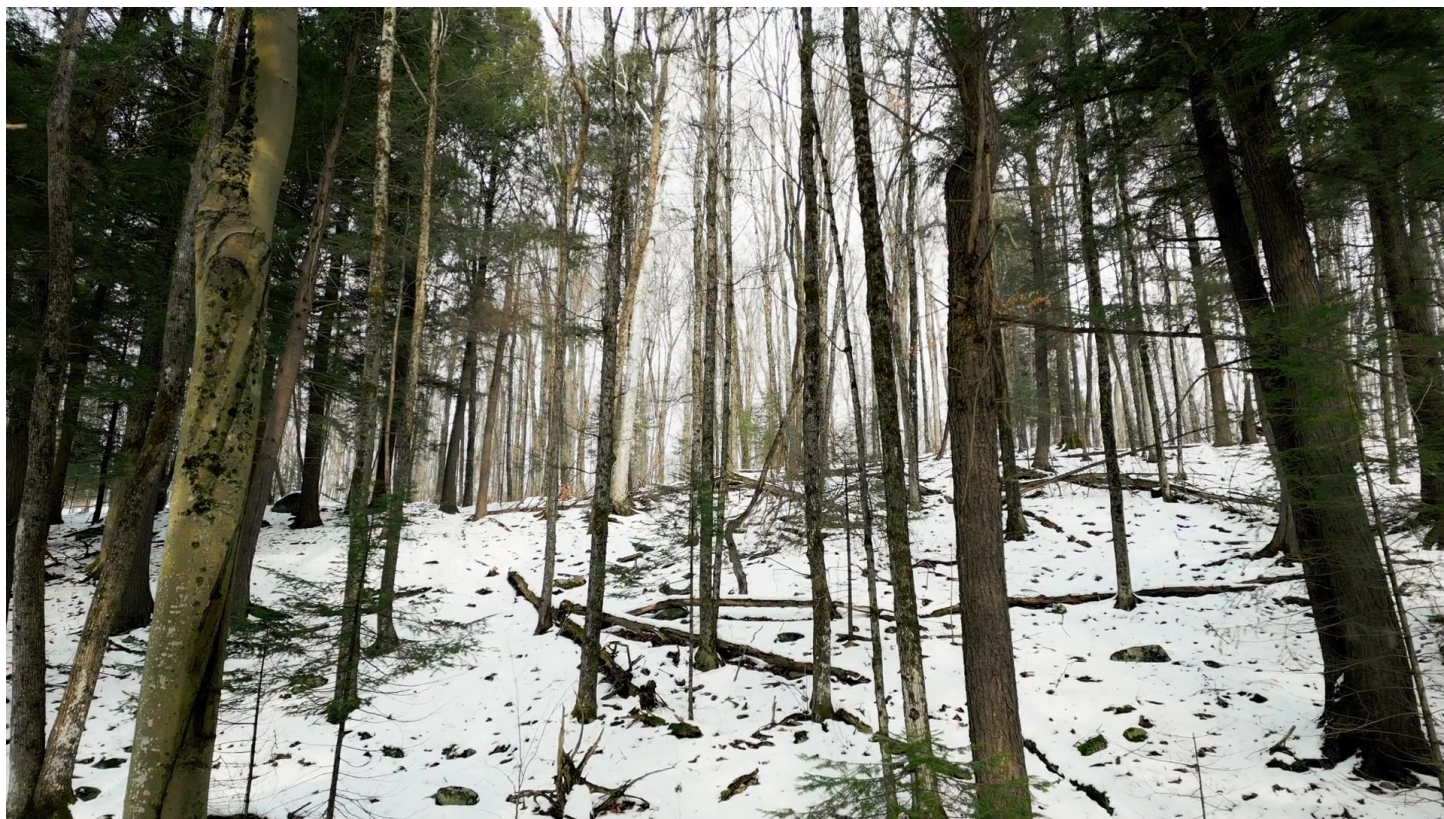


wesleyan

FEBRUARY 2023 EDITION



Pastor's Column.....2

January's Presentations.....3-6

United Women in Faith.....7

Sunday Children's Time.....8

Fox Valley Brass Band..... 8

Wednesday Night Gatherings...9

Outreach.....10

Discipleship.....11

Birthdays/.....12

Financial Update.....13

Pastor's Column

Surrounded by a Great Cloud of Witnesses

If you have not attended worship during the month of January, you are certainly missing out. For the Season of Epiphany, we have invited seven lay persons from Wesley UMC to give the message each week. Each has presented a value that is important to them, told stories of how they adopted the value and how they are using it in their daily living. They've also presented us with ideas for rituals to use as a community to support the value.

