

Koinonia *focus*

WOOD RIVER & ALDA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
DECEMBER 2024

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services:

Wood River: 5:30 at the High School Theater,
13800 W Wood River Rd.

Alda: 7:00 at the Church, 202 E Pine St.

Church Events

- Dec 1 Alda Congregational Meeting 3:00
- Dec 6 Ruth & Rachel Circle Christmas Party
- Dec 11 Cookie Boxes 12:00
- Dec 11 Youth Group 6:30
- Dec 24: Christmas Eve Worship times: WR 5:30 at the High School Theater—Alda 7:00
- Dec 25 Christmas Day



Pastor's Note: **Advent**

Nativity season is just around the corner. For many, this time of year is synonymous with reunions with family members they have not seen in a long time. Christmas is always celebrated on December 25, wherever you are in the world. We look forward to this date, excited to discover the wonders it brings: delicious meals shared with loved ones, a pile of presents, heartfelt wishes and lots of joy. Yet we sometimes forget the true essence of what Christmas means to Christians. While it is great to be merry and festive, there are other important aspects we should consider as we anticipate this Christmas season: Advent.



Advent is a time of looking ahead to the arrival of the one we celebrate at Christmas. It is a time of preparation that reminds us to welcome the precious gift of life that is the birth of a child, a savior. A child who destined to rule the world, but above all to touch our hearts. He is here to guide us to the Father and offer us the path to salvation because he cares for us and wants us to be redeemed. His presence among us is a proof of that consideration and love.

During this season, we prepare our hearts to focus on what really matters - Christ - rather than material things. This season is about preparing ourselves so that God can lead us to true redemption through His Son. Discovering the true meaning of Advent can also mean recognizing that we are not quite ready yet, and that we need time. Time to pay attention to the signs around us that reveal what God wants us to see. Perhaps it is an indication to slow down our hectic lives and set aside moments for God.

Just like the three wise men in Matthew 2 who followed the star to find Christ, let us stay alert to the signs God places in our lives. It is all about being aware, so we do not miss out on the amazing things that await us along the way. We need to take the time to understand each moment and prepare ourselves for what lies ahead!

I wish you a joyous Advent season! Let us use this time to reflect and prepare ourselves for the blessings to come.

Pastor Rachel

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH—Renaë Graham, President

United Women in Faith held their Annual Bazaar on November 5 and it was a huge success! Many Thanks to St. Mary's Catholic Church for the use of their building. Being able to use their kitchen and hall was a blessing! The support we received in so many ways was humbling. Thank you to each and every one of you who helped in any way.



The soups, pies, crafts, support of people in the community, and the help we received were wonderful! Please join me in Thanking the ladies for a job well done! Our ladies raise the bar pretty high and we are blessed to have them!

UWF did not have unit or circle meetings in November due to the Bazaar.

We will meet on December 11 at the Wood River Senior Center for our unit meeting, and will fill cookie boxes. Later that day the Youth will deliver the boxes for us. If you can donate three dozen **unfrosted** cookies for the boxes, please call Mary @ 308-383-1146 or Renaë @ 308-379-6399. Cookies will be accepted on that date @ 1:00 p.m. at the Senior Center. Thank you!



December 2024



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

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| <p>1</p> <p>Dual Worship @Alda 10:00</p> <p>Congregational Meeting 3:00-Alda</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>3</p> <p>Gary & Ida Qui- senberry Hunter Davidson</p> | <p>4</p> <p>Bible Study 9:30</p> <p>Cary & Bev Voss</p> | <p>5</p> <p>Dave Ogden</p> | <p>6</p> <p>Ruth & Rachel Circle Christmas Party</p> | <p>7</p> |
| <p>8</p> <p>Dual Worship @Alda 10:00</p> | <p>9</p> <p>Kaye Doane Galen Wescoatt Robert Williams Emily Ogden</p> | <p>10</p> <p>Hezekiah Reyes Anna Miller</p> | <p>11</p> <p>Bible Study 9:30 Cookie Boxes 12:00 Youth Group 6:30</p> <p>Marques Valdez</p> | <p>12</p> | <p>13</p> <p>Mark Codner Lauretta Rice</p> | <p>14</p> |
| <p>15</p> <p>Dual Worship @Alda 10:00</p> <p>Nathan Mayhew Marcia Almquist</p> | <p>16</p> <p>Rachelle Valdez Stacey Hayes</p> | <p>17</p> <p>Celebration of Life for Terry Saner 2:00-Alda</p> | <p>18</p> <p>Bible Study 9:30</p> | <p>19</p> | <p>20</p> | <p>21</p> |
| <p>22</p> <p>Dual Worship @Alda 10:00</p> <p>Aaron Burr Holly Arndt</p> | <p>23</p> <p>Barb Meguire</p> | <p>24</p> <p><i>Christmas Eve</i></p> <p>WR Worship 5:30 at High School</p> <p>Alda 7:00</p> | <p>25</p> <p><i>Christmas Day</i></p> | <p>26</p> <p>Natalie Shears Phillip Denman</p> | <p>27</p> | <p>28</p> |
| <p>29</p> <p>Dual Worship @Alda 10:00</p> <p>Cara Odenbach</p> | <p>30</p> | <p>31</p> <p>Rachel Nkonge Gunnar Hayes Jamie Riley Kayla Molczyk</p> | | | | |

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The UWF is needing cookie donations for their annual Cookie Boxes. Please contact Renae Graham or Mary Bilslend if you're able to help with 3 dozen unfrosted cookies for Dec. 11
- Youth Group will only meet once this month to deliver Cookie Boxes on Dec. 11
- If you are interested in participating in any Advent readings during church, scan one of the codes listed below. It will take you the SignUp Genius website. Select one of the available options. The Christmas Eve service is just for Wood River while the Sunday Readings are for both churches.



Advent Sunday Reading



Christmas Eve Readings

- Be sure to follow our Facebook page for all the fun stuff the Youth is doing and any other announcements we may have.
- Most communication is done via email. If you aren't getting messages, contact the office to update your email address.

Giving & Attendance Report

Wood River:

November: \$6,989

October: \$7,008

September: \$7,714

Average weekly attendance: 39

Alda:

November: \$762

October: \$608

September: \$670

Average weekly attendance: 12



WR: For safe and secure way to give online, scan code with smartphone. You will need to create an account and be approved if it's your first time using.