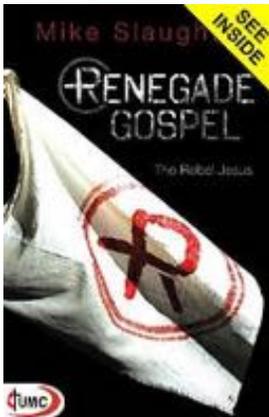


MAPLEWOOD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
**MESSENGER**

January 2016



**remember, a cross shadowed the manger**  
**Preparation for Lent has begun**

For the all-church Lenten study we will be reading and studying Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus. Topics covered during this six session study will include

- ★ Discovering the Rebel Jesus
- ★ Revolutionary Lifestyle
- ★ The Most Important Question You Will Ever Have to Answer
- ★ Seeing Jesus Today
- ★ The Way of the Cross
- ★ Resurrection

Central to the Christian faith is a man who denies all our pre-conceived notions about what God should look like. Joining his movement will mean coming to terms with the real Jesus, the rebel Jesus.

Jesus didn't come to start a religion. The rebel Jesus came with a renegade gospel to start a revolution. *You and I are invited to be a part.* In Renegade Gospel, pastor and author Mike Slaughter presents Jesus and his challenging message to inspire us during Lent, Easter, and through the year. Discover Jesus all over again. Decide now to make room in your schedule to participate in this study and BEWARE – It could change your life!

**Human Relations Day is January 17, 2016**

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, 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.

**(This is one of the 6 special days that the United Methodist Church ..... to make all of us aware of the needs of others in our community.)**



**Paige Watkins playing the piano during worship on the pageant Sunday and Danny Findley narrating the Christmas pageant program.**

FROM  
PASTOR  
KIM



Dear Friends,

Thank you so very much for the generous Christmas gift! I am having fun pondering the best way to put it to use! In the meantime, thank you very much!

**Blessings, Pastor Kim**

It is hard to believe it, but the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, is February 10. For the past several years, Lent, the approximately six week period leading up to Easter, has been a time that we focus more intensely on spiritual growth at Maplewood UMC. As we have done in past years we are planning an all church Lenten study, asking everyone to commit to three things:

1. Pray every day.
2. Participate in a weekly small group during the 6 weeks of Lent.
3. Attend worship every Sunday during Lent. (I know Spring Break happens. Perhaps you can commit to worshipping at a church near you while you are on your spring break trip.)

This year the all church Lenten study will be guided by the study book, "Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus", written by Rev. Michael Slaughter, the pastor at Ginghamburg United Methodist Church. The themes for Sunday worship, the children and youth Sunday school classes, and the small groups for adults will follow the study book. The days and times for adult small groups will be posted in the bulletin and on the easels in the room behind the sanctuary very soon. Everyone is invited and encouraged to take part in the all church

very soon. Everyone is invited and encouraged to take part in the all church Lenten study.

What follows are dates for worship services held during Lent and Holy Week (the week leading up to Easter). More details will be provided as plans are completed.

**Wednesday, February 10 6 – 6:5)**  
p.m. Ash Wednesday soup supper-  
a served at no cost on an "eat  
when you arrive" basis in  
Fellowship Hall  
\*\*7 p.m. Ash Wednesday  
service in the sanctuary

**Sunday, March 20—Palm Sunday  
worship**

**Thursday, March 24 Maundy**  
Thursday meal & worship in the  
evening.

**Sunday, March 27—Easter Sunday  
Celebration!**

In addition to these worship services the Maplewood-Richmond Heights Clergy have agreed to organize weekly Lenten lunches at churches in the community. Maplewood UMC will host **the Lenten lunch on Wednesday, March 9 at noon in Fellowship Hall.**

*Pastor Kim*



**Annual Pageant where all the children take part.**

from Finance for 2015

## Ah, the blessing of a “giving” congregation

The Finance team of Ad Council, wants to remind this congregation what a great and generous year we all made 2015! The unselfish giving of this group of believers continues to bless many people. Some of the highlights include:

- A successful Adopt-an-Apportionment campaign and payment of 100% of our conference and district apportionments for the 10th year in a row.
- Receiving approximately \$7,000 towards our "Raise the Roof" campaign for the new roof on the Education Building. Added to the \$9,000+ donated in 2014, we have generously received over \$16,000 in total for that project.
- Funding many awesome mission and ministry areas, including Annual Conference offerings, youths attending church camp, mission trips for youth and adults, anger management classes, Serve 2015, and support of Weekend on Wheels and Joe's Place, to name just a few!
- An amazing Consecration Sunday resulting in a 5.81% increase in the expected budget for 2016.

We praise God from whom all blessings flow and wish you a happy and blessed 2016!



If your email address has changed or the church does not have your email address let Sally in the church office know. (314) 647-5902 then it can be updated or added.