I've heard from some of you about how this series has stirred your imagination and prompted you to consider a value that is important to you and a closer examination of the rituals you participate in. The genesis of this series came out of my observation that the rituals we practice have often become rote or obligatory without fully understanding the values that historically have supported them. In addition, while we can often be critical of the behavior and actions of others, we spend less time focused on the values that do or could inform our individual actions. This is one of the hallmarks of being United Methodist — our emphasis on the reciprocal nature of beliefs influencing actions and actions influencing beliefs.

Many of you have commented on how useful the presentations have been, a reminder that one does not have to be a talented, educated or charismatic preacher to develop a meaningful and memorable message to God's people. One only needs the conviction of their faith and values and a personal story to share.

Our speakers in February will be Jonathan Akyea, Katrina Baugh and Lynnette Singh. On the pages that follow, I've listed out the speakers in January, their values and rituals along with the blessing they received. As a church, we have adopted the practice of blessing each other in worship. The ancient practice of blessing is a deeply spiritual practice and one each of us can adopt in the wide circles of friendships we inhabit.



Ash Wednesday

Please join us for Ash Wednesday Worship at Wesley on February 22nd at 7pm in the Gathering Place.

January's Presentations

January 8 Stars, Dreams, and Donkeys by Thew Elliott

Value: The living planet has the capacity to ask something of us and we have the capacity to respond.

Ritual: Use animal sounds (like a donkey) to share your voice with animals and nature, and listen for what they have to tell you.

Blessing *by John O'Donohue.*

Like the joy of the sea coming home to shore,
May the relief of laughter rinse through your soul.
As the wind loves to call things to dance,
May your gravity be lightened by grace.
Like the dignity of moonlight restoring the earth,
May your thoughts incline with reverence and respect.
As water takes whatever shape it is in,
So free may you be about who you become.
As silence smiles on the other side of what's said,
May your sense of irony bring perspective.
As time remains free of all that it frames,
May your mind stay clear of all its names.
May your prayer of listening deepen enough
to hear in the depths the laughter of god.



January's Presentations

January 15 Practicing Grace by Lore Baker

Value: Grace is practiced through active listening.

Ritual: Actively listening to one another.

Blessings *adapted from John O'Donohue.*

May you be blessed in the holy names
Of all whose suffering you witness and ease.
May a window of light always surprise you, and
may you know serenity in the houses of
loneliness, suffering, or pain.
May you be granted wisdom to see
The gifts of every circumstance.
May your memory bless and protect you
With the hard-earned light of your own learning.
May the grace of time heal every wound
You feel or are companion to.
May you know in every storm:
No hair on your head will be harmed.
May your listening be a blessing each day.



January's Presentations

January 22 Embracing My Humanity by Amy Jackson

Value: God honors our humanity by meeting our physical, spiritual, mental and emotional needs.

Ritual: Placing a hand on your heart, noticing our breathing, find two words to describe your feelings in this moment, and one word to describe what you need today. Conclude with a breath prayer – a one sentence prayer asking one thing from God.

Blessing *from Mary Oliver*

You do not have to be good.

You do not have to walk on your knees
for a hundred miles through the desert repenting.

You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.

Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.

Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
Are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
Calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting–
Over and over announcing your place
In the family of things.



January's Presentations

January 29 Valuing Wonder by Sarah Swanson

Value: Wonder

Ritual: Each time we wonder or ask a question, run your fingers alongside your chin.

Blessing *drawn from words of Thomas Merton*

Even when you cannot see the road ahead,
even when you cannot know for certain

where a path will end,

even when you aren't sure of yourself,

Remember this:

The desire to please God

pleases God.

Live inside this desire

and do not worry where you are going.

You will be on the right road,

and you will never be alone,

for joy and wonder will be

your constant companions.



United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith's Circles, formerly United Methodist Women, have been meeting in person or via Zoom. The Susanna Circle will meet in person on February 21st at 7pm. The Hannah Circle will be meeting at Wesley on February 28th at 1:30 pm. All women are invited to attend either Circle meeting.

We are excited about the plans for the April 22nd Soul Retreat. Make sure that you are saving the date. It will be held in the Prestbury Club House starting at 9:30 am. More information will be in the March Newsletter.

At the end of the year, United Women in Faith made a love gift to Mutual Ground from the profits of the Garage Sale held last spring. We thank all who assisted with the sale and who purchased items so that they could be reused and not end up in a landfill.

