines.

In the same way that it's hard for us to believe the women who started the Sunday School program at Aldan Union 95 years ago were not allowed to vote, it would be equally difficult for our founders to imagine our lives at AUC today. How could they have ever known that one day a Power Point screen would bring up the words to contemporary praise songs during worship, or that we'd

use an organ every Sunday morning as well as electric guitar (though generally not at the same time)? They would never have believed we'd have our own gym, that we'd maintain a library full of DVDs, that we'd communicate via satellite with our missionaries. It would be shocking for them to discover congregants wearing jeans, and unthinkable that some would be reading the words of Scripture using Bible apps on their iPhones during the sermon.

Although the differences between the Aldan Union Church of 1915 and the AUC of 2010 are staggering on the surface, what has not changed is its purpose: to grow in the Word and serve the Lord. Before Aldan Union even had a name, it was a Sunday School for neighborhood children, serving the community and encouraging the youth to hear the gospel and live lives for Christ. Before Aldan Union even had its own building, it was a gathering of likeminded believers who wanted a church to call home. Though the appearance has changed multiple times, and buildings have been added and property purchased, AUC's mission has remained the same, and we have kept our firm foundation in the Lord.

Celebrating a 95th birthday is an incredible feat, and in our rapidly changing world, there is something to be said for standing the test of time. I also think it offers us a challenge, and that is: how will we as a church move forward in the coming years? How will we find ways to meet the needs of the next generation? What traditions will we let go, and what traditions will we take up? What will our worship look like in a decade? Fifty years from now? As we remember the church we once were nearly a century ago, we also get to imagine what our church will be in the future.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Hebrews 13:8



From the Heart- Explorer Girls! by Debbie McDevitt

So, I'm sitting in my living room, minding my own business when the phone rings. It was Bill Ressler. Now I don't know about you, but when Bill Ressler calls, I quickly pray and ask God to reveal and forgive whatever I did wrong. However, to my surprise he was calling to ask me to write this article to share my love of and for Explorer Girls. How Cool! There is so much I could say that I would fill the pages of View from the Pew. Would anyone mind eliminating the Trustee and Elder pictures? Just kidding!

Explorer Girls started in 1982 after JK Williams and 11 women from this church met regularly to write a curriculum that would help girls learn about God and their God given abilities. The focus is to invest in the lives of the girls that come each week. We want them to know how much God loves them, and we want them to come to know Jesus as Savior.

Our whole family is an Explorer Girls family. I've been a leader for over 25 years. Melissa and Amanda both went all the way through the program. Jim was the typical Explorer Girl husband. Driving, lifting, lugging and carrying. Did I mention, driving, lifting, lugging and carrying? I have been privileged to be a mom and a leader. What I love as a leader is watching what God can do with women who are so different to accomplish His purpose. We get to share His love with girls who come from all different kinds of backgrounds and home situations, and to see Him work in their lives. Some of those little girls are now all grown up and are leaders here at AUC. My most precious memory is the honor of standing beside a little girl as she asked Jesus to be her Savior. Being a mom with, and of, Explorer Girls is especially sweet. My own girls' relationship with Jesus has grown and deepened. They have learned from Godly women and have developed life long friendships. And now I have the privilege of working side by side with Amanda in the Seekers group here at AUC and in the Explorer Girl summer camp program.

When I have asked some of the girls what they love about Explorer Girls, there are three things that most of them said. They love learning about Jesus, they have great friends, and they have fun with the leaders. Explorer Girls is a special place for girls to be with other girls and to find out about a Savior who loves them and how totally special each one of them is to Him. For some of the girls this is the only place they hear this truth. While all of this is happening they are singing, cooking, acting, journaling, crafting, laughing and making friends, just to name a few things. And we leaders get to watch it all happen!

Explorer Girls meet Monday evenings from 7-8:30 from September through May. For more information please contact JK Williams, Director of EG Ministries 610-626-3332.