3	Jan Harsh
4	Kris Hewitt
5	Jenny Shirar
12	Victoria Chandler
12	Bertha Brown
14	Caroline Haines
14	Melanie Brucker
15	Nickey Hobbs
17	Emily Soderberg
18	Stacy McCarter
21	Larry Schmid
22	Jonathan Schmid
22	Samantha Schaffner
25	Tyleah McCarter
25	Margarita Urbina
27	Brian McGowan
31	Michael Casey

### Have you heard?

We have a magnificent new instrument in our church – a beautiful new organ has been installed thanks to an anonymous gift and to the crafters group. Thanks to all who helped with the installation and moving of organ pipes to our parsonage with the hope of selling them. It will be a huge blessing to our church for many years to come. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!!!!

## Person to Person

*Dave Phelps*

I had a couple of eye opening experiences a few weeks ago. First, I went into the County Government Center for the first time in years to pay our property taxes. Because I hadn't been there in some time, I was surprised: I had to empty my pockets, remove my belt and go through a metal detector in the presence of two police officers. I don't mind paying my fair share of taxes but this was worse than I expected.

The second experience, later that same day, happened at the laundromat. A little girl wanted to "help" me with my laundry. Fortunately, her mother was standing nearby and could see that nothing out of line was happening. Later, the little girl came up to me and wanted to give me a hug. I glanced nervously at her mother, who was standing several feet away, and gave her a gentle hug.

**At that moment, I realized I was afraid to hug a child!** And that is simply wrong. Fear is natural and there are plenty of things to be afraid of but hugging a child shouldn't be one of them. I had let my own fear of being misunderstood overcome the little girl's desire to be friendly.

One day when Jesus and the disciples were experiencing a storm on the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 8:23-27), the disciples became afraid. When they woke Jesus, he calmed the storm and asked, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" (vs. 26b ESV). Another time, at night, he approached the disciples, walking on the sea, and they were afraid again (14:22-33). When Peter recognized him, he walked out on the water himself (vs. 29). But he became afraid and began to sink (vs. 30). Jesus pulled him out of the water and said "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" (vs. 31b ESV). Jesus repeatedly makes the connection between fear and "little faith." At every turn, he tells the disciples—and us—"Do not be afraid." Our lack of faith brings about fear, just as theirs did.

Paul wrote to his young friend Timothy, "God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." (2 Tim. 1:7 ESV). The Spirit of God doesn't make us afraid, doubt does. And John wrote "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." (1 John 4:18a ESV). And

one of the simplest expressions of love is to hug someone. If we believe God is in control, we don't need to be afraid.

When King Herod heard about the birth of Christ, he was afraid of the child and what it represented because it was a threat to his reign as king (Matt. 2:1-3). While I was afraid of what the little girl's mother might do, Herod was afraid of what the young Christ would do. But we don't need to be afraid. The child who was born a king wants to reign in our hearts and cast out our fear. While I stand afraid to embrace a child, the child of God reaches out to embrace *me*.

I don't want that little girl from the laundromat to grow up thinking there's something wrong with wanting to hug someone. She can't approach random strangers but she shouldn't live in constant fear. I don't want to live in fear either and, thanks to her example, perhaps I can be more open to the possibility of giving and receiving hugs.

Across the ages, through our doubts, God's words echo: Don't be afraid of what man can do to you. Don't be afraid to express love. Don't be afraid to hug someone. Don't be afraid to go where you need to go because God will be right there with you. Don't be afraid to speak out for God and for justice. The one who sends us will have it no other way.

"So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love." (1 John 4:16-18 ESV.)

**Visit Person-2-Person on the Web at <http://person2person.faithweb.com>**



**READ THROUGH THE BIBLE**



## Amy reminds us that

...

...choir is back, rehearsing every Wednesday at 7:00pm. Newcomers are welcome and "returnees", too. We will love and welcome all, but we certainly could use some additional soprano and alto voices! Remember, everybody has a song and this is a great place to sing it!

A **HUGE** thanks to vocalists, instrumentalists, singers, Praise Band, Adult Choir and the men's choir who provided beautiful music during Advent and Christmas. We are blessed to have such a powerful music ministry created by our volunteer musicians.



Tom and I wish to thank the Quilting group for the special quilts made for our grandchildren, Patrick and Millie. They were happy to get them. *Amy and Tom Cordeal*

Millie and Patrick, Amy and Tom's grandchildren with the quilts created by our quilters and given to the children by Maplewood UMC

## second time around shoppe

### Here's another way to minister at MUMC

The Second Time Around Shoppe continues to be a success: contributing to the budget of the church ... giving opportunities to many in the community to buy needed clothing & housewares at price that is affordable to them (you should have seen the Christmas shopping for children that happened here!) ...inviting folks to share worship and Sunday School.

The shop is open every Thursday from 9am to 2p.m. and the first Saturday of the month from 9a.m.'til noon and the shop needs **HELP!!!!** On some days donations are overwhelming; everything needs to be sorted and put in the shop. This is where the help is would be of great help.