We are continuing to work on our NO IDLING project. Please be aware of the impact on our environment and health when you have your car idling. Take an extra blanket to keep you warm if you and your car will be in a pick-up line for an extended period of time.

Please save the dates details to follow. We look forward to seeing you. If you have questions about these United Women in Faith activities contact Emmy Lou John at emmyloujohn@yahoo.com.



United
Women
in Faith

Sunday Children's Time

Join us in the parlor every Sunday before service from 10:10am - 10:30am where we will be having a children's time for ages Pre-K - 5th grade. During this time, we will be exploring different stories in the bible along with learning hands-on ways to experience worship.



During worship at 10:30, we are excited to provide a space for all children at the Pray-Ground at the front of the sanctuary. This space is filled with exploratory crafts and activities to go along with the lesson of the day. Email Michelle Curiel if you have any questions! michellecuriel.wumc@gmail.com



Fox Valley Brass Band

Fanfares, Overtures & Hymns—Fox Valley Brass Band Fall Concert Sunday, March 5, 2023 at 3pm in Wesley's Sanctuary

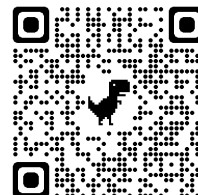
Brass Fanfares, Overtures, and Hymns including music of Gregson, Sparke, and Himes. Relish in William Himes, "Amazing Love" and yield to the majesty of Philip Sparke's "A London Overture".

Ticket Prices Online: Student/Seniors: \$12; Regular: \$15

Ticket Prices at the Door: Students/Seniors: \$15; Regular: \$18

Click [here](#) to purchase tickets in advance.

Wesley United Methodist Church has Safe Gatherings trained and screened staff and volunteers. For more information, please go to <https://safegatherings.com/about-us/who-we-are/> or scan QR Code.



Wednesday Night Gatherings

During last month's Wednesday Night Gathering, we had step-by-step painting and a family game night. Thanks to all who showed up to participate and shared in a friendly competition. We're excited to continue to feed families and engage in intergenerational activities! All ages are welcome!



On February 1st, we hosted a Wednesday Night Gathering which included valentine card making for staff and homebound and a delicious chili and cornbread meal!



Join us for our next gathering!

Feb 15th from 6-8 pm: Dinner from 6:00-6:45pm (Pierogis!) followed by a sandwich making party for the Community Fridge and conversational Spanish/English learning.

Outreach

Help with Unhoused Donations

Hesed House is always in need of donations. Bob McKnight is at church every Monday between 9 and 9:20 to receive your items. You can also leave them when you're here for service on Sunday.

Here is a list of current needs:

- Gift Cards (\$10/\$25/\$50 increments)
- Aspirin 325 mg
- Razors
- Ace Bandages (various sizes)
- Toilet Paper
- Box Size Kleenex
- Family Size Conditioner & Lotion
- Travel Size Body Wash (1 oz preferred)



Thank You from
AID Holiday Hopes Program

Thank you for your gift donations
Wesley friends & family!

Jennifer,
Many thanks to you for coordinating
the holiday gift giving at Wesley
United Methodist Church.
Many AID clients were blessed
to receive a gift this Christmas.
Thank you & the church
members who donated. We
appreciate your partnership
with this program & look forward
to hopefully working with you again
next Christmas. I wish you
& yours many blessings in the
new year!
With gratitude,
Angel & Candace

Discipleship

Mug Club

Enjoy a cup of coffee and conversation. This is a social group of men with lots to talk about and too much time on our hands. We have not had too many solutions, but we've had lots of fellowship. We invite you to join us! For more details call or email Rich Brown at 630-881-7931 or rwb7247@gmail.com.

Every Thursday at 9am at Sugar Grove Café, 1942 Rte. 30, Sugar Grove

Let's Go Adult Fellowship—ALL ARE WELCOME!

Let's Go is a social group open to all adult members and friends of Wesley. All Are Welcome! We had a great time at our annual Let's Go Ugly Sweater/White Elephant Christmas Party on Saturday, December 17 at the home of Meredith Lindgren. It was fun to be together to celebrate the Christmas season! We haven't made plans yet for another get-together but stay tuned for information for our next party! If you are interested in attending future Let's Go functions and aren't on the list, please contact Meredith Lindgren, 630-788-6911 or psalmmom418@gmail.com. I will gladly add you to the list!

