

Alton / Thayer Newsletter

Alton & St. Paul United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 241
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United Methodist Newsletter



Alton United Methodist Church

St. Paul United Methodist Church

Why Take a Vacation from Church?

When I was a child, attendance at church every Sunday was expected. It was a rare Sunday that the family missed worship. The discipline of weekly attendance has stayed with me as an adult. Aside from the fact that people notice when the pastor takes a Sunday off, I plan my Sunday around worship. I would do that if I were not in ministry. Even when I travel, I find a local church for on Sunday, and I enjoy the similarities and differences between that service and the one I normally attend. Nowadays, it seems that attending church on Sunday is just one option among many. More people are choosing to sleep in, or go out for breakfast, or go to a child's sports activities, or play golf or one of many other activities instead of worship. I wonder why is it so hard to set aside one hour for God?

Church Consultant Thom Rainer offers several reasons why people attend church less often. He suggests the following:

- We are minimizing the importance of the local church.
- We worship the idols of activities.
- We take a lot of vacations from church.
- We do not have high expectations of our members.
- We make infrequent attendees leaders in our churches.

It is more acceptable to decide to "take the day off" from church than it has ever been. Ultimately, it is your decision whether to attend on any given Sunday. The only consequence is to your relationship with God. A healthy relationship takes work, and that includes setting aside time to be with God. When we worship as a group, we reinforce and encourage our relationship with God. Thom Rainer has a point when he suggests that we have minimized the importance of the local church. It used to be the center of our social activities. Now it is one choice among many, not only on Sunday but throughout the week. And I agree that we have elevated the importance of other activities above our worship of God. God has clearly said that we should not put anything above God. I am flexible about a lot of things, but the 10 Commandments continue to direct my life and my relationship with God.

Rainer points out that, for 2000 years, the church has been that place where believers gather to worship, minister and be accountable to one another. It is not the building that makes a church, but the people who support each other, praise God, and hold each other accountable. Once we begin to step away from the discipline of weekly attendance, it becomes easier to miss the next week, and the next, until we have drifted away. I also agree with Rainer that our congregational leaders set the example for all to follow. If our leaders are not attending regularly, then who else will feel obligated to be there?

I am not pointing fingers. But over the years, in every church I have been part of, it has increasingly been acceptable to find other things to do on Sunday morning. One thing has not changed: God desperately wants to be in a relationship with you. God continually invites you into that relationship. Worship is one way that you can carve

time out of your week to be with God. My prayer is that your desire to be with God continues to grow and that it includes a desire to worship one hour a week with your friends at church.

Blessings,
Pastor Pam



"I think, what has this day brought me, and what have I given it?" -Henry Moore

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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There will be an SCI Visioning Workshop with Suzanne Nicholson on Saturday June 17 from 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m @ Thayer UMC.

There will be a lunch provided. Leadership team and all interested persons are invited.

Thayer UMW will meet Thursday, June 15, 6:00 pm, at Nancy Alford's home. There will be a light meal, and the program will be based on the DVD "The Parable". This is a good one for Spiritual Growth. Either call Nancy for directions (264-7807), or meet at the church to carpool by 5:45 pm. Y'all come!! Definitely casual.

There will NOT be a potluck dinner in June due to a lack of hosts. We still need hosts to sign up for July, August, and October so that we can get back to eating!

Please add your names to the list in the narthex if you would be willing to host future potlucks!

Bread Breakers will meet on Tues. June 20th at noon



A minister who was very fond of pure, hot horseradish always kept a bottle of it on his dining room table. He offered some to a guest, who took a big spoonful.

When the guest finally was able to speak, he gasped, "I've heard many ministers preach hellfire, but you are the first one I've met who passed out a sample of it."



Teens and Tweens on a Mission (TnT) Our Alton UMC youth group finished another year of weekly after-school meetings on May 11.

Pizza was the main event, but we managed a few card games and Twister. Since the weather was nice, we also had volleyball and basketball games over at the parsonage. Each of the youth is hoping and planning to have a healthy, happy summer. So is Marian!



There will be a community fundraiser dinner on Saturday, June 24th from 4pm to 6pm.

This dinner will serve as a fundraiser for the victims of the flooding in Thomasville.

The menu consists of a pork loin cooked by Michael Graham, coleslaw, potato salad, and baked beans. Dessert and drinks will also be served.

We hope to see you there!



Alton VBS will take place on Wednesday, June 28th at Alton City Park.

Please remember to fill out the registration forms for all attendees. We hope to see you there!

Happy Father's Day!