

# wesleyan

MARCH 2025 EDITION

## LENT

A SEASON OF RENEWAL



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# Pastor's Column

## **A Praying Church: Becoming a People of Prayer**

*A Lenten Invitation from Pastor Tammy*

Dear Beloved Church Family,

As we step into the sacred season of Lent, we are invited once again to slow down, reflect, and draw closer to God. This year, as a church, we are embarking on a journey to deepen our life of prayer. Inspired by our Lenten worship series, *A Praying Church: Becoming a People of Prayer*, we will explore what it means to move beyond prayer as an individual practice and embrace it as the heartbeat of our community.

Lent is traditionally a time of repentance, fasting, and renewal. It mirrors Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness—a time of solitude, testing, and profound reliance on God. In the same way, we are called to reorient our hearts toward God's presence, trusting that transformation happens not through our own efforts alone, but through the power of the Spirit working in and through us.

But what if prayer was not just something we “did” occasionally, but something that shaped our very identity? What if our church was known, above all else, as a people of prayer? This Lent, I invite you to join me in seeking a renewed vision for prayer—one that is not merely routine, but life-giving.

Here are a few ways you can engage with this call to prayer during Lent:

- **Join us in worship each Sunday** as we reflect on what it means to be a praying church.
- **Set aside intentional time for prayer each day**—whether in silence, in spoken words, through Scripture, or in community.
- **Consider offering your voice to our time of Praying Together** during worship as we seek God's presence together.
- **Encourage one another in prayer**—lifting up the needs of our church, our neighbors, and the world.

As we walk this Lenten path together, let us remember that prayer is not about getting the words “right.” It is about abiding in God's love, listening for God's voice, and trusting in God's faithfulness. May this season draw us deeper into communion with God and with one another.

With hope and expectation,



Pastor Tammy Scott

# Worship

## ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

MARCH 5 AT 7PM

# OUT OF THE DUST...

Fox Valley United Methodist Churches  
(Batavia, Geneva, Wesley/Aurora, Baker Memorial/St. Charles)



**GUEST PREACHER:**  
**Rev. Fabiola Grandon-Mayer**  
*Director of Connectional Ministries  
Northern Illinois Conference*

**HOST CONGREGATION:**  
**Baker Memorial UMC**  
307 Cedar Avenue, St. Charles

## A Praying Church: Becoming a People of Prayer

March 9-April 13

All are welcome Sundays  
9:30am Online  
10:30am In our Sanctuary  
Wesley United Methodist Church  
14 N. May St., Aurora, IL 60506  
[www.wesleyumcaurora.org](http://www.wesleyumcaurora.org)

*Cultivating a  
culture of prayer  
rooted in love,  
justice, and  
communal  
connection.*

# Mardi Gras Pancake Party



Join us for a  
Mardi Gras Pancake Party!

**Tuesday March 4th  
6-7:30pm**

**This event is FREE and open to the community!**  
**Join us for dinner: pancakes, sausage, fruit, and juice!**  
**Stay to make fun Mardi Gras themed crafts!**

Wesley United Methodist Church  
14 N. May St., Aurora, IL 60506  
www.wesleyumcaurora.org



## Wesley in the News

Al Benson submitted this article about the Prayer Shawl Ministry which appeared in the Jan/Feb 2025 issue of the United Women in Faith Response magazine.

influence

### Donating Prayer Shawls in Illinois

by AL BENSON


Wesley United Methodist Church in Aurora, Illinois, blessed 76 handmade prayer shawls during a Sunday worship in March 2024.

On behalf of United Women in Faith, Aurora resident Mari Curless led a group prayer blessing of the covers.

The event was culminated after a year of volunteer work by four Wesley members and two non-members. Curless said shawls will be donated to local people in need.

The Wesley United Methodist Prayer and Friendship Shawl Ministry sponsored the project.

