

The Chimes

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
MARCH 2017

'Science of God' is based on collective experiences

Lent is a 40-day journey (not including Sunday) when we are highly encouraged to participate in spiritual disciplines that equip us to grow deeper in our understanding and experience of God. It is a time of challenge and of encouragement to both think theologically and to put that theology into practice. As we begin this season, I offer this perspective from *The Joyful Christian* by C.S. Lewis.

"Everyone has warned me not to tell you what I am going to tell you... They all say 'the ordinary reader does not want Theology; give him plain practical religion.' I have rejected their advice. I do not think the ordinary reader is such a fool. Theology means 'the science of God,' and I think any man who wants to think about God at all would like to have the clearest and most accurate ideas about him which are available. You are not children: why should you be treated like children?"

"In a way, I quite understand why some people are put off by

Theology. I remember once when I had been giving a talk to the R.A.F., an old, hard-bitten officer got up and said, 'I've no use for all that stuff. But, mind you, I'm a religious man too. I *know* there's a God. I've *felt* him: out alone in the desert at night: the tremendous mystery. And that's just why I don't believe all your neat little dogmas and formulas about him. To anyone who's met the real thing they all seem so petty and pedantic and unreal!'

"Now in a sense I quite agreed with that man. I think he had probably a real experience of God in the desert. And when he turned from that experience to the Christian creeds, I think he really was turning from something real, to something less real. In the same way, if a man has once looked at the Atlantic from the beach, and then goes and looks at a map of the Atlantic, he also will be turning from real waves to a bit of colored paper. But here comes the point. The map is admittedly only

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Church Events

- March 1 - Ash Wednesday service - 7 p.m.
- March 2 - Membership Care Team meeting - 9:30 a.m.
- March 8 - Ladies' breakfast (Benny's) - 8:30 a.m.
- March 9 - Greeting card ministry - 9:30 a.m.
- March 11 - Men's Club ham dinner - 5-7 p.m.
- March 23 - Administrative Council meeting - 6:30 p.m.
- March 28 - 150th Committee meeting - 10 a.m.
- March 28 - Worship Team meeting - 6:30 p.m.
- Mondays - Disciple Bible study - 9 a.m. and 7 p.m.
- Wednesdays - Handbell Choir rehearsal - 5 p.m.
- Wednesdays - Choir rehearsal - 6 p.m.
- Saturdays - Men's Bible study - 8 a.m.
- Sundays - Confirmation for Adults - 6:30 p.m.
- Sundays - Intro. to United Methodism - 3:30 p.m. (starts March 19)

Upcoming worship

“Seven Last Words”

During the season of Lent, we will be taking a closer look at the seven last words of Jesus from the cross. Each of the last things that he said was tremendously important and meant the world to the people who witnessed the Crucifixion. During these weeks leading up to Easter, we will be taking the time to delve deeper into the significance of these words.

- March 5: “Behold Your Son” based on John 19:23-27
- March 12: “Father, Forgive them” based on Luke 23:33-38
- March 19: “My God, My God” based on Mark 15:29-34
- March 26: “Today, You Will Be With Me” based on Luke 23:32, 39-43
- April 2: “I Thirst: based on John 19:28-29
- April 9: “Into Your Hands” based on Luke 23:44-49
- Good Friday, April 14: “It Is Finished” based on John 19:30-34, 38-42
- Easter Sunday, April 16: “The Rest of the Story” based on Mark 1-20

Men's Club annual Ham Dinner

Saturday, March 11
5-7 p.m.

Tickets are \$7
adults, \$5 children;
available from any
Men's Club
member
or at the door

Introductory class returns March 19

Another round of this class kicks off Sunday, March 19.

This four-week study is open to our entire church, designed as an interactive way to learn a lot about who we are as United Methodists. It includes a little of our history, doctrine, theology, and membership vows. This is designed for anyone who would like to join the membership of Wesley United Methodist Church and everyone who would like to learn a little more about our denomination. This study will be held at 3 p.m. Sundays, starting March 19. For any who desire to join our church, we will receive new members



Easter Sunday, April 16.

There is no cost to participate; call or email Pastor Wesley if you would like to participate, so we have enough materials.

