

Volume 40  
Issue 1

**JANUARY  
2016**

# First United Methodist TIDINGS

*Worship  
the  
Father  
in  
spirit  
and  
truth.*  
*John 4:23*

Wood River FUMC  
PO Box 35  
1105 Main Street  
Wood River, NE 68883  
Office Phone: (308) 583-2716  
Office Email: [office@woodriverumc.org](mailto:office@woodriverumc.org)

Office Hours:  
Mon & Wed: 8:00 - 1:00  
Thursday: 8:00-12:00

Alda FUMC  
PO Box 11  
202 East Pine Street  
Alda, NE 68810  
Church Phone: (308) 381-7008

Pastor: Philip Sloat  
Cell Phone: (308) 383-2512  
Home Phone: (308) 583-2552  
Email: [psloat@greatplainsumc.org](mailto:psloat@greatplainsumc.org)

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## BIRTHDAY BANK

**Jan 10**

On January 10, everyone celebrating a birthday this month will be recognized with well wishes by your church congregation. We hope you'll be present to drop your coins into the church birthday bank!



Wood River First United Methodist Church  
1105 Main Street / PO Box 35  
Wood River, NE 68883  
Church (308) 583-2716 / Parsonage (308) 583-2552  
Pastor Phil's Cell (308) 383-2512

Church Email: [office@woodriverumc.org](mailto:office@woodriverumc.org)  
Pastor Phil's Email: [psloat@greatplainsumc.org](mailto:psloat@greatplainsumc.org)  
Website: [www.woodriverumc.org](http://www.woodriverumc.org)

Pastor: Rev. Phil Sloat  
Church Secretary: Veronica Kaufman  
Custodian: Cindy Howe

## PASTORAL NOTES

On January 10, 2016 we will celebrate the Baptism of the Lord during our worship services. The Gospel lesson for that Sunday includes these memorable words:

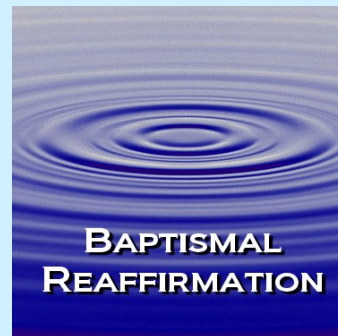
“ . . . [W]hen Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’”—Luke 3:21b-22 NRSV

Jesus’ baptism marked the end of his “hidden years” when he was growing up in Nazareth and preparing for his mission on earth. Following his baptism Jesus began to teach, to call his disciples and to perform mighty acts of mercy and power. God spoke again on the Mount of Transfiguration when he again bore witness about Jesus: “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!”—Luke 9:35b. We recognize how God revealed Jesus as his only begotten son, sent to be our redeemer and the means by which we are saved.

During our worship on January 10, we also remember and celebrate our own baptisms. We do this by reaffirming our Baptismal Covenant. Our baptism is a great blessing and gift of God’s grace by which we enter into the Body of Christ, “are incorporated into God’s mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit.” United Methodist Hymnal, p. 50. At our baptism we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked as Christ’s own forever. This is an awesome new reality. As baptized persons we are daughters and sons of God, beloved by God and precious in God’s sight.

Along with God’s gift to us in our Baptismal Covenant we bear witness to our faith in Christ and our commitment to serve him. “Through the reaffirmation of our faith we renew the covenant declared at our baptism, acknowledge what God is doing for us, and affirm our commitment to Christ’s holy church.” United Methodist Hymnal, p. 50.

Join us in worship on January 10 to remember who you are and to rededicate yourself to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.



Pastor Phil

## SHIFTING GEARS—Sermon Series

As we begin the L-3 Groups in the Alda and Wood River congregations I will be preaching a series of sermons that draw upon the book, Shift: Helping Congregations Get Back into the Game of Effective Ministry.



- Sunday, January 10, Baptism of the Lord Sunday  
Sermon Title: “Shifting into Covenant Life”  
Gospel Lesson: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
- Sunday, January 17, Human Relations Sunday  
Sermon Title: “Shifting from Fellowship to Hospitality”  
Gospel Lesson: Luke 4:14-21
- Sunday, January 24, Third Sunday After the Epiphany  
Sermon Title: : “Shifting from ‘Serve Us’ to Service”  
Gospel Lesson: Luke 4:22-30
- Sunday, January 31, Fourth Sunday After the Epiphany  
Sermon Title: “Shifting into Discipleship”  
Gospel Lesson: Luke 5:1-11
- Sunday, February 7, Transfiguration Sunday  
Sermon Title: “Shifting into Worship As a Lifestyle”  
Gospel Lesson: Luke 9:28-43



## RACHEL CIRCLE NEWS- Bonnie Schurer

On a cool, bright, sunny day, members of the Rachel Circle went to Perkins in Grand Island on Dec 3, 2015 for their Christmas dinner.

