

Alton / Thayer Newsletter

Alton & St. Paul United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 241
Thayer, MO. 65791
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United Methodist Newsletter

August



Alton United Methodist Church

St. Paul United Methodist Church

Where Two or Three Are Gathered, We Find Christ.

Polarization. Divisiveness. Disrespect. Whatever happened to the days when we could disagree about an issue but still treat each other with civility? It seems as though there is no room for peaceable disagreement. I see this in our nation's legislative bodies. I see it in the community and sometimes I see it in the church. We are less tolerant and more likely to be offended by those who think differently. The result is a society that is more likely to ostracize those with whom we disagree. This constant state of bickering and disagreement contributes to a rising sense of isolation, frustration, and helplessness.

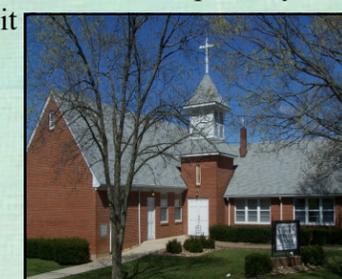
I wonder what would happen if we kept Christ in the center of our relationships? Jesus says "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matt. 18:20). I think we could start to treat each other with more respect if we see Christ in everyone, even those who have differing viewpoints. Pause and pray before responding sharply to another person. He or she is also a child of God and deserves our respect and love.

Recently, I saw that The Way Forward Commission, which is meeting to determine how the United Methodist Church can function as a denomination in the face of deep division, has been soliciting opinions from a number of groups. Predictably, each faction expressed an extreme position that left no room for differing viewpoints. Now the commission will sort through all these statements and recommend something—possibly a change in structure—that is unlikely to please everyone. I do hope it will allow us to continue as a united denomination. I pray daily for the commission, that God will infuse their discussions and guide their decisions.

Historically, the United Methodist Church has valued differences in theology. The gift of our denomination has been its ability to hold many beliefs in tension and focus instead on those things we can agree upon. It is a good strategy for the local church as well. Both Alton and St. Paul are undergoing changes, yet if each focuses on the common goal of making disciples for Christ, we can thrive regardless of what happens on the denominational level. Before focusing on the negative in another person, see Christ. Before attacking or insulting another person, treat them as you would treat Christ. Jesus also said "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me" (Matt. 10:40). Be the first to welcome another in the name of Christ and that will go a long way to finding common ground.

We are never going to agree to everything. There will always be differences in our understanding of the Bible, in politics, economics, culture— you name it. But when we see Christ in each other, we can possibly take the contempt out of our disagreements and replace it with respect. May Christ infuse all your relationships.

Blessings,
Pastor Pam



"Stories make us more alive, more human, more courageous, more loving." - Madeline L'Engle

St. Paul Monthly Calendar

Leadership Mtg. 1st Sunday at 12 pm

UMM Breakfast 2nd Sunday at 7 am

Trustees Mtg. 2nd Sunday at 12 pm

Piecemakers every Thursday at 9 am

Exercise Group

Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11 am

Alton Monthly Calendar

UMM Breakfast 1st Sunday at 7 am

Leadership Mtg. 2nd Sunday at 7 pm

UMW Every 4th Monday 4pm

Stitches & Prayers Every Tuesday 9am



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Members of the St. Paul church enjoyed an ice cream social on July 2nd, complete with delicious toppings and home made ice cream made by Jo Ann Wood, Nancy Alford, and Ruth Stevens.

The Festival of Sharing will take place on October 21st. Please turn in all kits by September 24th.

For more information regarding the kits, you can pick up the information on the table in the narthex by the coat closet.



Bread Breakers met on July 18th. A lunch was served and afterward, a presentation on the upcoming solar eclipse was held. A game of bingo followed the presentation.

Bread Breakers will meet next on August 15th at noon.



