

wesleyan

DECEMBER 2022 EDITION



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Pastor's Column

It's happening all around us. Nature is preparing for winter. The trees are shedding back to the soil the nutrients that sustained them. Squirrels are running wild, mouths stuffed with nuts. Fur and feather counts are increasing while other birds, butterflies and bats are beginning their migration south or even underground for the season. All of this reminds me that I haven't seen my neighbors, the bumble bees. They must already "bee" sleeping somewhere on the property.

My preparations for winter have consisted of dragging out my winter coat from a closet. Searching the house for a matching pair of gloves and a hat. Stumbling through the garage in search of a window scraper for the car. Switching the thermostat to heat and then trying to remember how to program it. Opening the sweater closet and taking stock of which ones survived last winter. Pulling the down comforter out of its dry-cleaning packaging to be laid across the bed. I perform these tasks in solidarity with the neighborhood animals. It seems to me that the woodland creatures are better prepared for the winter.

I wonder if they dread the coming of winter like I do. The hour of midnight that comes at 4 pm. The bone-chilling cold that blows through the body. The lack of color and sun and life and all that I've grown accustomed to over the last eight months. The risk of falling, sliding or crashing. I have done very little if anything to prepare for all of this. Oh, to be a Zombie Tree Frog frozen in suspended animation through the winter. It must be nice to sleep through it all.

Maybe you are like me, physically prepared for winter yet failing to prepare the heart for what it needs to survive. I know what I need to prepare. My list of things I'm thankful for. My values and beliefs that shine a light in the darkness, guiding me step by step. My hope in renewal, rebirth, spring, new life that will come even if I can't see it. Rituals and habits that crowd out fear and anxiety. My curiosity about life and a list of things I still want to understand better.

"In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be." I'm thankful to God for Wesley United Methodist Church and all faith communities that provide space to prepare and rituals to guide our hearts. Preparations and rituals for the birth of a child, the loss of a family member and rights of passages as we change.

What is one ritual you might adopt this season of winter? What is an activity of the heart that might assist you in navigating each day? What words and actions might serve as a daily reminder of who you are and whose you are? What will make you come alive even when you are surrounded by darkness? Follow the light. Prepare your heart for Love. All of creation is preparing with you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John".

Worship

November 27 [1st Sunday of Advent]

Light Up the Night: Romans 13:11-12

As the beloved community, we journey with each other in keeping watch. We shine the light on the darkness of injustice as we make space for one another. The stories we tell shape who we are as God's people and call us to provide hope to those being oppressed.

December 4 [2nd Sunday of Advent]

Holy Communion—Welcoming Everyone with Bread: Romans 15:4-13

Jesus welcomed the poor. Paul expanded this welcome to the gentiles. Each generation has also expanded this welcome to those who are kept out or pushed out. Our table is open and wide to include all people. We welcome one another through service and mutual aid.

December 11 [3rd Sunday of Advent]

New Hit Single: Redistribute the Wealth: Luke 1:46b-55

Mary's song is one of liberation for those who are oppressed, for whom every day is a struggle. What will it take to build the community Mary sings about and that Jesus ushers in? What steps do we need to take to create a more loving and just world? What's in your wallet?

December 18 [4th Sunday of Advent]

Refuse Evil and Do Good: Isaiah 7:10-16

The prophet Isaiah declares that Immanuel will be the one who refuses evil and chooses good. What does it look like for us to refuse the evil and choose the good. What is good? What is evil? How do we know?

Visit from District Lay Leader



Leonard Jones, United Methodist Church Prairie District lay leader, visited Wesley UMC in Aurora on Sunday, Nov. 13. Jones is a member of Friendship UMC in Bolingbrook. Wesley pastor the Rev. John Bell said, "The district lay leader was in worship with us and shared with us ways they are trying to bring district congregations together." Jones greeted Wesley congregants at a post-worship reception.

Events

Holidays Around the World—Fox Valley Brass Band Fall Concert

Saturday, December 10, 2022 at 3pm in Wesley's Sanctuary

Featuring Hanukkah and Christmas brass band music from around the world. Fox Valley Brass Band will have you singing and dancing along to Steven Bulla's "Rhapsody for Hanukkah", classic Christmas Carols and favorites from Leroy Anderson.

Donations to Wesley United Methodist Church are appreciated.

United Women in Faith Cookie Sale

Help us support United Women in Faith's mission projects!

We are accepting prepayments only until all boxes are sold. No payments will be accepted at the door. Order online by clicking [here](#).

Pick up orders from 1-2:30pm on Saturday, December 10th at Wesley UMC, 14 N. May St., Aurora, IL.

