

wesleyan

MAY 2023 EDITION



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Pastor's Column

I recently walked into my neighborhood grocery store, Prisco's Family Market. Prisco's is a staple in our family. Whether it's to purchase from their vast selection of cheeses, yummy gelato or assortment of cannolis, we frequently walk there from our house. A couple of weeks ago, I was making another walk down to Prisco's and thought to myself, "Come July, I'm not going to be able to walk here anymore!" I started to cry. In Prisco's, standing next to the cannolis. I was telling a friend about this experience, and they said, "You should probably pay attention to that. To your sadness." They're right. Transitions are not easy. We need to pay special attention to them. We can acknowledge the challenge and also recognize that we will survive and probably thrive from the experience. Good things often come out of transitions.

It's hard to leave after ten years. I have enjoyed the relationships I've developed both at Wesley United Methodist Church and in the community. With the new structure that was implemented in 2015, I went from four monthly administrative meetings to one! My colleagues are still super jealous. I've worked with a lot of gifted staff over these 10 years but this is the best configuration of staff I've ever worked with. And as a community, we made a lot of great memories and did a lot of good, which I look forward to celebrating on June 3rd. Hope you can be there!

I also recognize that it's hard for a congregation to go through a change in pastoral leadership. Maybe it's for the same reasons. Maybe it's because we follow an appointment process, which on the one hand guarantees that the congregation will always have a pastor while also providing pastors the freedom of the pulpit to preach what needs to be preached. On the other hand, the process does not give the congregation nor the incoming pastor a lot of input or self-determination.

These ten years certainly have been shaped and formed by the partnership between us. Many of you have led and started new initiatives. Some of them were temporary. Others continue today. Your visions, dreams and discernment of God's calling for you makes us who we are today. Your efforts have made a difference and changed lives.

I, too, have had visions and dreams and discerned God's call in my life. It's also the case that over time, the church begins to function around the style of leadership of the pastor. Priorities and focus are influenced by the pastor. When people find out that a long tenured pastor is leaving, it can be scary because part of the congregation's identity is wrapped up in their pastoral leader.

It's also true that having a new pastor is exciting. The beginning of a new appointment brings with it all the potential and possibilities of spring. New leadership means new perspectives, new ideas, new ways of seeing the work of the beloved community. In much the same way you trusted and respected me, Pastor Tammy will have opportunities to explore and try out new ideas while maintaining and building on the work we have done together.

Pastor's Column

I've learned and grown a lot as your pastor. I think we all have. I'm not the same person I was ten years ago and that's Good News! I appreciate the ways we have managed transitions together with opportunities for failures and room for making mistakes. It's how we learn. God calls it grace. I hope you will afford Pastor Tammy the same space and opportunities that you gave me.

While I am sad to leave Wesley UMC (much more than I am about leaving Prisco's), I'm also excited about Pastor Tammy's leadership and the experience she will bring to this beloved community.

I'll have one more newsletter article to share in June. I'm looking forward to the celebration on June 3rd and sharing in worship with you for one last time on June 4th.

John



Pastor John's last Easter
at Wesley
April 9, 2023

A Note from Pastor Tammy

Happy May! In just two short months we will begin our ministry together. I am so excited to be coming to serve as your pastor! I thought it would be helpful to tell you a little bit about myself as you prepare to welcome me and my family. I am the mother of identical twin 8 year old daughters, Hannah & Haylee, who are just about to finish 2nd grade. I am sure you are all wondering what the tricks are to tell them apart...I am sad to say there is not a quick, easy difference to share, though they are used to being called Hannah/Haylee and then identifying which one they are! H&H as I often refer to them in writing are active in Brownies and cheerleading and are just getting started playing softball this spring! At the end of May, the girls and I will be moving from Sugar Grove to a home that we have purchased in Oswego with my parents, Tom & Joan Biltgen. H&H will be enrolled in 3rd grade at Southbury Elementary this fall.

Five things to know about Pastor Tammy...

1. I am the oldest of 3 girls and grew up in Lockport, IL. I remain close to both of my sisters who live in Lockport and Verona, IL.
2. I earned my Master of Divinity from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in 2006. I was commissioned as a UM Deacon in 2006 and ordained a UM Deacon in 2009. I began the transition from UM Deacon to UM Elder in 2018 and was ordained a UM Elder in April 2021, my ordination was delayed by Covid.
3. I taught High School math in Washington DC for 18 months.
4. I enjoy trying new foods and restaurants and cannot wait to explore all that Aurora has to offer!
5. I am a HUGE Chicago Cubs fan!

Here is a picture of me and my girls from Christmas! We cannot wait to meet all of you and hear your stories and share ours!

Blessings,

Pastor Tammy Scott



Farewell to Pastor John

You're Invited!

What: Farewell Dinner for Pastor John

When: Saturday, June 3rd 5:00pm

Where: Gathering Place



After serving for 10 years as our Pastor, John is moving to Louisville, KY, to follow his wife Alison's new job opportunity working with refugee re-settlement. We are certainly going to miss him and want to celebrate and thank him for his ministry at Wesley and his outreach and connections he has made in the city of Aurora.

