



Alton Grace United Methodist Hosting Open House Soon

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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ALTON - [Alton Grace United Methodist Church](#) is inviting the public to an Open House which is fast approaching on Sunday, December 3, 2023, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the church, located across from Duke Bakery at 702 Henry St. in Alton.

Pastor Alan Abert recently discussed more about the Open House and Alton Grace United Methodist on an [episode of Our Daily Show! on Riverbender.com](#).

“You can expect a really warm greeting from the church,” Abert said of the Open House. “This event has been one that has emerged post-COVID as we slowly get back to a sense of community.”

Abert said the event will feature both Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus, and that there will be “a unique display of nativity sets,” some with special historical significance for the church. There will also be music at the event and some local crafters offering their goods for sale.

“We’re just trying to get a little bit of everything out there in a nice, safe, family-friendly environment for people to come visit us,” he said. “This event is really designed to invite the community in and say, ‘Hello, here we are.’”

Abert added that Alton Grace United



Methodist Church has been part of the Alton community since 1852 and has been in its current location on Henry Street since 1880. The church building was designed by prominent Alton architect Lucas Pfeifferberger and recently underwent an exterior restoration. Abert said he looks forward to showcasing the church itself and its members.

“We’re excited about just having the opportunity to show the building and the people off,” Abert said. “The inside of the church is really decorated beautifully, so it’s worth coming in just to take a look.”

When he first joined Alton Grace United Methodist Church over six years ago, Abert said he could feel a sense of welcoming and friendliness from day one, and looks forward to bringing that experience to others on Sunday.

“We basically welcome everybody who comes through our doors. The big difference, I think, is that it’s from the first time you walk in,” Abert said. “You don’t have to worry about coming in over weeks and months trying to establish a relationship and, ‘Am I sitting in the right pew? Am I going to make anybody unhappy?’ None of that goes on here.”

As for the Open House coming up this Sunday, Abert said that it’s not an “advertising campaign to bring people into the pews,” but an invitation for people to come visit with no pressure to join the church."

“It’s not about church growth, it’s not about putting tons of people in the pews. We’re in a world today where ... churches have been declining,” Abert said. “You can get caught up in that, or you can say, ‘We’re at 7th and Henry Street in Alton, how can we continue to be a sphere of influence in our community?’”

For more information about the Open House or Alton Grace United Methodist Church, visit their [website](#) or [Facebook page](#), or see the full interview with Abert at the top of this story or on [Riverbender.com/video](https://riverbender.com/video).