Elder: Fran Larkin by Dawn Kiker



Ann and Fran Larkin

Over fifty years ago, Fran and Ann (Bentley) met at a fast pitch softball game. Ann went to watch her brother play on a cool April evening and put on what she thought was her brother's team jacket. When Fran, who was playing on the same team as Ann's brother, asked for his jacket, she told him, "no, it's not yours, it's my brother's!" That mistake sparked a five year relationship between Fran and Ann. The Lord had special plans for this couple.

Fran grew up in a row home in West Philadelphia with his parents, grandmother, three sisters and one brother. He attended West Catholic High School and Lincoln University. He went with Ann for five years during the mid 50's, but was not a believer. Because of her faithful witness and lifestyle, Fran fell on his knees, alone in his bedroom, and asked Christ to be his Savior.

Ann grew up on a farm near Chester during the great depression with her parents, two sisters and two brothers. She attended Ridley Township High School, Hahnemann Hospital School of Nursing, and Philadelphia College of Bible graduating Delta Epsilon Chi. She was the captain of their undefeated basketball team for three years and was their leading scorer. Ann trusted in Christ when she was thirteen years old while attending Garden City Chapel. Percy Crawford was the guest speaker and

when he gave the invitation to receive Christ, Ann went forward.

Fran and Ann were married on September 16, 1961. Their family quickly grew to include Bryan, Martha, and Beth. Desiring a well established Christian youth program for their kids, the Larkin family began attending Aldan Union Church in the late 70's and became members in the early 80's. Their involvement in serving our church family was instantaneous. Fran started the Men's Tuesday Morning Bible Study and over the years, taught High School and Adult Sunday School, conducted several marriage retreats in Sandy Cove, MD, coordinated adult dinners, was invited as a guest speaker at Keswick and has given his testimony at many Christian organizations in the Northeast. He is thankful for the many men the Lord has used over the years to strengthen his Christian walk: Chuck Hall, John Ruzzi (who are now with the Lord), Chuck Young, Paul Thompson and Bill Ressler.

Currently, Fran is the Chairman of the Membership Committee and is responsible for overseeing the interview process of new members, the shepherding program, and Men's Ministries. His term will be completed by February 2012.

Ann serves the Lord by visiting the sick, sending cards of encouragement, writing missionary letters and being active in Women's Fellowship. She is thankful for some special women who have encouraged her in her faith: her Mother, Rosemary Stewart, Marge Montgomery and Mary Beebe.

Although both are retired, Fran from sales and Ann from nursing, both continue to keep very active. Fran enjoys golf, baseball, bird watching and reading poetry. He also drives a school bus for the Springfield School District. Ann loves to write and exercises at the YMCA six days a week. Also keeping them on their toes are nine grandsons, who love the Lord and are all active in sports. They are the joy of their lives!

When asked to share a favorite Bible verse, Fran chose 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."* Considering that cost, Fran's prayer is that the Lord would continue to give him opportunities to talk to people about knowing and receiving Christ.

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Trustee: Bob Park by Dawn Kiker



Bob and Phyllis Park

Bob and Phyllis (Turkington) were born in Philadelphia not far from each other. Bob had one sister, Ruth, and Phyllis was the youngest of three girls. Both attended Shaw Jr. High and when Bob and Phyllis met at John Bartram High School and at age sixteen they first dated. Both were in the same graduating class of 1954.

Coming from Christian homes, with wonderful parents who set fine examples, it's no wonder that Bob and Phyllis both accepted Christ at a young age: Bob was nine, while attending Fourth Presbyterian Church; Phyllis was twelve when she received Christ at a Percy Crawford Crusade held at her home church, Sherwood United Presbyterian.

Shortly after graduation, Bob and Phyllis met up again at Bob's church and started dating regularly. When Bob was drafted into the Army in the spring of '57, Phyllis waited for him. He returned in May of '59 and they were married six weeks later, June 6, 1959, settling into a little row home in southwest Philly right around the corner from Phyllis' parents and Sherwood church.