We will be having a Farewell Dinner for Pastor John on Saturday, June 3rd at 5:00pm at the church. Everyone is welcome and invited. A light dinner of sandwiches, salads and dessert will be provided. Reservations will be quite helpful in determining how many to prepare for. A link to the reservation page is included here <https://churchteams.com/m/Register.asp?a=ZSs0OFINL21mSVU9>

We will also be asking everyone to create a personal thank you note or letter to honor and thank John for how he related to or helped you in your faith journey at Wesley, or any funny or good memories you have from his time here. Make it creative. Make it simple. Make it full of love. Start sending them in now. These can be submitted digitally to Jenny in the office at jennifer.wumc@gmail.com or can be dropped off or mailed to the church office, 14 N. May St., Aurora, IL 60506. We would need these by May 10, 2023.

We would also like to have everyone look through any pictures you might have of John involved in church activities – weddings, Trunk or Treat, Confirmation, meetings, preaching, gardening, washing dishes, setting up tables – any pictures that show him at work in our midst. These can also be sent digitally to Jenny in the office – or a hard copy to be dropped off or mailed to the church office. We want to fill a scrapbook full of memories for him and Alison and their family. Our crafter/scrapbooking group is going to be working on this book and would need them by May 10, 2023.

We will also be taking a love offering for John to thank him financially. A check can be mailed or dropped off at the church – or there is now a [link](#) on the church website where you can designate an amount of money to the “Love Offering” category.

We hope everyone will participate in some way to show love and appreciation to John for being the 2nd longest serving pastor in Wesley's history. We will miss him!

United Women in Faith Retreat



United
Women
in Faith

United Women in Faith's purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; and to develop a creative supportive fellowship and to expand concepts of mission through the global ministries of the church.

Our unit has gone about meeting our purpose through various avenues. We just had a Soul Care Retreat for 29 women where we worked on meditation, having fun making cards, making a "Vision" collage and enjoying each other's company while we learned about sustainable/environmentally friendly products.

We closed with a communion service. (See photos above)

United Women in Faith

Upcoming Events:

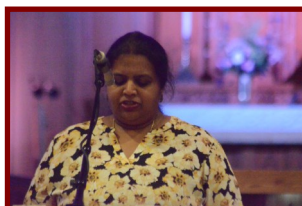
Our reading program expands our minds and meets on the 5th Wednesday of a month. Our next book review is on the Firekeeper's Daughter by Angeline Boulley. The gathering will take place at church on May 31st at 7 pm. Circles gather to have fellowship and to gain knowledge of what God is calling us to do through Jesus. They usually meet on the third Tuesday of the month, which this month is on May 16th, at 1:30 pm or 7 pm.

United Women in Faith also has two creative groups that meet: Knitters & Knotters that make the Prayer Shawls and Tuesday Crafters that among other crafts do the Card Ministry for our homebound members.

United Women in Faith make a financial commitment to the national organization which helps support the work that the General Board of Global Ministries does along with the direct partnership work that we do around the world. We raise monetary support through our December Cookie Walk. Last year we cleaned up the People for Child Care rooms and held a garage sale.

At our United Women in Faith's Sunday worship service April 30th (photos below), our membership thanked a person who has stood by us and enabled us to do so many projects. Always assisting with technical help via Zoom links, online registrations, promotion of events, timely reminders, and best of all one is greeted by her with the most wonderful smile in person or on the phone. Jennifer Pawlowski was presented with a Special Mission Recognition pin. It is in honor of all the exceptionally thoughtful and sometimes after office hours extra effort that she gives that continues to aid United Women in Faith to live out our purpose.

During the service we heard from Connie Wieck, a General Board of Global Ministries missionary who has been serving in China. With the help of Mari Curless, Betty Aquize and Shirley McKnight we blessed the Prayer Shawls. They are available at church to be given to anyone who you feel needs a Prayer Shawl.



Lekha Cristanujaya



Mari Curless,
Shirley McKnight &
Betty Aquize



Kari Nicholson-Rigaud



Mari Curless



Connie Wieck



Emmy Lou John & Jennifer Pawlowski

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 are hoping to have a spring get-together before everyone is busy with summer fun, so if you are interested in hosting an event, please contact me. 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 Laurel Gilbert on Wednesday, May 24, 2023. We will have a salad dinner at 6 pm, followed by a book discussion. We are reading the book "Native: Identity, Belonging, and Rediscovering God" by Kaitlin B. Curtice, and are hoping to finish it at this meeting. We won't be meeting on Wednesday, May 10 due to scheduling conflicts. We will be picking our book for the summer, so if you have any ideas, please share them with us! Since we don't meet regularly during the summer, we usually pick a fun book to read. If you are interested in joining us for fun, fellowship, and great book discussions, contact Meredith Lindgren, 630-788-6911 or psalmmom418@gmail.com.