"Shawls of different sizes, shapes, and colors were lovingly crocheted or knitted by both members and



Aurora, Illinois, resident Mari Curless, left, presides at a blessing of 76 handmade prayer shawls during worship at Wesley United Methodist Church in Aurora. Assisting are Luli Smith, center, and Betty Aquize-Mendoza, right.

non-members of Wesley," Curless said. "They are given with prayers of appreciation, joy, thankfulness, and inspiration for both physical and spiritual healing. We pray that they will affirm friendship, celebration, and joy."

Curless thanked donors of yarn and other materials, volunteer crafters, persons who identified re-

ipients, persons who delivered or mailed shawls, and those who prayed over the covers. She invited congregants to take shawls for people who would benefit from them. 🙏

Al Benson submitted this article on behalf of United Women in Faith members at Wesley UMC in Aurora, Illinois.

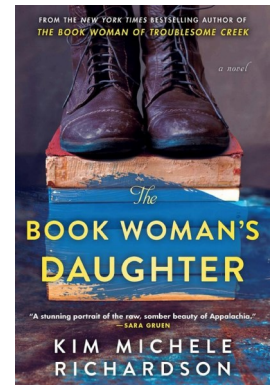
# United Women in Faith

## UWiF Unit Meeting/Potluck

Neither Tuesday Crafters nor Circles will meet this month. The Circles will meet next on April 15th. Our unit will meet on March 23rd after worship for a meeting and potluck lunch.

## UWiF Book Club

We are meeting March 2nd after service in the chapel for a potluck lunch and book discussion. We will be discussing, The Bookwoman's Daughter by Kim Michele Richardson. The group will be meeting every other month this year on Sundays and will be reading and discussing books from the United Women in Faith Reading Program.



## Willow UMC Food Pantry

Our United Women in Faith Unit will again be sponsoring the "Postal Box Auction" for Willow UMC's Food Pantry in Willow, Alaska. Our entire congregation and friends are encouraged to be thinking about the items that can go into the box. They should be representative of our area. Share your ideas and items or money to purchase them with Emmy Lou John.

A special canister, for donations, will be in the narthex on the first two Sundays in March.



To the left is the Hannah Circle meeting at Sharon Livingston's lovely home on February 18th.

Pictured from L to R: Lynnette Singh (who led the program), Sharon Livingston (on floor), Lynn Burnett, Vicki Martin, Emmy Lou John, Shirley McKnight and Sarah Swanson (peeking into the photo).

The Susanna Circle met at Lynnette's welcoming home but a picture was not taken.

# Poem from 2/23 Worship

This is a poem titled “The Black Prayer.” It was written by RuNett Nia Ebo, and published in Chicken Soup for the African American Soul. The poem, the prayer, was inspired by Genesis 1:26-27.

God created humanity in God’s own image,  
in the divine image God created them,  
male and female God created them.

## **The Black Prayer**

*written by RuNett Nia-Ebo*

Why Did You Make Me Black Lord  
Lord ... Why did you make me black?  
Why did you make someone  
the world would hold back?...

Black is the color of dirty clothes,  
of grimy hands and feet.....  
Black is the color of darkness,  
of tired beaten streets...

Why did you give me thick lips, a broad nose and kinky hair?  
Why did you create someone who receives the hated stare?

Black is the color of the bruised eye when someone gets hurt...

Black is the color of darkness, black is the color of dirt.

Why is my bone structure so thick, my hips and cheeks so high?  
Why are my eyes brown,  
and not the color of the sky?

Why do people think I’m useless? How come I feel so used?  
Why do people see my skin  
and think I should be abused?  
Lord, I just don’t understand...  
What is it about my skin?  
Why is it some people want to hate me and not know the person within?

Black is what people are “Labeled”  
when others want to keep them away...  
Black is the color of shadows cast...  
Black is the end of the day.

# Poem from 2/23 Worship

Lord you know my own people mistreat me,  
and you know this just ain't right...

