

The Chimes

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
FEBRUARY 2018

Pastor's reflections

I've been thinking of scales a great deal lately. No, I don't mean the kind in your bathroom or the kind on fish or snakes, but rather the kind also called a balance. If you can, picture the image often called "Blind Justice." She often stands outside courthouses; she holds a scale, a balance which must be perfectly level, to show that no favoritism is found in the court system. Such favoritism would lead to injustice.

That desire for a healthy balance in various aspects of life goes beyond just our courts. In so many things, we humans need to find the right balance to thrive: a balance between: confidence and humility, work and family, and what I have been thinking about most, old and new.

I daily thank God to be the pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church. This church has much love, great generosity, and a smooth operation. Now we aren't perfect: no person or group of people is, but there is much here that is life-giving and shows God's love through Jesus Christ. When things are going well, we don't need to fix what isn't broken. In some ways we need to stay the course because we are on the right path with the Holy Spirit of God as our guide.

However, God does not call us to never change. The witness of the scriptures shows people changing and following God in new ways: moving from slavery to freedom, from wandering to settlement, from sin to mercy, from sickness to wholeness, and from death to life. Wesley United Methodist Church will need to change things from time to time to live out our calling from God to follow Jesus. Sometimes the change will be easy: for instance, before you get this newsletter, we probably will have changed a back-up battery in one of our exit signs.

Church Events

- Feb. 1 - Greeting card ministry
9:30 a.m.
- Feb. 13 - SPRC 7:00 p.m.
- Feb. 14 - Women's breakfast
8:30 a.m. Bennys
- Feb. 16 - Ladies luncheon
11:30 a.m. Angelo's
- Feb. 27 - Ad council meeting
6:30 p.m.
- Mondays - Disciples bible study
9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesdays - Buddy bags
packing 12:30 p.m. (NEW DAY!)
- Wednesdays - Choir 6:00 p.m.
- Thursdays - Coffee with Pastor
7:30 a.m. Airplay Sports
- Saturdays - Men's bible study
8:00 a.m.

Some changes, however, may be harder as we are called to something new to better reach more of God's children here in the Sauk Valley area, or to let a ministry, which is no longer bearing fruit, die. As pastor, I want to invite us to change as God is calling us, but not try to force change for its own sake as that will throw the scales out of balance. Change will happen and keeping the right balance, keeping the scales even, that's where we need God's wisdom and so, so much grace!

I ask you, the people who make up this congregation, to pray for guidance as we move forward. Pray and try to open your hearts, minds, eyes, and ears for what God is calling us toward. We need to stay on God's path for us, and that might mean a few changes of direction as the path weaves forward around obstacles, or as the path goes in a new way to better connect with people who need love in Jesus's name. We will need to make some changes, but we also want to continue to do that which bears fruit in His Name. Our visioning day was a start, but each of us is called to help us all follow God's way. So, let's stay in balance, and in so doing, best serve God and share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ.

Pastor Jeremiah



Ash Wednesday

For more than 1000 years Christians have gathered each year on Ash Wednesday for worship to mark the start of the holy season of Lent. Lent is the 40 days before Easter (not counting Sundays). On these days, followers of Christ are invited to seek to grow in faith, to consider how God is asking them to transform their lives for the better, and finally to live out the calling to bless others that Christ gives us through the Holy Spirit.

We will have an Ash Wednesday worship here at the church starting at 7:00 PM. The service will be a bit different. Prayer stations will invite us to turn our hearts to God. We will have a time of music. We will have a time of confession. Finally we will have the imposition of ashes, in which we are marked with the sign of the cross as a remembrance of our need for God's Grace and also to remember we are loved by God. Some of our confirmation students will be helping Pastor Jeremiah lead worship.

Join us for a different sort of service in which you are called toward God in a multiple ways, so that we can remember what a difference and blessed change Christ can make in our lives.

Worship Service in February

Upcoming Worship Services

We are nearing a change in the season. No, I don't mean that spring is coming early; in the seasons of the church year, we are nearing a change as we enter Lent: a time to prepare our hearts and minds to remember the Last Supper, Jesus's crucifixion, and most of all the joy of Jesus's resurrection on the first Easter. This season change will come in the middle of the month, so our new sermon series will begin on February 18th.

- February 4: This will be the final sermon in our "Faithful Resolutions" series. Through an examination of Psalm 84, we will consider why God calls us to worship with our church family each week.
- February 11: Our guest preacher will be Rev. Megan Thompson, my best friend and lovely wife. For many years, Megan and I designate a Sunday near Valentine's Day to "send our love" to each other's congregations. We do a pulpit exchange, so each of our congregations can get to know our spouse better. Join Megan as she talks about her call to ministry. Don't miss her sermon; she's a fantastic preacher!
- February 18: For Lent we will start a new sermon series called "Being a Disciple." To be a disciple means to follow Jesus. In ancient times people who wished to be baptized as adults and become Christians would use the time of Lent to learn more about what it meant to be a disciple, a Christ follower. As our guide for this sermon series, we will look at two of Jesus's sermons, the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew and the Sermon on the Plain in Luke. To start off, we will consider what Jesus teaches us about "right and holy" relationships with God and with our fellow human beings.
- February 25: "Being a Disciple" continues as we look at how Jesus asks us to live our faith in a way that is humble and invites others to follow Him.