Eleven members and three guests, Sue Uhrich, Cindy Howe and her grandson, Johnathan were present.

Christmas treats were given by Sylvia McTavish and Cindy Howe. Sue Uhrich gave everyone a cute little doll. Sylvia read an opening prayer poem. Sue Jackson read a Christmas Story.

A meal of their choice was enjoyed by all. Prayer concerns were given. Marilyn Wester gave the treasurer’s report. We are glad to have Sue Uhrich join our circle. Our next meeting will be Jan 7, 2016.

## PARISH NURSE - New Year Changes - Mary Bilslend

Baby Steps! Yes! Baby Steps! The New Year is here and we want it to be better and for us to do better. Isn't this the wish every year?

Don't start with a major overhaul - Baby Steps!

1. Cut down or cut out the pop. Add water
2. When frying, cut out the use of butter and begin sautéing in olive oil.
3. Add more fruit and vegetables - up to 10 a day.
4. Take a healthy breakfast to work instead of eating donuts or bad snacking.
5. As each change becomes a habit, add another thing.
6. Exercise is always needed, but one must start small and incorporate what you like to do in your exercise - swim, walk, dance, yoga, etc.
7. Quit eating bread is a good thing if you are into weight loss.
8. If all fails, you might want to consider a health/exercise coach to assist you in reaching your goal.



### Falls

Be careful and help prevent falls. 1 in 3 adults over 65 fall every year. Many sustain serious injuries such as broken hips or head trauma.

1. Danger zones include invisible ice. Salt when possible these areas.
2. Falling when getting in or out of the bath is a hazard. A grab bar is nice and use it!
3. Home pathway perils include loose rugs or carpet and slick hardwood floors. Also check for items left in familiar paths to trip over. Some medications and/or medical conditions can cause dizziness that can lead to falls. Get up slowly. Sit up first and make sure you're not too dizzy to rise.
4. High heels or shoes with slick soles may cause one to fall especially in unfamiliar places (at weddings or events, etc.) Wear lower heels with a nice walking sole.
5. If it's icy, stay in or where there are hand rails, use them always.

Have a safe and healthy new year.

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## HUMAN RELATIONS DAY - January 17

Turn on the news or drive around the outskirts of your town and you will find what Jesus called "the least of these." Those living in the margins of society, struggling to survive. People like:

- An immigrant teenager in Texas' poorest county, being recruited by a local gang
- A father struggling for sobriety in Little Rock, Arkansas
- An Oklahoma woman recently released from incarceration looking for work

Over and over Jesus served people like this, embracing them. And that's what we want to model as the people of The United Methodist Church. To continue the ministry of Jesus we established Human Relations Day as a Special Sunday that calls all of our churches to participate in helping all God's children to realize their potential.

### **Equipping The United Methodist Church to Be the Church**

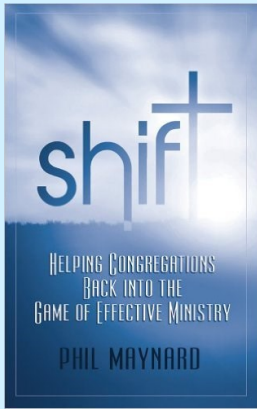
As a member of The United Methodist Church, your gift, on this day, allows the work of folks like Bruce and Becky Ballou to build relationships with those teens in Texas. Your gift allows Montey Payne to lead recovering addicts towards healing. And your gift helps Rev. Steve Burr find work for ex-offenders. This work, and hundreds of other ministries, are possible because you give.

### **Will You Support the Ministry of Christ Among Those on the Margins?**

Will you continue to support Human Relations Day? Will you continue nurturing at-risk youth, strengthening communities' self-improvement efforts and advocating for the oppressed?

Rev. I Maliik Safir, whose church works with those gripped by addiction in Little Rock, sums up the work of Human Relations Day by recalling Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan: "to meet the poor, the disadvantaged and the underserved at the places where others have robbed them and help them to recover from the wounds of social inequality."





## LOVING, LEARNING, LEADING TOGETHER

At our Church Conference on Monday, November 9 we approved the Vision and Goals for the Alda and Wood River Churches for 2016. Both congregations have committed themselves to engage in something new. It is called the L3 process. L3 stands for “Loving, Learning, and Leading.” The Great Plains Conference is using this L3 model in all of its current programs of congregational development and revitalization.