As always the shop accepts donations of clothing that does not show wear and is clean; donations of housewares, shoes, comforters, and curtains (all in good shape) are welcomed.



**Out with the old and in with the new organ.**



we are so blessed...

**... so many reasons for being thankful**

**\* words from our wonderful staff:**

**"Thank you** to the church for the Christmas gift; it was most appreciated. Thank you, too, for all the support and encouragement throughout the year for our music program at MUMC. It is a privilege to be the music director and I look forward to another successful year."  
**Amy Cordeal**

"I want to say **thank you** to the church for remembering me at Christmas. I appreciate being a part of MUMC."  
**Mike Plonka**

**"Thank you** for so kindly remembering me at Christmas time! It certainly wasn't necessary, but greatly appreciated. I feel honored and blessed to work at MUMC and with so many wonderful people. Best wishes to all for much health, love, happiness and peace in 2016."  
**Sally Noel**

**\* thanks from our MUMC folks:**

*"Thank you to everyone for all the prayers, food, and well wishes for Ryan and my family. It is much appreciated."* **Madaleaze Cramer**

**\* and thanks to our MUMC family for leading us:**

**\* Shay Blackwell** for organizing the Taking Down on the Advent Greens!  
and **Madaleaze Cramer** for the delicious lunch that fed the "de-decorating team (20 folks!)"

**\* Amy Cordeal** for coordinating the Advent wreath lighting each week.

**\* Steve Shirar** for picking up the Poinsettias.

**\* the entire Watkins family** for all the work they did for Christmas Eve service hospitality...getting things ready, greeting and ushering, and cleaning cleaning up after the service. THANK YOU!

**\* Rachel Ward and Kyle Kranes** for **ALL** of the ways they serve as leaders in Children's Ministry and especially for their leadership of the Children's Christmas pageant.

**\* Hope Watkins** and her crew for Build A Gift leadership! You did an amazing job once again this year.

**\* Shay Blackwell and Suzanne Thompson** for organizing the Christmas Giving Tree.

**\* Larry Schmid & Amy Cordeal** for the gift of their trumpet & flute duo.

**\* Everyone who shared gifts** for the Christmas Giving Tree

**\* All the men** who sang with the men's chorus on Sunday before Christmas.



**\* and thanks for early support of the 2016 Youth Mission Trip:**

... to everyone who baked AND bought cookies ... we raised \$1,500 for the trip!!!!

January sermon series

## Following the Prince of Peace in a World Filled with Violence

There is no doubt that violence is part of our life in St. Louis City, in our nation, and in our world. Violent crime even happens in churches. In June of 2015 nine people were killed while attending a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Less than a month ago the president of a Christian college in Virginia encouraged the students on campus to arm themselves with handguns. The students were encouraged to avail themselves of the free handgun training classes provided by the university. Some Christian leaders and organizations are on the opposite end of the spectrum when it comes to their view toward violence and/or the use of weapons.

Conversations about violence can be extremely difficult even among Christians. It's no wonder ... consider the amount of violence that we encounter when we read the Bible.

In January we are going to talk about what it means to follow Jesus, the Prince of Peace, in this world that is so full of violence. Over the next few weeks we will ask a lot of questions:

How does scripture define violence?

What did Jesus, the Prince of Peace, teach and model about peace and violent behavior? What did he mean when he said "Don't think that I've come to bring peace to the earth. I haven't come to bring peace but a sword." in Matthew 10: 34?

When Jesus taught us to "turn the other cheek." Does that really mean that Christians are called to be human punching bags...no matter what?

As individuals and as a congregation what are some practical ways we can promote peace within our selves, our families, our work place, our communities?

I hope that you will *be in prayer for me and for all of us as we seek God's guidance* about a difficult and often controversial subject. May God grant us the grace we need as we think and talk about violence and what it means to follow the Prince of Peace.

*Pastor Kim*

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**Pictures from Build-A-Gift....another fun and successful year. Pictures from Lisa Watkins**

Kim Shirar, Pastor  
Pastor's Office Hours:  
Tuesday: 9 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.  
Thursday: 9 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.  
Cell Phone: (314) 651-9999  
E-Mail: [pastor@maplewoodumc.org](mailto:pastor@maplewoodumc.org)

Sally Noel, Secretary  
Secretary will be in the office:  
Thursday 9a.m. - 4p.m.  
Maplewood UMC phone:  
(314)781-5902  
Maplewood UMC Official Website:  
[www.maplewoodumc.org](http://www.maplewoodumc.org)



In the last issue of the *Messenger* the congregation was asked to send in pictures of their nativity sets they had at home.

Congratulations to Henry Stotler for sending a picture of his nativity set.....his was the only picture to be submitted.



# MAPLEWOOD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

7409 Flora Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63143

January  
2016



**Every Sunday**  
**9:45 a.m. Sunday School**  
**11:00 a.m. Worship**