Sign Up for the Lenten Study!

Our church wide Lenten study will be Adam Hamilton's powerful 24 Hours that Changed the World. This book and DVD study looks at the last day of Jesus's earthly life and was filmed on location in and around Jerusalem and other sites in the Holy Land.

This book and video ask us to consider what God is saying to us through each of the major events in this final day that Christ, God's Word in the Flesh, walked before His resurrection. In looking at events like the Last Supper, Jesus praying in the garden, Jesus's arrest, the crucifixion, and finally Christ conquering death, we see the powerful love of God and the signs that through Christ, God is making all things new and better.

Four study groups will be meeting this Lent. Pastor Jeremiah will lead a group each Wednesday night at 7:00 at the church, starting February 14th (the first session will have a different start time as that is Ash Wednesday, but all other sessions will start at 7:00). At 2:00 PM on Thursdays, Sue Inks will lead a group at the church. On Thursdays at 6:30 PM, Nancy Pitsch will lead a group at the church, child care is secured for this evening session. Both of these groups will start meeting Thursday, February 15th. Finally, a group will be meeting with Pastor Jeremiah at the church on Sunday afternoons at 3:00 beginning on February 18th.

If you've not already done so, please sign up! In particular, we want to invite any of our youth from 6th grade on up to join the discussions as we read, talk, and with the Holy Spirit's help, learn and grow in faith.



Northern Illinois Conference
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Registration open for 2018 Laity Convocation *From Why to How: Executing your Plan for Ministry*

Brochures can be found on
the "Wesley UMC" table
in the fellowship hall.

Online Registration is open for this year's NIC Laity Convocation which will be held on **Saturday, Feb. 17** at Sycamore UMC, 160 Johnson Ave., Sycamore.

We are pleased to announce that the Rev. Dr. Junius Dotson, General Secretary of Discipleship Ministries, will be our keynote speaker and leader of one of five breakout sessions.

Early registration cost is \$10 per person or \$40 per Church and includes a continental breakfast. Registration after **February 3** will be \$15 per person or \$50 per church.

Childcare will be provided free of charge. Please let Laura Lopez (llopez@umcnic.org) know if you are in need of child-care.

Note to Clergy: CEU's available.

Join us to learn strategies on transforming ministry plans into action.

Breakout sessions will include:

- How Do We Share Our Faith?
- How Do We Meet Our Neighbors?
- How Do We Use Data to Help Our Neighbors?
- How Do We Talk About the Way Forward?
- How Do We "See All The People"?



Rev. Dr.
Junius Dotson

*****Please see Pastor, Jan Glover, or Elisa Gatz for more information.*****

We would like to thank you for your thoughts and prayers during Al's heart surgery. His recovery has gone very well and we are extremely thankful. We appreciated the phone calls, cards, visits and meals, thank you all so much.

God Bless and keep you always,
Al, Diane Rude and family

Welcome to Wesley UMC!

Elaine Hilger, 1013 Avenue D, Rock Falls has joined our Wesley family as of January 1st, 2018.



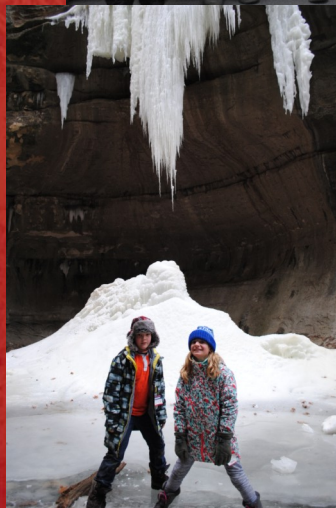


Cards from Wesley Card Ministry bring memories, love, and "home" to a heart belonging to Wesley UMC stationed in Fort Campbell, KY. Vinny Poci, son of Amy Poci, is an aviation mechanic with an E3 ranking. He began serving in August of 2016 & has been in Virginia and South Carolina. Two of his three times home were during the Christmas holiday season. Our Wesley Card Ministry, co-led by Debbie Kramer & Gloria Grant, with many hands helping address & write messages each month have helped to bridge the gap for Vinny between home & serving his country.