Beginning in January of 2016, both the Alda and Wood River United Methodist Churches will form L3 Groups. Participants will grow closer to one another during this process. We will support and encourage one another in our Christian walk. We will also learn from scripture, from some of the leading voices for renewal in the church today, and from each other. The goal of this process is to make our churches stronger--more vital, faithful and effective in our calling to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

To accomplish all this requires a commitment. The members of each group will form and make a covenant with one another. The groups will meet once a month for a couple of hours. There will be some reading that members of the L3 Groups will be expected to do to prepare for each session. This L3 process will also involve the entire Alda and Wood River congregations as Pastor Phil will be connecting his sermons to the material that the L3 group is focusing upon in their time together. The first book that we will be considering is Shift, Helping Congregations Back into the Game of Effective Ministry by Phil Maynard.

Please consider whether God is leading you to be a part of this exciting new initiative. While some may wonder whether they have the time to commit themselves to this process, remember that faithful discipleship requires a deep level of commitment and a willingness to put God first in our lives. Being part of a covenant/accountability group is an important means of grace and an effective way to live our baptismal covenant.

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## SHIFTING GEARS—“Shift”—

### First Book for our L-3 Groups

Right now both cars that I drive have automatic transmissions. They are easy to drive. But my favorite car ever was a Mazda GLC wagon with a five-speed manual transmission! It was so much fun to drive—to shift through the gears when accelerating or to down shift when slowing down. If I wanted the best gas mileage I would cruise in fifth gear but if I needed to pass someone, I would drop it down to third or fourth gear for additional power.

While the analogy is not perfect, I believe that both the Alda and Wood River congregations may need to think about shifting gears. Perhaps we have been cruising along for a while and we need some more power so that we can accelerate!

To help us consider if we need to make some changes, we are going to be focusing on Shift: Helping Congregations Get Back into the Game of Effective Ministry by Dr. Phil Maynard. This book is available as an Ebook on Kindle for \$14.95. It is also available from Cokesbury for \$12.50. This is a short book and an easy read but it has some very important points for us to consider.

In his Introduction, Dr. Maynard writes:

*As a church consultant and denominational leader, I am witnessing God breathe new life into churches with whom I have worked. . . . I am writing this book because I believe that every church has the potential to be vital and fruitful. These are not just buzzwords. They are words filled with hope and promise.*

*Not every church will choose to live into this potential. . . .*

*If [your] church has the will to move into a more vital ministry, this material is full of great ideas to help you do that. It is not easy. This Shift will require much of you. It will challenge some of your long-held assumptions about what effective ministry looks like. It will require letting go of some things that may have been held dear for a lifetime. And it will engage the most creative parts of your being to apply clear principles to your context.*

Over the next month I will be preaching a series drawing upon the ideas found in this book. I have ordered several copies of Shift for interested persons to read. Hopefully I did not order enough! Pastor Phil



# BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

*Address is Wood River unless otherwise noted*

1	Janet Snodgrass Curtis Rohrich	PO Box 476 15025 W Old Military Road	19	Alison McLamb Dylan Mayfield	14712 W. Old Military Rd 4123 Buckingham Dr Grand Island, 68803
2	Matt Thompson	22623 Wilson Ave Waterloo 68069		Christy Burnett	18560 W Holling Rd Shelton 68876
	Patty Camp	PO Box 62		Noah Landanger	PO Box 2
	Rev. Peggy & John Hock	18440 W 94 <sup>th</sup> Kenesaw 68956	20	Paisley Hayes	PO Box 41
4	Doug Thompson	2981 S Hwy 11	21	Susie Powell	10969 S NE HWY 11
	Donna Burr	1106 Elm St	22	Nathan Burnett	18560 W Holling Rd Shelton 68876
	Deb Baxter	3777 S Monitor Rd GI 68803	23	Cindy Howe	PO Box 427
5	Joyce Miller	13872 W Guenther Rd		Kent & Mona Luebs (1988)	12234 W Schultz Rd
	Tyler & Rachel Lucas	1405 Koenig #211 Grand Island, 68801	24	Mona Luebs	12234 W Schultz Rd
6	Rod Skeen	510 E 11 <sup>th</sup>	25	Inez Rohrich	PO Box 88
8	Shad Smith	PO Box 23	26	Raynard Apfel	PO Box 126
9	Cole Arnett	PO Box 569		Braeden Oster	PO Box 54
10	Dick & Marilyn Webster (1954)	3307 Schroeder Grand Island 68803	27	Dave Reeder	PO Box 473
13	Arturo & Rachele Valdez (1996)	PO Box 242 Alda 68810		Jessica Rauert	4793 S NE HWY 11
14	Owen Lemburg	1312 Walnut		A.J. Valdez	PO Box 242 Alda 68810
	Rod & Nina Skeen (1962)	510 E 11 <sup>th</sup>	28	Marilyn Denman	3700 S Alda Rd Alda 68810
16	Charlie McLamb	14712 W Old Military Rd		Howard Jackson	PO Box 574
	Maggie Brandt	110 W 11th	29	Ryan Camp	PO Box 62
	Jim & Kim Thompson	2615 W Division Grand Island, 68803		Jim Skeen	1405 Marshall
17	Ron Rickert	PO Box 561	30	Kelby Radney	5756 S Schauppsville Rd
				Nina Skeen	510 E 11 <sup>th</sup>
			31	Bill Heise	104 E Green St
				Morgan Heise	104 E Green St
				George Mead	711 Walnut
				Dave Sidders	PO Box 182