Bad Girls Bible/Book Study

Bad Girls will be meeting at the home of Meredith Lindgren on Wednesday, February 8, 2023. We will have a soup dinner at 6 pm, followed by a book discussion. We are reading the book "Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God" by Kaitlin B. Curtice. Here is what Nadia Bolz-Weber (author, speaker, and theologian) said about this book: "In *Native*, Curtice takes the reader along as she bravely weaves together her spiritual, tribal, religious, cultural, and familial history into a cord that anchors her as she makes sense of herself, her world, and her identity. After reading this book, I may just touch a tree now and again and see it as prayer. I'm so grateful for Curtice's voice."

If you are interested in joining us for fun, fellowship, and great book discussions, contact Meredith Lindgren, 630-788-6911 or psalmmom418@gmail.com.

NDY (Not Dead Yet) Group

Remember this group is NOT just for Wesley members. We normally meet for lunch the last Friday of each month. All are welcome! Contact Lynn Burnett at le.burnett@yahoo.com for details on our next meeting.



January 2023

Congregational Care

Birthdays

Larry Miller 2/2

Marion Dodd 2/3

LeRoy DeKing 2/8

Al Benson 2/9

Judy Brown 2/9

Adam Karl 2/9

Ted Crawshaw 2/14

Betty Aquize Mendoza 2/14

Lynn Burnett 2/16

Faith Burnett 2/17

Jane Matteson 2/18

Eleanor Clarke 2/20

Jack Clarke 2/20

Jenny Pawlowski 2/23

Financial Update

	1/1 – 1/15/23	Annual Budget for 2023
Pledge and Non-Pledge Giving	13,999.64	280,899.96
Other Income	7.50	188,979.12
Expenses		
Worship	248.00	8,049.96
Discipleship	261.95	4,350.00
Outreach	0	3,500.00
Operating Costs	6,948.04	127,009.12
Salaries & Benefits	10,266.12	288,244.80
Apportionments	0	37,000.00

Questions? Please contact Jennifer Pawlowski, Financial Secretary, at jennifer.wumc@gmail.com.

Staff



Rev. John Bell
Senior Pastor



Thew Elliott
Director of
Traditional Worship



Michelle Curiel
Director of Praise &
Worship /Children & Family



Jennifer Pawlowski
Administrative Coordinator



Sean Moore
Audio-Visual Editor
and Technician



Claire Agoro
Custodian

Coordinators

Jennifer Pawlowski
Administration
(pictured above)



Carol Stoffel
Congregational Care



Meredith Lindgren
Worship

Small Groups

Bad Girls Bible Study

Meredith Lindgren
630-788-6911
psalmmom418@gmail.com

Fine Arts Committee

TBD

Hesed House

Bob McKnight
630-896-5287
redwoodcats@sbcglobal.net

Let's Go Fellowship

Meredith Lindgren
630-788-6911
psalmmom418@gmail.com

Knitters & Knotters

Claudia Smith & Betty Aquize
Claudia: 312-523-6688
Betty: 331-222-6364

Mug Club

Rich Brown
630-881-7931
rwb7247@gmail.com

NDY Group

Lynn Burnett
le.burnett@yahoo.com

Prayer Shawl Ministry

TBD

Special Events Coordinator

Lynn Burnett
le.burnett@yahoo.com

Monday Morning Study

Emmy Lou John
630-264-2892
emmyloujohn@yahoo.com

Tuesday Crafters

TBD

United Methodist Men

Herb John
630-264-2892
herbjohn@ymail.com

United Women In Faith

Emmy Lou John
630-264-2892
emmyloujohn@yahoo.com

Wesley Gardeners

Meredith Lindgren
630-788-6911
psalmmom418@gmail.com

Wesley Golfers

Ralph Breazeale
630-897-6657
jrbreeze47@comcast.net

Yoga Classes

Ann Merk
630-643-3115
asm52@yahoo.com

Governing Board

Bob McKnight

Kathy Breazeale

Wally Loague

Jim Merk

Mary Terrell

DiAnn Wiley

Roger Curless

Rev. John Bell

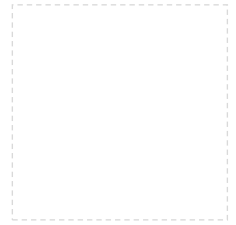
Jonathan Akyea



Wesley
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

14 N May St, Aurora IL 60506-3867

Return Service Requested



14 North May Street, Aurora IL 60506-3867
630.896.1033 | wesleyumcaurora.org

Office Hours: 8am-12pm

Scan QR code
to donate

Remember to "Like" our Facebook page at Wesley UMC in Aurora, IL and our NEW
Instagram Page at Wesley UMC Aurora
to stay up to date on everything that is happening at Wesley!

