

The Chimes

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH/DECEMBER 2020

From Our Pastor...



I want to share a story and ponder it with you.



A six-year-old boy was heading home from the beach with his four-year-old sister. After a few minutes, he noticed she was no longer beside him. He looked back and saw that she had stopped walking. She was standing in front of a shop window, staring keenly inside. Her brother joined her, peering through the glass.

"Would you like anything?" He asked her. She pointed at a teddy bear. He took her by the hand and pulled her into the shop with him. He looked around the shelves of toys before finding the bear his sister wanted. He lifted it gently and gave it to her. Her little face lit up with joy.

The shopkeeper, an older man, had been watching them closely, smiling. While the girl held the bear in her arms, the boy went to the checkout and asked: "How much for the teddy bear, sir?" The shopkeeper smiled. "Well, what can you afford to pay?" From his pocket, the boy took some shells that he had collected on the beach and placed them on the counter. The shopkeeper began to count them as if they were real money. Then he looked at the boy. The boy asked anxiously: "Is it enough?" The shopkeeper replied, "No, no. This is too much. I'll give you something back." He kept only four shells and gave the rest back to the boy. The boy put the shells back into his pocket, delighted, and went home with his little sister.

Church Events

Please watch for future updates on when events will resume along with any new events or activities!

MORNING DEVOTIONS, "stop in" from 4am-noon; for as short or as long as you'd like! Meet in the comfort of your own home, in a quiet, cozy area, with the company of Christ and others who'll be there in love, prayer, and spirit! Bring a Bible, an open heart, listening ears, and at least one spoken praise of gratitude per morning! A journal and/or a devotional are optional. All ages encouraged & welcome; no limit to numbers! Questions? Need more info or resources? Text or call Nancy Pitsch 815-499-3802. Please let me know if you're joining us!

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An employee had watched the scene and asked the shopkeeper: “That bear was pretty expensive. Did you really just sell it for shells?” The shopkeeper smiled again. “To us, they’re just shells. But to that little boy, they are treasured. He does not understand what money is now, but he’ll know when he’s older. If he remembers that he once bought a toy with shells instead of money, he will still believe in the good things in the world.”

Isn’t it a beautiful and heartwarming story? I just pictured this scene in my mind, and it made me smile. I have heard from a few people that how frustrated and tired they were in this challenging season. One of them said, “I think I’m almost done with my patience.” You know what? I feel exactly the same as you do. And it gives me another perspective to read the story above.

Some people might talk about the number and some scientific information about pandemics in the past and infectious disease patterns. And some people simply underestimate the harm, saying, “it is what it is. No need to be worried.” But most of us are afraid and tired of it in this season. It is about the lives of ourselves and our beloved ones. And we are serious like the boy with the shells.

And we read the kindness of the shopkeeper. What caught me was, the shopkeeper said, “He’ll know when he’s older” “He will still believe in the good things in the world.” With this shopkeeper, I thought of God’s love and plan for us in this Advent season. And I believe God understands what we are feeling, and I feel confident with God’s yearning to listen to us, including crying out for help and security.

The shopkeeper’s kindness costs a certain amount of money, but God’s love for us costs Jesus Christ, the Incarnation of Godself. Jesus’ sacrifice was already planned at the beginning of the first Advent. I think God’s hope was, when God sent Jesus, “My beloved one would know how much I love them, and they would know what plan I have.” Christ’s coming was God’s love letter for us. As we have faith in God leading us in this challenging season like Moses’ wilderness, we will one day know that God is still present, walking with us, guiding us, and helping move forward with hope in Christ. Amen.

Peace in Christ,

Rev. Paul Lee

Worship Schedule

December 6, 2020

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 1:20-23, Hebrews 1:1-3

<Jesus, Emmanuel>

December 13, 2020

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 9:6-7, Luke 1:26-38, Revelation 21:1-8

<Jesus, the Lord, and King>

Guest Speaker, Rev. Mike Jones

Dec. 20, 2020

SCRIPTURE READING

John 1:1-5

<Jesus, the Light of the World>

Dec. 27, 2020

SCRIPTURE READING

1 John 4:14-19, 2 Tim 1:7

<Not of Fear, but Power of Love>

The Greeting Card ministry is continuing to work from home. About 14 people are able to keep this ministry going each month. Many thanks to all of them!

If you need a prayer shawl, please call the office..
You may pick one up there during office hours



Hats Off!

My heart is filled with thanksgiving for our Wesley Church family, and especially for our Trustees! The team of Trustees for this most challenging year have continued to work together to accomplish a number of projects to improve our church facility. Equally important has been the willingness of many of the Wesley Church members to assist us in that process. Projects that have been done this year include: tree trimming and removal, parking lot and sidewalk improvements, repair and restoration of the chapel stained glass windows, landscaping the south end of the church property, and remodeling the girls' restroom.

Cory Canas, Curt Greenfield, and I will be retiring from the trustees team. Cory has faithfully filled our lighters and candles for our Sunday morning services. He has also provided wonderful food for our cleaning days in the spring and fall. Curt shared excellent advice for our concrete project in the parking lot and helped to maintain the Exit lights and emergency lights within the building. His expert assistance on the playground project made the work much easier. Thank you, Cory and Curt, so much for your faithful service throughout the last three years!