"I suppose the easiest way to start would be to just say thank you. Thank you to everyone at Wesley. I absolutely love opening the cards sent to me by my church family; it is a cheerful reminder of everyone back home. It is easy for young adults to get caught up in their "new lives" when they move away- whether it be for the military, college, or just leaving the nest, but everybody has one little thing that brings them back to their hometown. Some look at old pictures, others eat a peanut butter banana sandwich like mama used to make- for me it is reading your cards. It takes me back to Sunday school with Mrs. Pitsch, talking with everyone before the sermons began, sneaking an extra donut when mom wasn't looking, and showcasing my musical inexpertise in the children's bell choir. These memories and the support from my Wesley family have helped get me through some hard times, and made the good times even more joyous. So thank you all so much; everything you do means a lot to me- the shelf in my room can attest to it. "

With much love,
"Vinny"

Pastor Jeremiah's enthusiastic idea to suggest & plan this one-in-a-lifetime trip for the Confirmation Class to Starved Rock Park resulted in an AMAZING EXPERIENCE! Thanks to Brad & Erin Graves and Andy & Nancy Pitsch for being on for the adventure, too! When you see one of these courageous, "all in for adventure", curious, life-loving, faith-investigating youths, ask them what they thought of their afternoon outside in 20 degree weather, hiking, climbing, sliding, discovering God in nature and in one another... and stop to really listen to what they have to say. This day was truly a day of wonder; one that will add to the person of faith these already truly amazing youths will yet to become.



Birthdays

February 1	Debbie Hodges	February 17	Tracy DuRall
February 2	Carol Cravatta, Al Rude	February 17	Liz White
February 3	Benny Fenn, Diane Rude	February 18	Corrine Smith, Erma Robinson
February 7	Stacey Stutzke	February 19	Mary Nemes
February 8	Brandon Fredericks	February 20	Jack Graves, Gary Swart
February 12	Kari Hansen, Warren Heuck	February 24	Lynn Majewski, James Teachout
February 13	Keaton Cervantes	February 25	Mary Michel
February 16	Rachael Turffs	February 28	Holly Taylor-Vrhel

Anniversaries

February 13	Nick & Shay Papoccia
February 14	Dave & Roberta Fredericks
February 15	Luke & Phyllis Stutzman
February 22	Matt & Chris Larson
February 23	Doug & Ann Wiersema

Coffee Hosts

Feb. 4	- Gene & Sue Klock
Feb. 11	- Norma Church/Amy Poci, Mary Anne Batten
Feb. 18	- Elaine Hilger/Mary Spitzer, Mary Anne Batten
Feb. 25	- Ceruzzi family & Papoccia family

Servers for February- 8 a.m.

	Greeters/Ushers	Acolytes	Liturgist
February 4	Nancy Pitsch, Tracy DuRall	Nancy Pitsch Tracy DuRall	Amy Poci
February 11	Pam & Mitch Clodfelter	Lynn Majewski Tracy DuRall	Randy Clodfelter
February 18	Lynn Majewski Rebecca Tieman	Lynn Majewski Rebecca Tieman	Jan Glover
February 25	Lynn Majewski Rebecca Tieman	Lynn Majewski Rebecca Tieman	Marc Melton

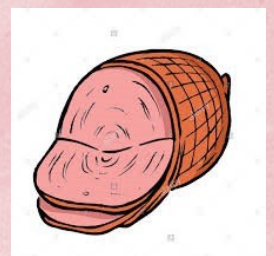


Servers for February- 10 a.m.

	Greeters	Ushers/Acolytes	Liturgist
February 4	Elaine Hilger Sharon Wasson	Jaime, Amber, & Josh Greenfield	Aaron Marken
February 11	Elaine Hilger Sharon Wasson	↓	Mary Spitzer
February 18	Bill & Sue Abate		Mary Spitzer
February 25	Don & Sena Warkins		Bryn Gatz

Save The Date

The Men's Club Ham Dinner is on the calendar for Saturday, March 24th. More details coming soon!



Wesley United Methodist Church

2200 16th Ave.

Sterling, IL 61081

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Wesley United Methodist Church

Phone: (815) 625-1968 Pastor: 815-592-3764

Website: www.sterlingwesley.org

Email: office@sterlingwesley.org

castiger1@gmail.com

Open Heart, Open Minds, Open Doors

You are invited to join us for worship Sundays at 8 and 10 a.m. with Sunday School and fellowship at 9 a.m.

Mission Corner

Wesley has always been a mission-minded church. The purpose of this space is to keep the congregation informed of our various mission efforts.

We currently are receiving:

- Donations of bedding, small appliances, and other **household items** to support Trinity UMC and the VA Clinic/Valor Program, as they work to find homes for local veterans. A list of needed items is on the table in the fellowship hall.
- **Toothpaste/toothbrushes** for Bear Necessities, Everyday Essentials and the FISH Food Pantry.
- **Travel-sized toiletries** for the Trinity and FISH pantries.
- **Loose coins** to benefit Peru-Bolivia Lake Titicaca Border Mission in February.

Volunteers are needed for PADS!

Can you give 4 hours of your time to spend with others that are experiencing homelessness in our community? Sign up for a shift! Wesley has the first Friday of every month, October-April, and the shifts are 7-11 pm, 11 pm-3 am, and 3-7 am. A prepared evening meal is also needed for each night that Wesley staffs the shelter. No special talents are required beyond serving food and loading a dishwasher. If you have any questions, talk to Joe Gatz, a PADS board member, or any experienced PADS volunteer. The shelter needs volunteers several nights each month, so also consider signing up other times.