They don't like my hair, they don't like my  
skin, as they say I'm too dark or too light!

Lord, don't you think  
it's time to make a change?  
Why don't you redo creation  
and make everyone the same?

God's Reply:

Why did I make you black? Why did I make you black?

I made you in the color of coal from which beautiful diamonds are formed...  
I made you in the color of oil, the black gold which keeps people warm.

Your color is the same as the rich dark soil that grows the food you need...  
Your color is the same as the black stallion and  
panther, Oh what majestic creatures indeed!

All colors of the heavenly rainbow can be found throughout every nation...  
When all these colors are blended, you become my greatest creation!

Your hair is the texture of lamb's wool, such a beautiful creature is he...  
I am the shepherd who watches them,  
I will ALWAYS watch over thee!

You are the color of the midnight sky, I put star glitter in your eyes...  
There's a beautiful smile hidden behind your pain...  
That's why your cheeks are so high!

You are the color of dark clouds from the hurricanes I create in September...  
I made your lips so full and thick, so when you kiss...they will remember!

Your stature is strong,  
your bone structure thick to withstand the  
burden of time...  
The reflection you see in the mirror, that image that looks back, that is MINE!

So get off your knees,  
look in the mirror and tell me what you see?  
I didn't make you in the image of darkness...  
I made you in the image of ME!

# March Birthdays



Camille Sapnu 3/3

Rich Brown 3/5

Monica Winfree 3/5

Elena Swanson 3/8

Lin Waid 3/13

Ben Smith 3/14

Hannah Scott 3/17

Haylee Scott 3/17

Joan Biltgen 3/21

Shirley McKnight 3/22

Jim Gilbert 3/23

Iliana Rigaud 3/29

Sanath Cristanujaya 3/30

Joan Roth 3/31

# Wednesday Night Gathering

On February 19th, we had a Science Night led by Jim Merk and enjoyed sloppy joes for dinner!



Our next Wednesday Night Gathering will be March 19th at 6pm! We hope you can join us for our Fat Tuesday Pancake dinner on Tuesday, March 4th from 6-7:30pm



# Congregational Care

A note from Carol Stoffel:

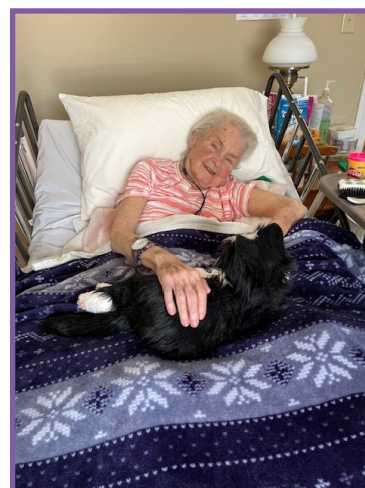
Thanks to "The Crafters" Vicki Martin, Meredith Lindgren, Lynn Burnett, Pat Price, Shirley McKnight, Mari Curless, and Emmy Lou John, for the different original valentines made for church members to sign. They were mailed to 12 of our members ( homebound or out of state).

It was so wonderful to receive here in Florida this beautiful Valentine with notes/signatures from church members!



Sharon Livingston visited Bev Benson at River Glen in St. Charles on February 5th. Also pictured is Bev's caregiver, Becky.

Lynn Burnett visited Ruth Ann Little in February at Sunnymere. Ruth Ann is pictured with her life-like cat companion, Oreo, which purrs and moves.



# Governing Board

Kathy Breazeale visited with Mary Terrell on February 4, 2025 at her home and presented her with the certificate honoring her for her years of service on Wesley's Governing Board.



# Scouting America

On February 2, 2025, we celebrated Scout Sunday with some of the boys from Troop 11 which meets here at Wesley. The boys helped out by serving as acolytes and passing the offering plates.