The Park family moved to Aldan in 1965, but continued to attend Sherwood UP, where both were active, until Bob fulfilled his term there as Elder. They came to Aldan

Union Church in 1970 and became members around 1972. Bob became active in the Men's Bible Class, as a choir member, and with Aldan Troop 2 as Cub Master and then Scoutmaster, working closely with Jack Edmundson. He's mostly known for his involvement with the finances of AUC, having been the Financial Secretary for four terms. For years, you could find him and Phyllis each Sunday night counting and preparing the bank deposit. Betty Craemer always called them "the bean counters".

Currently, Bob is our Assistant Treasurer and his term ends in 2016. He is also the Aldan Borough's Tax Collector, a position he's held for the past 25 years. Perhaps this desire to faithfully serve with finances originated from the witness of a former Sunday School teacher, a Christian business man, who impressed upon Bob the importance of tithing and using your finances to honor the Lord. Bob's prayer is that he would be accurate in counting and record keeping.

Upon arriving at AUC, Phyllis joined the Berean Class and enjoyed the teaching of Betty Lester and later Betty Upson for more than 35 years. She and Bob now attend the Friendship Class together with a wonderful group of people. Phyllis, who also has a knack for handling finances, is the General Treasurer of Women's Ministries. She also prepares the manse missionary apartment for guests, cares for the baptismal robes and enjoys attending Circle each month.

The Parks have five living children and one lost at birth. They are blessed with nine wonderful grandchildren, along with their first great-grandchild who will be born at the end of this month. Bob's favorite verse is, "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked" (Psalm 84:10). Phyllis' favorite verse is, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7). Their prayer is that all of their family will walk with the Lord and choose to draw near, persevering by faith until the Lord calls each one home.

Elder Fran Larkin (Continued from Page 4)

Ann's favorite verse is Colossians 1:10: "*And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.*" It is Ann's desire to walk worthy of the Lord, especially as the time draws near when she will actually walk with Him and see her Savior face to face.

An Open Door for Women's Ministries

by Veronica Hache



Leaders of Women's Ministries (Back Row) L. to R. Joan Coppola, Phyllis Park, Debbie Shaner, Libby Boyer, Shirley Hickman, Linda Lefferts (Front Row) L.to R.- Donna Bayley and Veronica Hache

Ours is a changing world. This is also true in our church. For about six decades Women's Fellowship has been the only way for women in AUC to "connect." In recent years these changes have made it evident that there was a need to come up with a different way to reach the growing needs of the women in our church.

Proverbs 4:26 advises, "Consider well the path of our feet. And let all your ways be established and ordered." (NLT) That was the thought behind the original Exploratory Committee which met several times from July 2008 through July 2009. There was much prayer and seeking His perfect will in enlarging the ministry to extend to all women in the church. Following that an Action Committee was formed to work on the structure of Women's Ministry. Early in 2010 the Board of Elders approved the establishment of Women's Ministry in AUC.

A director, six coordinators and a general treasurer form the leadership of this new ministry. They are: Director, Veronica Hache; General Treasurer, Phyllis Park; Bible Studies, Joan Coppola; Discipling/Mentoring, Shirley Hickman; Service, Libby Boyer; Fellowship, Debbie Shaner; Special Events, Donna Bayley; Communications,

Linda Lefferts.

Habakkuk 1:5 reminds us, "The Lord replied, Watch and be astounded at what I will do. For I am doing something you wouldn't believe even if someone told you about it." (NLT) One of the coordinators commented: "We continue to be excited and amazed by what our GREAT GOD is doing among the women of our church."

This ministry has given opportunity to many women to be involved and to serve the Lord and the church. A door has been opened for many women to use their gifts and abilities. It is also opening doors to become acquainted with other women. As an example at one of the first Book Club discussion groups, there were two ladies sitting next to each other, both of whom have attended AUC for many years, but had never seen or met each other until that day!

Some of the ways women can grow spiritually are through Bible studies, support groups and and/or mentoring activities (Heart 2 Heart). They can also build relationships by working together through service (delivering flowers, cleaning kitchens, clean up after communion, providing refreshments for new member receptions, etc.) It is exciting to see many younger women taking on leadership responsibilities in these areas.