I wish to tip my hat to two people who especially have helped me to function as the co-chair of trustees. Dave Fredericks, my co-chair for the first two years, has always supported and encouraged me in this challenging role. He and Roberta continue to serve by maintaining the landscaping at the church and parsonage. Steve Downes, my co-chair for this year, has eagerly assisted in the many tasks of leadership and is helping with the transition to a new year.

Toby Hodges and Rory Smith will be joining the team of James Fitzanko, Zack Glazier, Bill Parker, Barb Quick, and Rebecca Tieman. Amy Lopez, lay leader, and Paul Lee, pastor, are also advisors to the team. The team needs one more trustee to achieve nine members. If anyone is interested in serving, please contact Pastor Paul.

Thank you, Precious Lord, for these who so faithfully serve You and our church family!

Missions would like to remind everyone that the Advent/Christmas offering envelopes are split between the YWCA of the Sauk Valley, Domestic Violence Services and Disaster Relief. Normally the Christmas Eve offerings would be added to this. Since the service will probably be online we would ask if what you would normally give for that service be added to your Christmas envelope or turned into the office earmarked for Christmas Eve donation.

We will not be Bell Ringing this year but you can still donate, the following is a statement from The Salvation Army:

With the uncertainty of normal bell ringing this year (at stores) The Salvation Army is launching Virtual Kettles. The idea is that you can donate directly to our main kettle. With more people facing hardship this year, the need to serve those most vulnerable is greater. Our ability to raise vital funds to serve those in need this Christmas and beyond is at risk due to the impact of COVID-19. Please give today and help rescue Christmas through hot meals, basic needs, housing, holiday assistance and so much more.

Check out Sterling Online Red Kettle's team fundraising page for The Salvation Army - Heartland Division - <https://donate.saheartland.org/team/313644>

REMINDER

If you use your own key to enter the church, please check the door when you leave to be sure it is locked. The two entrances from the parking lot have been left open several times over the last few weeks. It is probably best to lock the door after you come in the building, especially if you are here alone. Thank you for your attentiveness to keeping the church safe!

Thanksgiving Service in Wesley Parking Lot 2020.



Missions: The total loose coins collected in the month of November for FISH is **\$443.81 (not including baskets collection.)**

In December, we will be collecting for
Sauk Valley Food Bank.

Thanksgiving Envelopes collection: **\$375.00**

Thanksgiving Baskets collection: **\$560.00**

Advent Readers & Candle Lighters

1st Sunday in Advent, November 29th: Glenda Seradilla & Jeremy Burkitt

2nd Sunday, December 6th: Ken & Mary Newlon

3rd Sunday, December 13th: James & Wendy Fitzanko, Derek & Aaron

4th Sunday, December 20th: Antonio & Amber Castaneda Jason, Jaz Mya, Jionni, & Julius

Christmas Eve – Christ Candle - Lynn Majewski and grandchildren: Brooklyn & Haleigh Freas, Ashlei Berhens & Levi Freas, Matthew & Addison Gabrielse

Birthdays

Dec. 2 Derek Fitzanko, Coralee Jacobs

Dec. 4 Emily Schwingle

Dec. 12 Kay Clark

Dec. 13 Sue Morris, Julie VanAusdal

Dec. 15 Luke Stutzman

Dec. 16 Nick Ceruzzi, Shane Williams

Dec. 18 Zephan Drew

Dec. 19 Jonathan Abele, Chad Duncan

Dec. 22 Elliot Noble, Sally Unterzuber

Dec. 23 Cindy Melton, Elaine Hilger

Dec. 24 Lenna Drew

Dec. 27 Sierra Sotelo

Dec. 30 Mallory Osborn

Dec. 31 Maddux Osborn



December Liturgists

Liturgist

December 6 Aaron Marken

December 13 Elisa Gatz

December 20 Darla Ewing

December 24 Steve Downes/Nancy Pitsch

December 27 Rory Smith

Anniversaries

Dec. 16 Darrin & Amy Driscoll

Dec. 28 Lowell & Coralee Jacobs

Dec. 31 Rick & Karen Palmer



If you **DO NOT** wish to receive Giving Envelopes for the new year of 2021, please call Tammy at 815-625-1968 or email at office@sterlingwesley.org

BY DECEMBER 6TH Thank you!

Wesley United Methodist Church

2200 16th Ave.
Sterling, IL 61081

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Wesley United Methodist Church

Phone: (815) 625-1968

Website: www.sterlingwesley.org

Email: office@sterlingwesley.org

Open Heart, Open Minds, Open Doors

You are invited to join us for Livestream worship on Facebook at 10 a.m.

Find us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/SterlingWesleyUMC>

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.**
- **Shampoo for Bear Necessities, Trinity, and the FISH Food Pantry.**
- **Travel-sized toiletries for Bear Necessities and FISH pantries.**
- **Loose coins to benefit :Sauk Valley Food Bank in December**