# Let's Go

Let's Go is a social group open to all adult members and friends of Wesley. All Are Welcome! We had a great time playing games and enjoying many sweet treats at our Valentine's Day Party on Saturday, February 15. Our next event will be our Annual St. Patrick's Day Party on Saturday, March 15, hosted by the Breazeales, complete with corned beef and cabbage, Irish soda bread, and other delicious Irish goodies! The party starts at 6 pm. Guests are asked to bring Irish-themed savory or sweet dishes to share, as well as favorite beverages. This annual party is always a big hit! If anyone would like to host a get-together, or if you have any ideas for get-togethers, please contact me. **I am still in need of an April host.** If you are interested in attending future Let's Go functions and aren't on the list, please contact the church office and Jenny will connect you with Meredith. She will gladly add you to the list!

## Bad Girls Bible/Book Study

Women of Wesley and friends, do you love to read? Are you looking for a group of people with whom to discuss really good books? Then check out the Bad Girls Bible/Book Study! We have read some great books over the past many years and our discussions are quite lively! Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 12 at Laurel Gilbert's home. We will be discussing chapters 13 and 14 of the book 'Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men' by Caroline Criado Perez. This book is a #1 International Bestseller and winner of the Financial Times and McKinsey Business Book of the Year Award. Here is an overview:

"Data is fundamental to the modern world. From economic development to health care to education and public policy, we rely on numbers to allocate resources and make crucial decisions. But because so much data fails to take into account gender, because it treats men as the default and women as atypical, bias and discrimination are baked into our systems. And women pay tremendous costs for this insidious bias: in time, in money, and often with their lives. Celebrated feminist advocate Caroline Criado Perez investigates this shocking root cause of gender inequality in *Invisible Women*."

Looking ahead, we will meet Wednesday, March 26 at the home of Lynnette Singh, and discussing chapters 15 and 16. This will conclude our study of this book. If you are interested in joining us, contact Jenny in the church office and she will connect you with Meredith.

# Small Groups

## Wanted: Greeters, Readers & Bread Bakers!

Are you looking for ways to serve at Wesley? Do you like to read? Are you friendly and welcoming? Then I have a job for you! I could use more readers for Sunday worship and for the online service, and I would love to have a few more greeters to welcome friends and guests each Sunday. And if you love to bake bread, Wesley can use your skills for communion Sundays! I provide the readings each week for the readers, along with instructions on recording for the online service. Help is available for those who don't know how to record. Readers need to be at church on their assigned Sunday by 10:10 to go over details and do a sound check. It's that simple! Greeters are stationed near the doors to welcome people as they come in and offer any assistance that is needed. For those visiting our church for the first time, it is so helpful to be greeted by a friendly face! Greeters need to be at church by 10 to greet and direct people to worship. Bread bakers supply the bread for communion on the first Sunday of each month, unless otherwise noted. Also, if possible, you will be asked to assist Pastor Tammy with communion, which would entail serving your bread as people come forward. If you are interested in any of these ministries, please contact Jenny in the office and she will connect you with Meredith. Or see Meredith at church on Sundays!

## 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 contact Jenny in the office and she will connect you with Rich Brown. *Every Thursday at 9am at Sugar Grove Café, 1942 Rte. 30, Sugar*

## Faithlink/Monday Night Bible Study

This is a "Sunday School" discussion group that meets via Zoom on Monday nights at 7 to 8 pm. We are currently discussing [Painting the Stars: Science, Religion and Evolving Faith](#) which is part of the Living the Questions DVD series.

If you'd like to participate, please contact Jenny in the office and she will connect you with Emmy Lou John.

## 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 at noon at Mother's Pancake House on Galena Blvd but, in the summer, we'll sometimes meet for a picnic at Wesley on the New York St. lawn. All are welcome! Contact Jenny in the office and she will connect you with Lynn Burnett for details on our next meeting.