Wesley Garden Club

Calling all gardeners! Our Wesley gardens are in need of some TLC after a long winter. As the weather warms up there will be much work to do to get the gardens back into tip-top shape. I hope to get out into the gardens soon and I'd love to work with others on tidying things up! With many hands we can bring our beautiful gardens back into beautiful bloom, bringing joy to many as they enter our building. If you have questions, please call Meredith Lindgren at 630-788-6911, or email me at psalmmom418@gmail.com.

Discipleship

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.



The NDY Group met on Friday, April 28th at Mother's Restaurant in Aurora.



Fox Valley Brass Band

Save the date for the following:

Brass Americana — Fox Valley Brass Band Concert

Sunday, June 25, 2023 at 3pm at Simmons Park (1201 E. Indian Trail)

Come soak up the summer sun with the Fox Valley Brass Band and enjoy show tunes, cinematic favorites and patriotic melodies! Gershwin, Porter, Sondheim, Williams, and more!!! Free will offerings to Wesley.

Children & Families

Wednesday Night Gathering—May 3rd 6-8pm

Join us for our final Wednesday Night Gathering! We'll be having a pizza party, sundae bar, and games.

We've had a great year of community sharing meals, conversations, laughter, and experiences. Thank you all who have committed to being a part of our Wednesday nights and to those who have helped make it happen. We will return to our gatherings when the school year of fall 2023 begins.



Family Movie Night: The Incredibles - Wednesday May 31st @ 7pm

Join us for an outdoor movie night! Bring your own lawn chair. Hot dogs, popcorn and beverages will be served. Free will donations are welcome.

Summer Programming

We need your help! In order to continue the work we do at the Meals on the Move Program at [William V. Plum Park](#) and Summer Camp, we need all the volunteers we can get. Please consider ways you can be involved.

Meals on the Move

Every Thursday from 1-2:30pm from the months of June to August, Wesley sets up a tent with arts & crafts, outdoor games, learning activities, and sports equipment for families attending the lunch program provided by the Northern IL Food Bank at [William V. Plum Park at 337 Plum Street, Aurora](#). We need volunteers who are willing to get to know our neighbors through conversation and through interacting with children. All abilities are able to help! There is room for all to help. Volunteers can simply engage in conversation with neighbors, or help set up our tent and games. Contact Michelle with any questions.

Art & Soul Camp:

This summer we are holding an Arts Camp centered around self love and communal love. Art & Soul Camp will be held from **July 10 - 13 from 5-8pm**. We need kitchen volunteers, crew leaders, station leaders from art, culinary, and music/movement. There is room for all abilities to help. Please consider ways you can be a part of providing a free and fun camp for our neighborhood! Contact Michelle with any questions.

A Note from Michelle

Wesley Friends,

I am excited to share that I will be starting graduate school in the Fall of 2023 - Spring 2025. I will be pursuing a Masters in Social Work to become a school social worker. My schooling will allow me to work full-time as well as pursue my degree full-time. I am looking forward to continuing my work at Wesley and use what I am learning in school to better serve our community.

I appreciate the support and space that Wesley has given me to find my passions for serving others. Working at Wesley has shown me that communities and families are what I care for most and I'm looking forward to learning more about sustainable community care through my social work degree. In advance, I thank you for your patience, support, and care as I further my education.

With love,

Michelle Curiel

Children & Families Director

Associate Worship Director

May Birthdays

Sandra Frazier 5/3

Laurie Studdard 5/6

Martha Griffith 5/11

Rob Burnett 5/15

Charlie Winfree 5/15

Barbara Johnson 5/16

Wesley Akyea 5/21

Michelle Curiel 5/26

April Member Visits



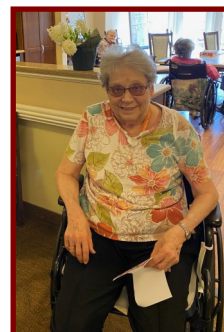
Pastor John visited Dorita Godfrey and brought her a colorful tulip.



Carol Stoffel visited Janie Matteson at Michaelson's in Batavia and brought her a hyacinth.



Carol Stoffel visited Bev Benson at Bickford of St. Charles and brought her a hyacinth.



Carol Stoffel visited Martha Griffith at Brighton Gardens in St. Charles and brought a hyacinth for residents to enjoy.



Easter lilies were delivered to Nedra Price (pictured to right) by her daughter Pat and to Nancy Verbic by Lois Scott



Lynn Burnett visited Ruth Ann Little at Fox Knoll and delivered tulips.

Carol Stoffel visited Ted Crawshaw and another couple at The Landings in Batavia and delivered a hyacinth.



Financial Update

	1/1—4/15/23	Annual Budget for 2023
Pledge and Non-Pledge Giving	81,711.39	280,899.96
Other Income	37,210.36	188,979.12
Expenses		
Worship	1,757.59	8,049.96
Discipleship	546.07	4,350.00
Outreach	2,237.54	3,500.00
Operating Costs	44,272.29	127,009.12
Salaries & Benefits	86,567.61	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 & Outreach
(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

Faithlinkers (held on Mondays at 10am CST via Zoom)

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

Tuesday Crafters (held on the second Tuesday of each month via Zoom)

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

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