Spring Lay Academy

The DeKalb District will not be hosting a Spring Lay Academy, so the Rockford District has invited you to join theirs.

To register, go to www.umcnic.org/RckSprngLayAcadmy2017.

Thank You

This is a very belated thank you to everyone who donated paper goods, coffee, creamer, syrup, and more to Loaves and Fishes at Christmastime. I took four big boxes, plus several other items over to them. They are most appreciative.

Loaves and Fishes served more than 23,500 meals last year, so the items will be put to good use!

Sue Abate

Corresponding secretary, Loaves and Fishes

When we moved to Sterling in 2002, our grandson, Joe Kennedy, then 3, and Helen had each just finished cancer treatments--surgeries and chemotherapy and radiation. It was a very uncertain time for all of us, especially our granddaughter, Brigid, who had to change school in the middle of kindergarten. In your fellowship, though, we immediately found a community of love and support. And softball.

With your help, we got through. Thank you for being there for us, when I was still such a young man of 65. And thank you for all the cards and good wishes and fun memories you sent me for this birthday, the one that proves the truism that a man must grow old, but he doesn't have to grow up.

John Robert McFarland

Sesquicentennial Corner

In preparation for the celebration of our sesquicentennial Oct. 8, the 150th Committee is asking for anyone who has **old pictures, artifacts, or mementos** from Wesley United Methodist Church to please share them so that they can be **displayed at the celebration** this fall. Please contact Bill Abate.

Also, the committee is **updating the**

The 150th Committee has created several **subcommittees** to work on **events and activities** leading up to the celebration this fall.

Subcommittees include:

- **Advertising/Publicity** (led by Bill Abate and Gloria Grant)
- **History** (led by Bill Abate)
- **Celebration Dinner** (led by Sue Abate and Karen Palmer)
- **Worship Service** (led by Pastor Wes and the Worship Team)
- **Videography/Interviews** (*leader*

history of the church. We have a history from 1867 to 2007, that was prepared for the 140th celebration. Anyone who has any **memories or ideas of significant accomplishments, events, or other happenings since 2007** is asked to share them, as well. Please mail them to Bill Abate at 1727 Hillcrest Drive, Sterling, IL 61081 or abate@essex1.com. Thank you!



Did You Know?

Did you know that there were actually two predecessors to the present day Wesley United Methodist Church, constructed July 13, 1975? The "new" Fourth Street Methodist Episcopal Church was dedicated April 5, 1905. Before that, the old church was built in 1871. Both churches were on the same site at the corner of Avenue A and Fourth Street.

needed)

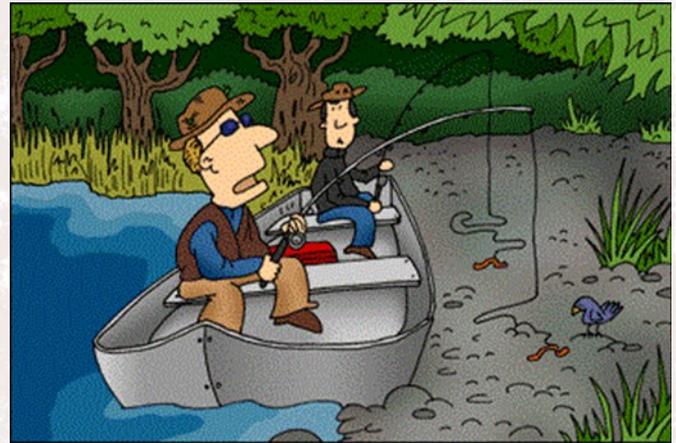
You are invited to join a subcommittee (or two) to assist in planning these activities. Please contact Renee Duncan at 815-535-3058 to join a group, or if you have any questions.

Doctrines are not God: they are only a kind of map

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colored paper, but there are two things you have to remember about it. In the first place, it is based on what hundreds and thousands of people have found out by sailing the real Atlantic. In that way it has behind it masses of experience just as real as the one you could have from the beach; only, while yours would be a single isolated glimpse, the map fits all those different experiences together. In the second place, if you want to go anywhere, the map is absolutely necessary. As long as you are content with walks on the beach, your own glimpses are far more fun than looking at a map. But the map is going to be more use than walks on the beach if you want to get to America.