As we try to reach out to women of all ages, we offer a variety of Bible studies: short studies or year long studies which are offered on Monday evening, Wednesday and Saturday mornings. There is also a Bible study for mothers of young children

Many new and exciting activities have or are taking place – exercise classes, book clubs, Four different craft nights have attracted many: knitting, quilt making, scrap booking and wreath making. A seminar on finances for women was held earlier in the year. Several special trips have attracted young and old (and not so old) including Longwood Gardens, Sight and Sound, Women of Faith, etc.

Fellowship still plays a vital role with nine circles meeting monthly. Circle time includes a devotional, time of prayer

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Great Turnout for Trunk or Treat! *by Brad Lowry*

The Outreach Committee and friends who organized the event estimated that 400 kids came to Trunk or Treat, so with 1 to 2 parents that's probably 800 to a 1000 people! Several of our members invited friends from other churches, as well as unchurched neighbors.

80 to 100 children had the gospel explained to them using gospel beads. (Gospel beads use the colors of Spurgeon's wordless book to explain the plan of salvation.) Several parents thanked us for explaining the gospel that way. The gospel beads were so popular, they used 40 yards of bracelet leather!



KidsKorner *by Shirley Cook* **“A Special Thanksgiving”**



Let's make this a special Thanksgiving time! Let's celebrate a God who is in control of everything – everywhere. The Bible says that He is the “Sovereign” Lord. That means that He's the “Greatest..” and is the Creator and God of everything. This November remember how wonderful the Lord truly is and that He is in control of everything in our lives.

But some of you may be saying, “This year's not that special for me”...Maybe it's true that your dad lost his job – or someone in your family has been really sick. Or, it's possible that you have been having problems at school – maybe with other kids. Perhaps your best friend has just moved to another state. Whatever has happened this year – God still loves you and is in control of your life.

Remember the story of the Pilgrims' first Thanksgiving almost 400 years ago? They were grateful to the Lord even though many of the people had died, others were very sick (and there were no doctors to help) A few Indians were helpful to them, but others were very unfriendly and wanted the Pilgrims out of their territory. But they celebrated God's goodness to them.

Let's think together about our God. He is the One who created every star, every animal, bird and fish – every blade of grass. Without Him, there would be nothing! Isn't it amazing that He also knows all about you? He sees you at school, at home, on the playground. He knows when you are eating, playing, sleeping. – AND HE LOVES

YOU! You are always special to Him. He knew all about you before you were born – the color your eyes would be, how smart you would be. God even knows what will happen in your life, tomorrow, next week and next year. That's because He is the Sovereign Lord.

The Bible says that God cares about every little sparrow. He knows when they are hurt. He is the God who controls the oceans, the wind, the storms. God cares about the creatures He has made. Have you watched Canada geese fly in their “V”, honking loudly? God taught them that this is the best way for them to fly. Did you know that humming birds can fly backward and upside down? God gave them that special ability. Have you read about the sea turtles who swim all the way across the Pacific Ocean and back again – and lay their eggs on the very beach where they were hatched? Who do you think takes care of them?

How do you suppose a bee or butterfly knows where to get the sweetest nectar? Who gave the lightning bug its flasher? How does the salmon swim up a waterfall to get back home? Who taught birds how to make a nest? Or beavers to make a dam? Who? The same God who loves you so much that He gave His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross to pay for your sin – your mistakes (and mine).

Thank You, Lord God, that You made a wonderful world for us to enjoy – and a universe for Your glory. Thank You that You are truly in control of everything in all creation. Thank You that all that You have made is good. Thank You for caring for the little sparrow. Thank You most of all that each of us is so important to You that You even know the number of hairs on each of our heads. We know that's true because the Bible says so. The Bible also tells us, over and over again how much You love each one of us. Thank You..

Women's Ministries (Continued from p.6)

and of course some delicious goodies. Women in the circles are involved in corresponding with AUC missionaries, and contacting our college students and those in the military. Some lasting bonds have been formed over the years with those to whom they minister.

The goal of Women's Ministry is to provide opportunities for women to become spiritually healthy while promoting loving obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. We invite you to visit our table across from the Nursery to talk to one of our ladies to find out how you can become a part of this exciting ministry.