SUMMER OUTING
 Friday, August 11, 2017

—DESTINATION: Laura Ingalls Wilder Museum and Bakersville Pioneer Village, Mansfield MO
 —Leave church at 8:30 am. Return to church approximately 6:00 pm
 —Each person will fund his/her own museum ticket (\$14) and lunch.
 —PLEASE let Nancy know by Monday, August 7, if you plan to go so transportation can be arranged.

You are encouraged to invite family and friends!

Forms are on the table with the Festival of Sharing board.



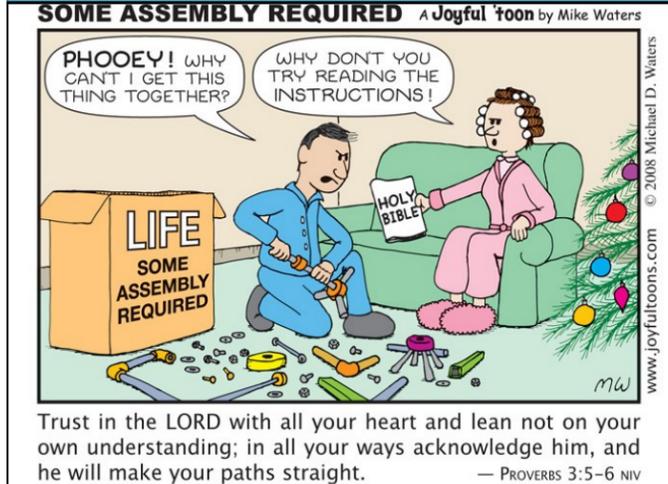
UMW will meet Thursday, August 17, 6:00 pm in the church library.

After a light meal, the program will be based on the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial. Business includes financial decisions on support for mission projects and Adopt-a-Program.



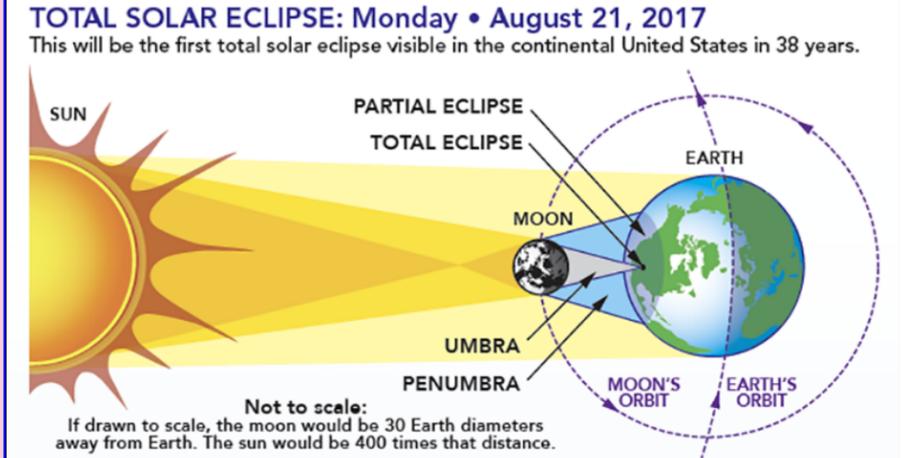
Remember that local schools start back this month, so please be aware of children and buses making their way back to school.

Thayer: Thursday, August 10th
Alton: Thursday, August 10th
Couch: Thursday, August 10th
Koshkonong: Thursday, August 17th



Be prepared for a once in a lifetime event!
 On August 21st, there will be a total solar eclipse in the United States. This is the first visible eclipse in 38 years and the first eclipse visible in Missouri since the 1800's.
 The eclipse begins at around 11:45 am and last until 2:40 pm.
 At 1:13-1:15, totality begins and ends— the moment where the sun is completely covered by the moon.

Do not look at the eclipse at any point (except for the 2 minutes of total darkness) without proper safety measures, such as eclipse glasses or a projection.
 Oregon County will be able to see around 95% of the totality of the eclipse. Don't miss this once in a life time opportunity!



The community dinner for the Thomasville Flood Relief was a success! Together, we raised \$4,800. Pictured is Laurel Johnson (left) presenting the check to Kelly Haddock (right)