"Now Theology is like the map. Merely learning and thinking about the Christian doctrines, if you stop there, is less real and less exciting than the sort of thing my friend got in the desert. Doctrines are not God: they are only a kind of map. But the map is based on the experience of hundreds of people who really were in touch with God – experiences compared with which any thrills or pious feelings you or I are likely to get on our own way are very elementary and very confused. And secondly, if you want to get any further, you must use the map. You see, what happened to that man in the desert may have been real, and was certainly exciting, but nothing comes of it. It leads nowhere. There is nothing to do about it. In fact, that is just why a vague religion – all about feeling God in nature, and



REMEMBER IN THE BIBLE WHEN THEY SWITCHED TO FISHING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THEIR BOAT AND THEN THEIR LUCK CHANGED ... MAYBE WE SHOULD TRY THAT

so on – is so attractive. It is all about thrills and no work; like watching the waves from the beach. But you will not get to Newfoundland by studying the Atlantic that way, and you will not get eternal life by simply feeling the presence of God in flowers or music. Neither will you get anywhere by looking at maps without going to sea. Nor will you be very safe if you go to sea without a map."

Food for thought,
Pastor Wesley

Servers for March - 8 a.m.

	Greeters	Ushers	Liturgist
March 5	Randy and Debby Smith	Jan Glover, Ross Helberg	Seth Faber
March 12	↓	↓	Wendy Fitzanko
March 19	Jan Glover, Amy Poci		Bill Inks
March 26	↓		Nancy Pitsch

Coffee Hosts

- March 5** Curt Greenfield family
- March 12** Tim Schwingle family
- March 19** Jim and Jackie Turffs
- March 26** Katie Spangler, Michael Henrekin

Servers for March - 10 a.m.

	Greeters	Ushers	Liturgist
March 5	Darlene Davis, Janet Palmer	Dave Abele, Jonathan Abele, Gene Klock, Michael Quick	Nancy Pitsch
March 12	Carol Shaw, Sally Unterzuber	↓	Bryn Gatz
March 19	Debbie Kramer, Nancy Pitsch		Sue Klock
March 26	Curt Greenfield family		Rick Palmer

Acolytes

- March** Haley Ceruzzi, James Morris
- April** Ashlei Behrens, Haleigh Freas

Birthdays

- | | |
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| March 2 - Sue Klock | March 18 - Amber Greenfield |
| March 4 - Aaron Fitzanko | March 20 - Mary Downes, Dakota Hayes, Gene Klock |
| March 7 - Bruce Kramer, Stephanie Spitzer | March 22 - Roberta Fredericks |
| March 8 - Jan Davey, Alice Vetter | March 23 - Colton Duncan |
| March 15 - Levi Freas, Abriana Poci | March 29 - Jeanne Burch, Lark Perry |
| March 16 - Darlene Kereven, Megan Stutzke | |

Anniversaries

- March 10** - Wes and Liz White
- March 17** - Andrew and Beth Jacobs

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 IMC 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.
- **Toilet paper** for the Trinity Pantry, Rock Falls UMC

Personal Care Pantry, and the FISH Food Pantry.

- **Travel-sized toiletries** for the Trinity and FISH pantries.

Items may be placed in the baskets and boxes on the missions table outside the sanctuary.

Also, **loose coins** this month will support the **PADS Homeless Shelter***.

Thank you for your generosity!

*See back page.

Wesley United Methodist Church

2200 16th Ave.

Sterling, IL 61081

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Wesley United Methodist Church

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Website: www.sterlingwesley.org

Email: office@sterlingwesley.org
wesley@sterlingwesley.org

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.

Challand Challenge for PADS

Challand Middle School has placed an emphasis on community service and outreach. As part of that, and in light of the recent article in the newspaper about the needs of the local homeless shelter, the school is doing a "Your Change Can Make a Change." Students are encouraged to collect their spare change for **PADS Homeless Shelter**.

The school has asked local churches to consider making matching donations to encourage the students to raise more

money. Wesley United Methodist Church has chosen to adopt this mission for March.

The students raised \$1,042, and we would like to try to match that.

Loose coins this month will go toward the challenge; any donations marked for PADS also will go toward the challenge.

Please give generously. Thank you!