

JULY 2023

The Chimes

★ Our e-version has additional pages, pics and information available on the website and email.



From Our Pastor...

The Annual Conference Presentation

During the Annual Conference, my heart was filled with gratitude and hope for the future. Even in the midst of challenges, we are reminded of the strength and resilience of our faith.



We have lately witnessed a decline in attendance and church ministries nationwide, including our own Conference. Some have experienced a decrease of one-third and some others by half. To be honest with you, I thought we would have a smaller number of participants. But I was wrong. Usually, about 700 delegates from local churches in our Conference participated. And I told you before the Annual Conference that about 650 delegates would participate. I was wrong. About 850 people attended the Annual Conference, which was the highest number in recent times, which means that we are yearning for the hope and revival of the church. And I could see and enjoy people's joy and excitement.

In our ordination service, we witnessed the consecration of eight individuals, seven elders, and one deacon. Additionally, three candidates were commissioned to serve the church and its people. These ordinations and commissions signify a continuation of God's work in and through us, ensuring that God's love and grace will continue to be spread to all corners of the Conference.

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Church Events

Tuesdays and Thursdays @4:00pm
Exercise Group (Fellowship Hall)

Saturdays @8:00am:
Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)

Sunday July 2nd @10:00 am:
Kramer farewell

Thursday July 6th @ 9:30am:
Greeting Card Ministry
(Fellowship Hall)

Saturday July 15th 8:00am—2:00pm
Habitat Day (contact:
j.davey@comcast.net)

Thursday, July 20th @11:30am:
Ladies Luncheon (contact person:
Beth Mathew 815-625-4381)

Sunday, July 30th following 10:00am
service: Potluck and Ice Cream
Social

Monday, July 31st @7:00pm:
Ad Council (Fellowship Hall)

Help Wanted!

Administrative Assistant (mornings M-F)

Organist/Pianist for Sunday mornings and some special occasions.

Music/Choir director (Sundays and rehearsals)

(Contact the office for applications or find them on the Wesley UMC Facebook page.)

(cont. from p.1)



I was honored to attend the Florida Annual Conference ordination service. They had a really tough season.

The Florida Annual Conference has experienced the loss of over one hundred local churches as they have chosen to leave our denomination. However, even in the face of these departures, we are uplifted by the unwavering faith and hope exhibited by those who remain. The joy and excitement for the future are so clear, as they have welcomed fifteen newly ordained clergies and over twenty commissioned individuals into their midst.



With denominational upheaval, concerns and confusion may have plagued the hearts of many and news media of churches leaving our denomination may have caused anxiety. It is true that some churches have chosen to leave, and there have been reports of thousands making such decisions. Yet, we find solace in the fact that the majority,

84% to be precise, have decided to continue the beautiful legacy of the United Methodist Church and its sacred ministry. The 16% leaving mostly consist of churches from a few select conferences, such as Texas, Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida. In our Conference, only eight local churches, a mere 2%, have chosen to leave. Among 86 churches in our district, only one is leaving, Fenton UMC, which is thirty minutes away from us. They are now Fenton Church, not UMC.



There have been so many rumors about our denomination since last year. Some said that “UMC doesn’t believe in Jesus. UMC doesn’t believe in the Triune God. UMC doesn’t believe in Jesus’ resurrection and the work of the Holy Spirit. So, your church should leave UMC and join GMC.” Excuse me? Those are the core of the

Christian faith. What am I going to preach without those core beliefs? That’s why I’ve intensely preached since last year on the divine nature of Jesus, his resurrection, John’s Gospel, and the work of the Holy Spirit because those essential beliefs define who we are as Christians.

We have so many things to take care of. Our church? We have so many bills to take care of, and we have staff to continue our ministry—financial challenge. We used to have 120 attendances on average, but after the Pandemic, we have about 95 ~ 100 for the first half of this year, which is not that bad compared to other churches. But I want to grow both in our worship and ministry more than before the Pandemic. I believe God will lead us when we bring what we have before God, just like Andrew, and do our best working together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Do you still have concerns or anxiety about our denomination and the future of our church? I don’t because I believe in God. We find so many different pictures of God. God is our creator. God is our redeemer. God is guidance. God is our good mother. And God is our good father. God is walking with us and helping us navigate our faith journey. Amen.

Peace in Christ,
Rev. Paul Lee

JULY Worship Schedule

July 2 Micah 6:1-8

What the Lord Requires of Us?

July 9 Colossians 3:13, Luke 17:3, Matthew 6:14

Six Words

July 16 Ecclesiastes 5:10, Luke 12:15, 1 Timothy 6:18-19

True Wealth

July 23 Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Mark 12:28-31

The Most Important Commandment

July 30 Luke 5:1-11

The Call of Simon

(* Fifth Sunday offering this month: *Native American Ministries*)

THANK YOU!

2023 Upcoming Pantry Collections

July: laundry detergent

August: toothpaste

Dear Friends-- Thank you for caring and sharing with our neighbors in need. We appreciate your continued support. Blessings,

Bear Necessities / Personal Care Pantry.