# Church Calendar

## Sunday, March 2nd

Worship: 9:30am online

Worship: 10:30am in-person

UWiF Book Club (Chapel): 12-2pm

Daisy Troop 5666: 1:30pm

Echo (Chapel): 4pm

## Monday, March 3rd

Yoga (GP): 4:30pm

BSA (GP, Gym, Youth Rm, Kitchen): 5:30pm

Faithlink (Zoom): 7pm

## Tuesday, March 4th

Office Hours: 9am-2pm

Bell Choir: 11am

Fat Tuesday Pancakes (GP): 6pm

## Wednesday, March 5th

Office Hours: 9am-12pm

Ash Wednesday Worship @ Baker UMC in St. Charles: 7pm

## Thursday, March 6th

Office Hours: 9am-2pm

Mug Club (Sugar Grove Café): 9am

Book Study (Parlor): 1pm

## Saturday, March 8th

Girl Scout Creators League: 1-4pm

## Sunday, March 9th

Worship: 9:30am online

Worship: 10:30am in-person

Eagle Scout Ceremony (GP, Kitchen, Sanctuary & Parlor): 12:30pm

Daisy Troop 5666: 1:30pm

Echo (Chapel): 4pm

## Monday, March 10th

Yoga (GP): 4:30pm

BSA (GP, Gym, Youth Rm, Kitchen): 5:30pm

Circle of Friends Unit Meeting: 6:30pm

Fox Valley Garden Club (Parlor): 7pm

Faithlink (Zoom): 7pm

## Tuesday, March 11th

Office Hours: 9am-2pm

Bell Choir: 11am

## Wednesday, March 12th

Office Hours: 9am-12pm

Bad Girls: 6pm

## Thursday, March 13th

Office Hours: 9am-2pm

Mug Club (Sugar Grove Café): 9am

Book Study (Parlor): 1pm

Cub Scout K-3 Den Meeting (Parlor): 6pm

## Saturday, March 15th

Let's Go—St. Patrick's Day

@ Breazeale's: 6pm

## Sunday, March 16th

Worship: 9:30am online

Worship: 10:30am in-person

Echo (Chapel): 4pm

## Monday, March 17th

Yoga (GP): 4:30pm

BSA (GP, Gym, Youth Rm., Kitchen): 5:30pm

Faithlink (Zoom): 7pm

## Tuesday, March 18th

Office Hours: 9am-2pm

Bell Choir: 11am

DCFS YAB (GP): 6pm

## Wednesday, March 19th

Office Hours: 9am-12pm

Wednesday Night Gathering: 6pm

## Thursday, March 20th

Office Hours: 9am-12pm

Mug Club (Sugar Grove Café): 9am

Book Study (Parlor): 1pm

## Saturday, March 22nd

Girl Scout Creators League: 1-4pm

Cub Scout Blue & Gold (GP & Kitchen): 3:45-8:15pm

## Sunday, March 23rd

### UMCOR SUNDAY

Worship: 9:30am online

Worship: 10:30am in-person

UWiF Potluck: 12pm

Echo (Chapel): 4pm

## Monday, March 24th

Yoga (GP) 4:30pm

BSA (GP, Gym, Youth Rm, Kitchen): 5:30pm

Faithlink (Zoom): 7pm

## Tuesday, March 25th

Office Hours: 9am-2pm

Bell Choir: 11am

## Wednesday, March 26th

Office Hours: 9am-12pm

Bad Girls: 6pm

## Thursday, March 27th

Office Hours: 9am-2pm

Mug Club (Sugar Grove Café): 9am

Book Study (Parlor): 1pm

Cub Scouts K-3 Den Meeting (Parlor): 6pm

## Friday, March 28th

NDY Group (Mothers): 12pm

## Sunday, March 30th

Worship: 9:30am online

Worship: 10:30am in-person

Fox Valley Brass Band: 3pm

Echo (Chapel): 4pm

## Monday, March 31st

Yoga (GP) 4:30pm

BSA (GP, Gym, Youth Rm, Kitchen): 5:30pm

Faithlink (Zoom): 7pm