## BIRTHDAY PARTY -

### Cindy Howe

On January 23, Cindy Howe really will be in the 50's!

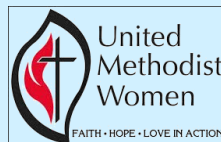
Come help celebrate this milestone in her life on Saturday, January 16 from 2-6 pm at the First United Methodist Church located at 1105 Main St in Wood River.

Cards and well wishes may be sent to PO Box 427, Wood River.



## PRAYERS

**HEALING:** HEALING: Brexton Hayes & family, Willa Freelen (Neal Sidder's sister), Cameron Klein (son of Lawrence), Dale Smidt, Virginia McCurdy, Larry Partridge, Barb McTavish, Karen Davis, Dorthea Fairbanks, Barbara Hayden (sister of Larry English)



## UMW DISTRICT MEETING

The UMW will hold their district meeting on Jan 9th at 9:30 AM in Wood River.

# January 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
<b>3</b> 9:30 WR Worship 10:30 WR SS 11:00 Alda Worship	<b>4</b> 6:30-7:30 Girl Scouts 6:30-8:00 Cub Scouts 7:30 Ruth Circle	<b>5</b> Office Closed	<b>6</b> 9:00 Bible Study 3:45 Confirmation Group 5:00 Worship Committee	<b>7</b> 1:30 Rachel Circle 7:00 Solutions Group Meeting, Alda	<b>8</b> 10:00 Tops Meeting, Alda	<b>9</b> 9:30 District UMW Meeting
<b>10</b> 9:30 WR Worship/Birthday Bank 10:30 WR SS 11:00 Alda Worship	<b>11</b> 7:00-8:00 Boy Scouts	<b>12</b> Office Closed	<b>13</b> 9:00 Bible Study 3:00 UMW Bingo at Good Sam's	<b>14</b> 12:00 WR Meet & Eat 7:00 Solutions Group Meeting, Alda	<b>15</b> 10:00 Tops Meeting, Alda 9:30 Fifth Quarter WR UMW Leadership Training, Garden City, KS	<b>16</b> 2-6 PM Cindy Howe's Birthday Party at the church UMW Leadership Training, Garden City, KS
<b>17</b> HUMAN RELATIONS DAY 9:30 WR Worship 10:30 WR SS 11:00 Alda Worship	<b>18</b> 6:30-7:30 Girl Scouts 6:30-8:00 Cub Scouts	<b>19</b> Office Closed 12:00 Alda Meet & Eat	<b>20</b> 9:00 Bible Study 3:45 Confirmation Group 6:30 MYF Meeting	<b>21</b> 9:00 Sewing Circle 7:00 Solutions Group Meeting, Alda	<b>22</b> 10:00 Tops Meeting, Alda 9:30 Fifth Quarter WR	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 9:30 WR Worship 10:30 WR SS 11:00 Alda Worship L3 Groups: Alda, after church, potluck or brown bag lunch WR: 4:00	<b>25</b> 7:00-8:00 Boy Scouts	<b>26</b> Office Closed	<b>27</b> 9:00 Bible Study	<b>28</b> 7:00 Solutions Group Meeting, Alda 7:00 UMW, WR	<b>29</b> 10:00 Tops Meeting, Alda	<b>30</b> The One Event
<b>31</b> 9:30 WR Worship 10:30 WR SS 11:00 Alda Worship The One Event						