

Almedia Church

The Almedia Bible Church as told by Robert Eddinger

Interviewed by Kevin Cosentino and Jake Stabley in Spring of 2005

The Almedia Bible Church was started in 1975. It is located on 145 Ridge Street in Almedia. Over 110 members and 49 families belong to the Robert Eddinger congregation.

Robert Eddinger is 62 years old. He has been living in Berwick for only four years as the pastor of Almedia Bible Church. Before he was a pastor, he was a math and computer science teacher for 35 years at Southern Columbia. He is married and has one daughter. He also has 2 grandchildren.

PATCHWORK: What type of activities do you have for the youth at the church?

EDDINGER: Well, not too many because we don't have a whole lot of youth. We have a youth fellowship once a month. They do a lot of activities: roller skating, making pizzas, church school classes and we're at a limit because we only have about six. Most the members are elderly so roller skating is kind of out of the question. They don't kind of want to do that. Bible studies and church school. Those kinds of activities.

PATCHWORK: How did this church community begin?

alterEDDINGER: Way back, long before I was here. This is my only my fifth year. The church originally had burnt down on the lot next door. This church was rebuilt in 1975. About one hundred and twenty years of ministry in the community. But this church was rebuilt in '75. Like I said, new church first of all. Just recently we put new carpeting in. We put in new cushions and painted, put a pavilion in the back yard for community use. We put up a bulletin board outside. So we're doing some things for the church to make it more attractive for people to come to worship.

PATCHWORK: How has the community changed because of the church?

EDDINGER: Probably because the church is here and this is a kind of retirement, elderly community. We're here for them to do those kinds of services. I don't think it's changed that dramatically because the church is here. Unfortunately that's the way church is.

PATCHWORK: Has religion changed in this area?

EDDINGER: I don't think it's changed. God does not change. We try changing him and try to say, ok let's do some things that we want to do, but religion worship does not change. We still worship the same God that they did 2000 years and even before that. We try to get it more modern and try to build it up with some other things and change society, but when you get down to it.

PATCHWORK: How has the size of the congregation changed?

EDDINGER: When I began, the size of worship was 45-50 and now we're averaging somewhere around 75 or 80. So we've increased a little bit, but unfortunately those are mostly retired or semi-retired people and not young adult families. And that's what we're trying to do.

PATCHWORK: What is communion like in your church?

EDDINGER: Basically we come to the alter to receive the sacrament once a month. We just changed that. Everybody is invited. You don't have to be a member of this or any other church. You just need to know your God and you're welcome to come and partake in the elements. We use grape juice and we use bread and not wine.

PATCHWORK: What makes this church unique compared to other churches?

EDDINGER: Because it's a family. We call this church family and I think that's the biggest thing. We work together. If somebody is ill or needs something, there we are as a family. It's like having 60 or 70 brothers in your house. Family of God is what we call it and I think that's really what attracted me here, as we are a church family.

PATCHWORK: Describe your Sunday school.

EDDINGER: It's very, very small. We do have six different classes. Two different adult classes. One is a bible study and the other is contemporary. We have a youth class. Not many, maybe one or two a week. Then we have a church school class for the younger ages. Our church school attendance is 17 or 18 on Sunday; we're trying to work on

that. Now we have church school at 9:00 and regular worships at 10:15 every Sunday and at 8:00 a prayer and praise celebration on Sunday mornings out in the church pavilion. That is closed in the fall time and we'll start that back in the summer.