

BELIEFS *Values*

COMMUNITY MESSENGER

Community Messenger features spiritual announcements from Oakland County religious institutions. Write: Community Messenger, c/o Beliefs & Values Editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Our fax number is (810) 644-1314.

STUDENT SEARCH
Openings are available for the 1996-97 school year in grades preschool through eighth grade at St. Matthew Lutheran School, 2020 S. Commerce, Walled Lake. Scholarships are available. Call (810) 624-7676.

SUMMER SERVICES
Summer services are scheduled for 10 a.m. Aug. 4 and 11 at Universalist Unitarian Church of Farmington, 25301 Halsted Road, Farmington Hills. On Aug. 4, Gwen Foss, a church member, will present "Harmony and Controversy: 147 Years of Universalism in Farmington," a review of the history of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Farmington and a look at the people and events that have helped shape it over the years. Founded in 1849 by architect and undertaker F.P. Lyon, the

church's history in many ways mirrors that of the larger Universalist denomination. On Aug. 11, Ann Oberls will present a service of traditional American songs during a family singalong. Readings speaking to the Universalist tradition also will be a part of the service. Call (810) 478-7272.

NEW MINISTRY
"In Full Bloom," an introduction to The Peaceful Waters Ministry, will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 11, at Bethan Hall, 25536 Lahser, one block north of 10 Mile, Southfield. Guest speaker will be Evangelist Renaye Coles, who founded the specialized ministry dubbed "Evangelism on the Move" with all of womankind in mind. Voices of Liberty will be the guest choir; refreshments will be served. Make reservations before Aug. 5 by calling (810) 569-1459. Seating is limited.

OUTDOOR WORSHIP
First United Methodist Church, 1589 W. Maple Rd., Birmingham, holds summer outdoor worship services at 7:30 p.m.

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PHOTO BY TOM HOFFMEYER

Church milestone: Sr. Mary Choiniere (left), SSJ, pastoral associate, and the Rev. Ted J. Blaszczyk, pastor, pose outside The Church of St. Alan.

The Church of St. Alan marks 30th anniversary

BY RENA FULKA
SPECIAL WRITER

When the 60 founding members of The Church of St. Alan began meeting for worship 30 years ago, only farm land surrounded church property.

"Coolidge was a dirt road dead-end at Maple," said the Rev. Ted J. Blaszczyk, pastor. "Cows across the street grazed on these fields."

Today, the Oakland County church at Coolidge Highway and Gloucester sets in the midst of the corporate world, surrounded by the Somerset Collection, Sheffield Office complex and the K-mart world headquarters.

"It was conceived as a large parish, but because of the shopping centers and apartments that went up around it, it's always remained a small parish," said Blaszczyk, the church's third pastor. "It's the smallest parish in Troy with the biggest heart."

Members of the 573-family church are now in the midst of their 30th anniversary celebration, which began on Jan. 1 with a reception in the social hall. A Founder's Day Mass and reception in June drew 80 original parishioners.

Upcoming anniversary events

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Rev. Ted J. Blaszczyk
Pastor, St. Alan's

include "Summer Fest 96," the annual parish picnic set for Aug. 18, featuring an outdoor barbecue, games, music, raffles, a silent auction, clowns, a magic show and sing-a-long Karaoke. A five-piece Mariachi band will bring a Spanish flair to the noon Mass preceding the picnic.

"It's a way to bring everybody together and learn about different cultures," said Sr. Mary Choiniere, SSJ, pastoral associate. "My idea of parish life is the inclusion of everyone."

Also on the agenda is a corn dance with a square dance caller set for Sept. 28. Anniversary activities culminate on Oct. 20 with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Kevin Harris, Auxiliary Bishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit, followed by a dinner dance at the Somerset Inn.

The Church of St. Alan, founded in 1966, was one of six Oakland County churches to spin off from Holy Name Parish in Birmingham. Troy resident Mary Bronersky, a former member of Holy Name Parish, joined St. Alan Church when Mass was initially held in the old Troy High School on Livernois.

"It was nice because it was closer to home," said Bronersky, who currently serves the church as a Eucharistic minister. "It was the only Catholic church close to us."

Bronersky remembers when the original church facility, completed in 1967, was renovated from a lecture-type assembly room to a church-in-the-round in 1987.

"It was a nice change," she said. "You can participate in the Mass more and you feel closer to it."

Bronersky and her husband, John, a church usher, are also members of the "50-Uppers," a 114-member group begun last year by Choiniere to provide local excursions for seniors has also helped establish religious special education for children with disabilities, drawing students

See ST. ALAN, B6

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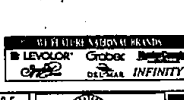
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