



United Methodist Newsletter

Alton United Methodist Church

St. Paul United Methodist Church

Turning Our Visitors into Honored Guests

I've had the wonderful opportunity during this past month to take a look at St. Paul and Thayer with fresh eyes. As a newcomer, I have spent quite a bit of time looking at how the community sees us. Is the church easy to find in the phone book? Is it easy to locate on the internet? If you ask anyone in town for directions, are they likely to know where the church is located? These may seem like obvious questions for long-time attendees, but for a newcomer, it is vitally important that our location is easily found.

Likewise, once a guest arrives, how is he or she treated? Do we engage them in friendly conversation or do we just say hello and move on to speak with friends? Do we invite them to sit with us or perhaps join us for lunch or breakfast or even Sunday School? People decide whether they will return to this church long before the service ever starts. The impression we make in the first five minutes after they enter the doors determines whether or not they want to come back. For that reason, every one of us is an ambassador of the church. It is every person's responsibility to make our guests feel welcome. Genuine hospitality is a mark of a vital, successful congregation.

Notice I call our first-time and infrequent attendees "guests" rather than "visitors." There is an important distinction between guests and visitors. According to dictionary.com, a visitor is one who spends time at a particular location. A guest is one who receives hospitality. Do you see the difference? Greeting a visitor is not as personal as greeting a guest. We want to be known for our hospitality, for our welcome of guests into our church home. A good place to start is to practice hospitality on each other, but be ready to greet anyone you have not met before as a valued guest. In time, a warm and authentic greeting will become natural. But it takes practice to become comfortable greeting the strangers among us. You have been warm and welcoming to me, but you know I will be here for a while. Now, let us work together on welcoming our guests each Sunday. The St. Paul Witness Team is presenting a video "Extending Hospitality to People Who Aren't Here Yet," at 2 p.m. Sunday, August 14. The video will last about an hour and will be followed by a short discussion. All members and friends of the St. Paul and Alton UMCs are invited.



Blessings,
Pastor Pam



BACK TO SCHOOL

Remember that local schools start back this month, so please be aware of children and buses making their way back to school.

Thayer: Thursday, August 11th
Alton: Thursday, August 11th
Couch: Thursday, August 18th
Koshkonong: Thursday, August 18th
Mammoth Spring: Monday, August 15th

August Meal of the Month

Canned Meat
Rice a Roni
Cake Mix/Icing
Bonus: Cooking Oil



*Be Welcome...
and Worship
with Us!*

I would like to thank everyone for your kind words, cards, flowers, memorial gifts, pet sitting and patience during my mother's illness and death. Your outpouring of Christian love helped sustain me and the family during this difficult time. Blessings, Pastor Pam Ekey.

Thayer UMW will meet at 6:30 pm on August 18th. Jody McIntire and her husband, who both volunteer at Mammoth Spring National Fish Hatchery, will be guest speakers for the meeting.

They both travel and volunteer speaking and working at federal facilities.

After the meeting, the ladies will go out for ice cream.



September 25th will be UMW Sunday. A guest speaker from the Susanna Wesley Family Learning Center located in East Prairie, Missouri will be speaking to the congregation.



**August Communion Stewards:
Still Needed**

*August Liturgist
Nancy Alford*

On July 14, Aaron Roberts (junior), Maranda Simpson (senior) and Marian Goodding (retired) visited ASU in Jonesboro. Both students are faithful members of Alton UMC's Teens and Tweens on a Misson (TnT) and are looking ahead to life after high school.



The Alton UMC Christian Olympics VBS was a success with 28 children attending. We had great food, lots of fun and fellowship, crafts, activities, and music with a pool party to follow. Everyone enjoyed themselves, adults and children alike. A big "Thank You!" to everyone who donated food, time, and love to help make this an exciting experience for all the children.



August Liturgist:
Greg Goodwin

Teens 'n Tweens, T'n'T, will meet on Wednesday August 24th, from 3:30 to 5:00. Hope to see you there!



Scout News



Nine Boy Scouts and four leaders attended the week-long summer camp at Kia Kima in July. Each Scout worked on earning merit badges from golf to swimming to first aid to robotics as well as many others. Lots of time was spent in the lake swimming and cooling off! A great time was had by all and they all made it home safely! The Scouts have also been assisting during Food Pantry events as part of their community service this summer and hosting the concession stand and gate at the ATV Rodeos for a fundraiser. These boys are staying busy this summer! The Cub Scouts enjoyed an evening out at The Bounce House in West Plains.

Fifteen Cubs and their siblings let off a little summertime steam! Their next summer activity is a swimming party at the Alton Pool before school starts.



Alton / Thayer Newsletter

Alton & St. Paul United Methodist Church
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“The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.” -Sydney J. Harris

St. Paul Monthly Calendar

Alton Monthly Calendar

Carry-In Dinner 1st Sunday at 12 pm

Leadership Mtg. 1st Sunday at 1 pm

UMM Breakfast 2nd Sunday at 7 am

Trustees Mtg. 2nd Sunday at 12 pm

UMW Meeting 3rd Thursday at 6 pm

Piecemakers every Thursday at 9 am

Exercise Group

Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11 am

UMM Breakfast 1st Sunday at 7 am

Leadership Mtg. 2nd Sunday at 7 pm

UMW Meeting 3rd Thursday at 6 pm



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