- \$10.00 per homemade (prepacked by UWF) box of cookies
- \$2.00 per plate of 20 buttermints
- \$2.00 per 3 rosettes
- \$3.00 per bag of bean soup
- \$4.00 per 1/2 lb. bag of peanut brittle



United
Women
in Faith



Emmy Lou John and Mari Curless
displaying the buttermints they've prepared!

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.



Outreach

AID Holiday Hopes Gift Program



Help Make The Holidays Brighter

In addition to partnering with Mutual Ground, we are also providing gifts for 10 clients of AID this season, please see the tag tree in the narthex during the first two weeks of December. Please return gifts (wrapped or unwrapped) along with corresponding tag by Monday, December 11th so that they can be delivered to AID.

Mutual Ground Winter Wonderland Client Gift Shoppe



Thank you for your donations of children's gifts and teen gift cards. Mutual Ground and its clients appreciate them.

Children & Families

Playground Donations/Children's Time

We are in need of donations for the Wesley Playground! We are excited to expand what we are offering for children on Sunday to make them feel more included and welcomed. Click here to view our wishlist to provide more materials for learning: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/62LE2GSAPOUH?ref=wl_share

We are now providing a children's time from 10:10 - 10:30am in the chapel with learning focused on the Advent Season. Children will also have exploratory learning options on the carpeted area upfront (The Playground) during worship, to create crafts and activities that go along with the daily theme.

This is one way we welcome children in our worship space. We welcome children's different movement, noises, and creativity. We are looking forward to providing more options for them to be celebrated in our spaces!



Wednesday Night Gatherings

Join us on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month for dinner from 6-6:45pm, followed by multigenerational activities until 8pm.

Here are our plans for this month:

December 7th: Pasta Night with Holiday Card Making!

December 21st: Pizza Night with Holiday Party! Join us for Christmas Cookie Decorating, Ornament Making, Crafting - maybe even some Christmas Caroling!



Dia de Muertos Celebration
November 2, 2022



Thanksgiving Dinner!
November 16, 2022



Gratitude activities
in partnership
with The Perch



Sandwich making to fill
community fridge
We made 138 sandwiches.

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 Let's Go Leaf All Your Troubles Behind Party on October 28. Thanks to the Loagues for hosting! Our next party will be our annual Ugly Sweater/White Elephant Christmas Party on Saturday, December 17 at the home of Meredith Lindgren. The party will start at 7 pm. Each guest should wear their ugliest holiday sweater and bring something savory or sweet to share, along with a favorite beverage. A wrapped white elephant gift should also be included so we can all leave with something wonderful/crazy/goofy/whatever to add to our Christmas memories! Please RSVP to Meredith at the email given below, or call me. You can also respond to the email that will be going out soon. If you are interested in attending 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 finishing the book, "The Vanishing Half" by Brit Bennett, at our next meeting on Wednesday, December 14 at the home of Char Dillon. This excellent book has taken a bit more time than anticipated! But we've had some wonderful conversations about it!



Our meeting on December 14 will be our annual Christmas party and book gift exchange. The party starts at 6 pm. Each reader is asked to bring a savory or sweet dish to share and a wrapped book, either new or used and much-loved, for our gift grab bag. We will also hopefully pick our next book, so if anyone has any ideas for a book, be ready to share! 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.

Congregational Care

Birthdays

Vicki Martin 12/5

Sue Clark 12/7

Lekha Cristanujaya 12/15

Lynnette Singh 12/20

Herb John 12/28

Claire Agoro 12/31

Martha Griffith during her visit with Carol Stoffel in November. She received a beautiful hand-painted card from Betty Walters who is new to Wesley.



Financial Update

	1/1 – 11/15/22	Annual Budget for 2022
Pledge and Non-Pledge Giving	275,708.65	280,899.96
Other Income	116,754.37	188,979.12
Expenses		
Worship	5,627.24	8,049.96
Discipleship	4,417.96	4,350.00
Outreach	2,063.04	3,500.00
Operating Costs	137,191.46	127,009.12
Salaries	253,234.55	278,519.52
Apportionments	3,000.00	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 Methodist Women

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

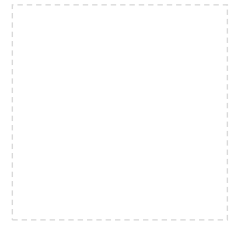
Jonathan Akyea



Wesley
UNITED
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630.896.1033 | wesleyumcaurora.org

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Instagram Page at Wesley UMC Aurora
to stay up to date on everything that is happening at Wesley!