Our Wesley family—

We want to thank everyone for all your kind words, prayers, and donations for our mother. To the women of Wesley, thank you for the great food for the luncheon. Mom loved her Wesley family and enjoyed seeing and talking to you on Sundays. Pastor Paul, thank you for the photo memorial and wonderful service. — The family of Violet Windham

A big thank you to all who helped in any way for Jeff Cedro's funeral and celebration of Life service.

Whether you supplied food, helped with ushering or greeting or general support

It was much appreciated and a wonderful way to honor our beloved Jeff.



We are in search of the person who made the brookies (half brownie/half cookie) for his funeral. It was loved by one of Jeff's family members and they desired the recipe..

Trinity UMC update:

Remaining School Supply Closet items are being transferred to the Regional Office of Ed. in Sterling. Thank you for your support over these many years. To continue, please contact Michelle (815-499-1992) or Katie (410-919-3536)

JUNE Loose Coins were collected for:

Reynoldswood Christian Camp (Dixon, IL).

The total received = \$127.90

July coins will go to Jennings-Lyon Day Home

(A rural learning center for children in Sheridan, Indiana)

***July is also a 5th Sunday month: Let's share in the support of Native American Ministries**

Thank you for continuing to support these important ministries. Reminder: "Loose Coins" can also be a designation on checks.



The Greeting Card Ministry will meet Thursday, July 6th, at 9:30am in Fellowship Hall to prepare **July cards for mailing.**

Everyone is welcome to come help and join the fun!

The Greeting Card Ministry group would like to thank Debbie Kramer for all of the beautiful hand crafted cards she and her friends have provided all of these years. The congregation has been blessed and uplifted by them. All the best to you and Bruce as you enjoy your retirement!

Ways to Give

Mail

You can mail donations to First Presbyterian Church using the enclosed envelope. Put Buddy Bags in the memo of your check.

Online

Go to www.firstpresbyteriansterling.org and click on "Giving" then make your donation online. If you give online, please send us an email to let us know that you want your gift to go to Buddy Bags.

EFT Pledge

We can set up a regular pledge using Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Just use the form on our website or call First Presbyterian Church and we will be happy to help you.

Donate Food

The list of food items needed every week is below on this page. Some of our friends pick up one or two items every time they grocery shop; others buy larger quantities at Sam's Club or Costco and drop them off at First Presbyterian Church or Wesley Methodist Church. Please, if you choose to donate food, only donate items from our list - we've carefully created this list of foods that children like and can easily prepare on their own.

BUDDY BAGS

DONATE THESE ITEMS HERE THIS SUMMER

Meats, Soups, and Pasta

Vegetable Beef Soup
Chicken Soup
Mac and Cheese
Mini Beef Ravioli
Beefaroni
Mini Spaghetti
Chicken Salad with Crackers
Tuna Salad with Crackers
Ham Salad with Crackers
Beanie Weenies
Hormel Completes (or similar)

Fruits, Juices and Vegetables

Raisins (single serving boxes)
100% Juice Boxes
Vegetable Cups
Applesauce
Fruit Cups

Breakfast Items
Cereal Boxes
Granola Bars
Breakfast Bars
Pop Tarts

Snack Foods

Cheese sticks
Cheese Crackers
Peanut Butter Crackers
Breadsticks and Cheese
Animal Crackers
Gold Fish Crackers
Non-refrigerated Pudding
Non-refrigerated Jello Cups
Pretzels
Potato Chips

The Wesley family offers their prayers and condolences to the family of **Marion Quick**, who passed on June 20, 2023.



And our prayers of love are offered for the family of **Keith Kimball**.

Keith went to be with the Lord on June 27, 2023.



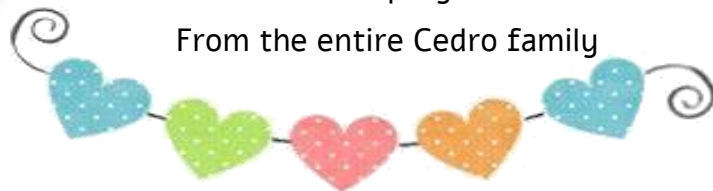
To my Wesley Church family,

There is no way I can thank everyone individually, because so many were involved with Jeffrey's visitation and service.

I do want to thank the set up and clean up friends, the kitchen girls, the Saturday men's bible study group and of course, Pastor Paul.

We will always remember everyone's kindness and continued prayers.

From the entire Cedro family



A VBS THANK YOU

We had a fantastic week at Vacation Bible School 2023. Our wonderful leaders and volunteers met Monday through Thursday at Wesley United Methodist Church.

Enthusiastic and joyful kids participated in studying Noah's Ark, Parting the Red Sea, Jonah and the Big Fish, and Paul's Shipwreck. The children enjoyed adventurous storytelling, energetic games and activities, creative crafts, marvelous music and nutritious snacks!

Bible verses that were shared such as Acts 27:28 *"God protects us and gives us strength"*.

The week wrapped with a Friday evening celebration and sharing of a delicious cookout! A perfect way to wrap up a week full of fun.

