



Almena UMC

Newsletter

June/July 2008
269-668-2811
www.almenaumc.com

Sunday Church Services: **10 am**

Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and our Lord, Jesus Christ!

How quickly the year 2008 has reached its midpoint! It seems the pace of life keeps speeding up for all of us. The upside of 2008 has brought both heartbreak and triumph to our extended church families. As some lives in our circle of care have come to an end, other new lives were born and baptized. As some programs decline, others were launched. As some friends slipped away, others joined our community. It is always a challenge for individuals and churches to keep moving forward on our journey with Jesus.

The journey we are on is more like a marathon than a sprint and along the way our lives are enriched and strengthened by many things. The rhythm of growth includes a balance between stress and rest, community and solitude, speaking and listening, giving and receiving. Praise God that he remains our rock solid coach: challenging us to grow and rewarding us with a sense of progress; going before us in Christ to show us the way. If we can trust in his care, knowledge and love, we will find ourselves equipped for the journey, no matter what setbacks come our way.

This summer, join us for worship as we focus on God's encouraging words from Psalm 23. "The Lord is My Shepherd" will be our theme beginning June 22nd. This psalm is often read at funerals, bringing comfort and hope to those who mourn. That is an excellent choice; but Psalm 23 is more for the living, than for the dead! In preparation for the series, I challenge you to memorize the entire 23rd Psalm. By the end of the summer, I hope that at least half of our congregation will have it etched on our hearts.

Remember that we are blessed so that we can be a blessing to others.

Peace, Pastor Donna

Psalm 23 (modified KJV)

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside still waters, he restores my soul.

He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

What is Relay For Life?

Relay For Life is the American Cancer Society's signature activity. It offers everyone in a community an opportunity to participate in the fight against cancer. Teams of people camp out at a local high school, park, or fairground and take turns walking or running around a track or path. Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the event. Relays are an overnight event, up to 24 hours in length.

Teams of people from all walks of life have fun while raising much-needed funds to fight cancer and raise awareness of cancer prevention and treatment.

- No matter who you are, there's a place for you at Relay. To participate, form a team, or dedicate a luminaria at your local American Cancer Society Relay For Life, please call 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit <http://www.cancer.org/>.
- <http://relay.acsevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RelayForLifeGreatLakesDivision>

Relay For Life is a life-changing event that brings together more than 3.5 million people to:

- Celebrate the lives of those who have battled cancer. The strength of survivors inspires others to continue to fight.
- Remember loved ones lost to the disease. At Relay, people who have walked alongside people battling cancer can grieve and find healing.
- Fight Back. We Relay because we have been touched by cancer and desperately want to put an end to the disease.

Join or sponsor the Almena United Methodist team and the Relay for Life for Van Buren East held at Lawton High School, Packer-Armstrong Sports Complex on June 21-22 from 10am-10am.

Submitted by: Elizabeth Gordy Event Co-Chair for Van Buren East

Missions by Lois Richardson

First some very impressive numbers from the April Crop Walk. Twenty-one people from Almena UMC walked or rode in the Crop Walk route. Once again the congregation, fellow employees and others were very generous. Donations totaled to another record year for us with a total of \$1671.70. Barb Alden received the special bookmark for raising the most money- \$350.00. Many people both world wide and local, will be helped by your participation and generosity. Thanks to all.

Our June mission project will be in Lane 1 and will go towards the support of our missionary, Paul Webster, working in Congo/Zambia, West Africa. For the first time in many years, we have pledged to be in a covenant relationship with the missionary we are supporting. At \$5.00 per member, we have committed to a total of at least \$415.00. I am very glad to see us take this step of faith and commitment and hope you are supportive through your mission giving in June.

I have some very important news to share with you. Paul is back in the United States and will be visiting his supporting churches. Currently he is in Ohio and then will be working all summer in Wisconsin until Labor Day. He will be in this area in September. He will be able to come to our church in September for lunch and a power point program at 12:00 on Thursday, September 25. I know many of our working members will not be able to attend at that time but I hope those who can, will come. Last fall he was at a special mission program at Portage UMC and Pastor Donna, Janet Swigart, Elizabeth Gordy and myself were able to meet him there and have a one on one conversation. It was a very rewarding and informative time so I encourage as many as possible to meet him here and show your support and interest.

Paul now has a co-director at his agricultural project. His name is Tshala Mwengo, a Congolese. He has been a big help to Paul and the work there. He recently attended the General Conference in Texas. The Mujila Falls project recently participated in the first regional Agricultural Show to be held in their area. They showed many of their crops and also their goats, donkey and rabbits. They won several first prizes. Through this fair people will begin to learn ways they can get involved in agriculture and better feed their families and communities. They are also finishing up their maize harvest which looks like a bumper crop. But on a more serious note, the value of the dollar has dropped by 50% over the past 7 years so they need twice as much income to do the same work, which certainly adds to the challenge of the work being done there.

The Bible League is our July mission project. It is the Bible League's goal to place the Bible, or sections of it, with as many people as possible in the language of the people within the United States and worldwide. The Bible League's ministry continues to grow since its beginning in 1936. Today more than 80 countries have received Bibles and New Testaments, Scripture portions, and basic Bible study materials. They also work with other publishers to buy and place millions of others. Bible-less people are encouraged to read and study it. In one example of their work, nearly 11,000 people in the Middle East became baptized Christians last year through Bible League ministry. They studied God's Word, and met and embraced Jesus Christ in its pages. The demand for Bibles is high, especially among Muslim people. "A transformed life is the most important result of a properly placed Bible." Every \$4 given provides a Bible that includes printing, shipping, administrative costs and training to effectively place God's Word in people's hands. Thank you for your gifts.

Christian Education Celebrations!

Promotional Recognition goes to.....

**Ashley May
Jakob Rickli
Lauren May
Rachel Rickli**



Pre-School-2nd Grade ~ Miss Elizabeth
Attendance Recognition for 2007-08 is:

Hadley McElroy
Christian DeMott
Lily Rozeveld
Kaitlyn Gill
Ashley May
Jakob Rickli

Middlers ~ Mrs. Hoffman

Attendance Recognition for 2007-08 is:

Hope Rozeveld
Mallory DeMott
Kate Rozeveld
Tyler Nette
Tim Gill
Lauren May
Rachel Rickli

Jr. /Sr. High School ~ Jackie Coons

Attendance Recognition for 2007-08 is:

Dylan Lentz
Ryan Sweet
Max Field
Beth Field

Graduation Recognition Sunday!



Congratulations ~ Beth Field!



Have a Great time at Summer Camp!!!



Vacation Bible School

The Fruit of God's Spirit



August 11-14, 2008 – 6:00-8:30 p.m. w/ light meal

Galatians 5:22 – “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control; against such there is no law.” (RSV)

5 years through 5th Grades.

“Fruit of the Spirit”

If you are interested in helping out with the VBS program this year, please contact:
Beth Rozeveld, Shirley Huffman or Elizabeth Gordy.



Jennifer Nette and Marcia Williams organized
an after church planting on June 1st.

Thanks to those who donated and
participated in the project!

Beautification project on the grounds of Almena UMC

