

# Alton pastor Woodard always tries to put others above self

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
January 28 2016 9:00 AM



**ALTON – Bishop Carl Woodard** has been the pastor of **True Church House of Prayer** in Alton for approaching 25 years and he will leave a legacy for his work, not only here, but other churches across the country.

Woodard's church is Pentecostal, and located at 1414 Pearl St. in Alton. He also oversees other churches in the area in a leadership role as bishop. The Pentecostal Church is closely associated with other Christian churches in the U.S.

“I am the first line of defense if a pastor has problems my job is to come in and encourage them and show different ways of how to correct problems in my area,” Woodard said.

Woodard has been married for 46 years to his high school sweetheart Anita. She is the daughter of Clarence Willis, who was once very involved in the Alton School Board and the local NAACP organization.

The Alton man said one of his higher purposes has been to always put others above self.

“That is my whole ministry,” he said of putting others needs above his own needs. “It is to take the raw people nobody wants and get them to pour into something that will help the rest of their lives. I don’t get a salary for what I do as a pastor. I do it because I love it.”

Woodard said he invites everyone in the Alton area neighborhoods to come to their church. He said his church has a variety of Bible studies and raises funds for Shriner’s, St. Jude’s and other ministries.

The Alton pastor is of the belief that all things work for the good of God.

“Just because someone has been in jail you don’t have to continue to be a criminal or a bad person,” he said. “Just because you are divorced or have any other type of problem doesn’t mean God doesn’t have a plan for you.”

One of the worst things Woodard ever experienced was the loss of a daughter who was only 2 years and 8 months old after multiple heart issues.

“That was one of the most difficult experiences of my life, but it was one thing that brought me where I needed to be,” he said. “It helped me minister to people who are hurting because I know what hurt is and what it is like to fall.”

Woodard grew up in Alton and graduated from Alton High School. For more than 30 years, Woodard worked at Shell Oil Company and retired there. At age 43, Carl became a pastor. The Alton man retired from Shell in 2005 and started working there on May 18, 1974.

Woodard said he feels extremely fortunate to have worked for such a good company in Shell Oil. He said often after he became a minister, people at the refinery would come up to him and talk to him, but he never openly pushed his religious beliefs. Carl let people come to him if they wanted to talk and was always there for them.

“Some of the greatest people I have ever known come from Alton and also the refinery,” he said.

Bishop Samuel White of Monroe Memorial Church, and Woodard are good friends. He said Carl is a caring person and constantly doing things he does not publicize for people.”

“He often helps people keep their homes and also ministers to other pastors to help them keep their ministries in his bishop position,” White said. “He is a person of integrity.”

Woodard and his wife have children and grandchildren and he said the greatest job in the world in being a parent and grandparent.

The Alton man said he tries to see the grace of God in everything he touches.

“I see God in the alcoholic who has a problem,” he said. “I do the same thing if someone is abusing drugs or has other problems. I have to see God is in everything. In the worst, I try to see the best of what they can be.”