Thank you to all of those who worked so hard to make this week a success! It would not have been possible without each and every person who contributed. Thank you so much!

We send our prayers and best wishes with Bruce and Debbie Kramer as they move to Buffalo, NY.

Congratulations on Bruce's retirement!



JULY 8AM

Worship Helpers

Door Greeter(s)	Usher/Acolytes	Liturgist
7/2 Jan Glover	Darla Ewing	Nancy Pitsch
7/9 Jan Glover	Jan Davey	Jeff Davey
7/16 Jan Glover	Parker Wetzell	Mel Hurley
7/23 Jan Glover	Rita Smith	Rory Smith
7/30 Aaron & Derek Fitzanko	James Fitzanko	Wendy Fitzanko

JULY 10AM

Door Greeter(s)	Usher/Acolytes	Liturgist	Matthew Mtgs Leaders
7/2 Bill Parker	Andy Pitsch	Mary Spitzer	Nancy Pitsch
7/9 Mark & Sharon Taylor	Carrion Family	Elisa Gatz	Mel Hurley
7/16 Bill Parker	Jaime & Curt Greenfield	Jean Moe	Amy & Steve Lopez Rene Morris
7/23 Frank & Janne Rausa	Castaneda Family	Jaz Mya Castaneda	Mel Hurley
7/30 Frank & Janne Rausa	Devon, Jovie, Remy Flick	Aaron Flick	Stacey, Ellie, Myla Wendelken



If you have updates or
corrections,
please let the office know---
thank you!

(Marla: 815-625-1968 or
office@sterlingwesley.org)



Birthdays



July 3 Haley Ceruzzi, Jeff Davey, Jaime Foss,
Sharon Siex
July 5 Sue Hondley, Stacey Wendelken
July 6 Vinny Poci
July 9 Sydney Graves
July 10 Lindsey Reynolds
July 11 Sandi Cox
July 13 Matthew Hansen, Andrea Mallhi
July 14 Nathan Blackburn
July 15 Roger Jacobs, Jack Osborn
July 16 Sharon Prichard

July 17 Aaron Flick
July 19 Pam Clodfelter, Steve Downes
July 22 Aaron Marken
July 23 Tim Schwingle
July 24 Sadie Wendelken
July 25 Meghan Clodfelter
July 26 Beth Jacobs, Darla Stigall
July 27 Allison Valenzuela
July 28 Linda Kavran
July 31 Dayton Hayes, Harper Johnson



90+90+90+ **New item: Please let us know if you are turning 90+ on your
birthday. We'd love to feature you with a photo in the Chimes!



Keep 'em coming—They all LOVE the cards/notes you send!

Jean Partridge

Allure Garden #2

Sterling, IL 61081

Janet Palmer

7859 Cunniff Rd

Rock Falls, IL 61071

Jillian Parker

1023 Annabelle Ln

Sterling, IL 61081

Rev. Paul Lee
Elisa Gatz

NIC Annual Conference 2023

Frank Rausa
Jean Moe



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
FOR JULY 30TH ! IT IS TIME FOR A
POTLUCK MIDSUMMER SOCIAL
AFTER 2ND SERVICE**

**DESSERT WILL BE AN ICE CREAM BAR
SPONSORED BY PASTOR PAUL**

**SO BRING YOUR DISH TO PASS AND ENJOY GOOD FOOD, GOOD
FRIENDS AND GOOD ICE CREAM!!!!**



Ice Cream Social



**Our annual Wesley Habitat Day
will be on Saturday, July 15th, 8:00am—2:00pm**



**Any help members can provide would be much appreciated to continue helping
people in need of affordable housing which we have been providing since 2013.
Please notify Jeff Davey if you will be able to help. Thanks!**

JOY Camp 2023



VBS: Pirates of Possibilities!



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 Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Join us for in-person Sunday services

8:00 am and 10:00 am

We will continue to post
sermons on Facebook and the website

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:

- **Laundry soap** is being collected for local pantries (July).
- **Travel-sized toiletries** for Bear Necessities and FISH pantries.
- **JULY Loose coins** to benefit: Jennings-Lyon Day Home (Sheridan, Indiana)
- **Summer Buddy Bags!**

Collecting items at Wesley:

Meats, Soups, and Pasta

Vegetable Beef Soup
Chicken Soup
Mac and Cheese
Mini Beef Ravioli
Beefaroni
Mini Spaghetti
Chicken Salad with Crackers
Tuna Salad with Crackers
Ham Salad with Crackers
Beanie Weenies
Hormel Completes (or similar)

Fruits, Juices and Vegetables

Raisins (single serving boxes)
100% Juice Boxes
Vegetable Cups
Applesauce
Fruit Cups

Breakfast Items

Cereal Boxes
Granola Bars
Breakfast Bars
Pop Tarts

Snack Foods

Cheese sticks
Cheese Crackers
Peanut Butter Crackers
Breadsticks and Cheese
Animal Crackers
Gold Fish Crackers
Non-refrigerated Pudding
Non-refrigerated Jello Cups
Pretzels
Potato Chips