

A STEP IN FAITH

“Take the first step in faith. You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.” – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

What a simple, yet powerful message. For each of us it may mean something different. It is the new year, and with it will come new goals, new dreams, and new trials. We don’t know what’s ahead of us when we take that first step in faith: a new job, a new relationship, a move...or something even deeper than that: repairing a damaged relationship, delving into a personal reflection, or embarking on a new spiritual journey.

All we know is that we can see that first step. And we take that first step not knowing exactly where the next, and the next, and the next may be...

My intention had been to write about the Children’s Ministry at our church and where it is heading (in a wonderful direction, by the way!), but this Martin Luther King, Jr. quotation fell upon my screen. I don’t believe in coincidences. So here I am, telling you about my first step in faith instead. It took me over 8 months to decide to take that step and apply for the Director of Children’s Christian Education position. During that time I was going through a life-altering family change and fighting the voice in my head that told me to apply. Other voices surmounted it: fear, doubt, stubbornness, grief. I was not listening to God among the many voices in my head. Finally, one unplanned conversation gave me the courage to take that step. After I took that first step and listened for His voice among the many, God cleared the path.

And now I am climbing those steps. Not knowing where I may go exactly, but I go on faith and I am enjoying the journey. The fruits of my labor may not be reaped immediately, but they will be there. “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” (Galatians 6:9). The harvest will be there if we sow the seed...if we take the first step.

What are the voices that are holding you back from taking that first step? No matter how small or big that first step (and the ones after it) may be, know that God will be there with you. All you need to do is close your eyes, take a deep breath, and put one foot out...and step up in faith.

Jean Grant, Dir. Children’s Christian Ed.

LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS...

THE TOWER lighting for January is given in loving memory of my mother, Mary Fletcher and my brother, David Fletcher by Barbara Fletcher.

THE ROSE window lighting for January is given in loving memory of Mrs. William B. Smith by the United Methodist Women.

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK...

- ✠ Those who struggle with and question their faith. May we be an example to them as those who live their faith.
- ✠ Someone in a difficult situation that only God has control of. I ask for God's protection over this problem.
- ✠ Hughes Andres Pierre as he continues to recover for his surgery
- ✠ Marilyn Baptist as she continue to recover from her surgery
- ✠ Cindy Muncey and family as they grieve the loss of Cindy's mom, Rena Mae Stephenson.
- ✠ Lawrence Tremblay and family as he grieves the loss of his son who was laid to rest last week and whose wife was taken off life support.
- ✠ The family of Jim Norcross as they grieve Jim's death.
- ✠ Phil Johnson and Family as they grieve the loss of Phil's mother, Janice.
- ✠ Judith Barton's sister-in-law's mother who is very ill in Trinidad.
- ✠ Marnie who is hospitalized with a rare blood disorder.
- ✠ Mildred Olson celebrated her 96th birthday on January 9th. Cards can be sent to her at Beaumont Nursing Center, 378 Plantation Street, Room 323A, Worcester, MA 01605.
- ✠ The family of Edward Mason, former Associate Pastor of Wesley UMC, who died in January 2014. Condolences can be sent to Edward Mason Jr., 86 Bayberry Hill Road, West Townsend, MA 01474.
- ✠ The Power of Prayer... Thank you all for your prayers for our cousin, his wife, and their new born baby girl "Melina". With your prayers Melina has made a miraculous improvement. She is off the respirator and is now home. Thanks to your love and the power of prayer. ~ *The Pisarski Family*

NEW MEMBER CLASS... Are you interested in becoming a member of Wesley UMC? We invite you to consider entering into a membership covenant with Wesley. Local church membership is one way to live out your commitment to the way of discipleship. Through membership you covenant to live out vows of faithfulness in worship, learning, stewardship and witness. Through membership you commit to serve Jesus Christ by your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness through the shared ministry of our local congregation. If you're feeling called to make this commitment, please let Pastor Shandi know. A New Member class will be held during Lent on Wednesday nights or Saturday mornings, depending on people's schedules.

IHN VOLUNTEERS... Wesley will be helping at the IHN house again February 8-15. A sign-up sheet is on the board. We are in need of additional people to support this outreach. It's easy to give 2 or 3 hours one evening. See Nancy Cook to learn what is involved.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS SHROVE TUESDAY CELEBRATION, February 17, 6-7:30 PM. You are invited to come enjoy our **PANCAKE SUPPER** with all the extra goodies (pancakes, fruit, toppings, bacon & sausage)! We are blessed to offer a special time for adults to enter into a holy discussion and fellowship about *The Meaning of Lent through the Years*, led by Lisa Fagerstrom in East Hall from 6:45-7:15 PM. Come to share or just to listen and take it all in. The children will join Jean Grant and the Education team for a special time of Lenten activities in Brewer Hall. This event is hosted by Sarah Circle and Christian Education Ministry. Great time to invite friends! If you are interested in volunteering with cooking, clean-up, crafting, or donating food, please contact Jean Grant.

Thank You, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!! Thank you again to those who donated to our van rental. Phil Smith and I, with the rest of the team were very grateful. We also want to share that we were able to help pitch in with other volunteers from all over the country to repair these ravaged homes that were heavily damaged by Hurricane Sandy. Even 2 years later there are still hundreds of homes that need repair. So please continue to keep these people in your daily prayers. God Bless all of you. You always come thru with your generosity.

We are aiming to have pictures posted on the Wesley website by the end of the day on Friday. So please, take a few minutes this weekend to see the work we were able to do while on this Mission Trip.

Gerard Piscitelli, Disaster Coordinator for New England Conference

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: A CLASS FOR YOUTH... The Massachusetts State Police, with the leadership of Captain Fran Leahy, is going to be leading a class for youth on "knowing your rights" on February 28, 2015 at 9am here at Wesley. This offering is initiated by Isaac Berko and the Wesley Basketball program and it is open to all young people who would like to learn about their rights. Parents are welcome to join their youth in the class. The event is free to all as it is a public service by the MA State Police. If you have any questions please contact Isaac Berko, at Isaacb94@hotmail.com.

CARTY CUPBOARD FOOD PANTRY

WE HAVE A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY... We are in need of someone to work at Friday morning's food distribution. You will be distributing the pre-packed grocery bags of food, so you must be able to lift 40 lbs. This opportunity runs from now until the beginning of May, and is on Fridays from 9:00 AM until 12:15 PM. If you are interested please call Nancy Spencer at 508-887-1481.

WE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS... *Meals in a can and Hearty low sodium soups.*

To everyone who donates to Carty Cupboard ~ **Thank You!!**

~ Sincerely, Nancy Spencer

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

UMW STEERING COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 7, 8:45 AM... Looking forward to starting our new year with new ideas for ways that UMW at Wesley can be a force for good. Come to Mary Ellis Lounge at 8:45 am and bring your circles' input. Can't make it? Call Allison Hansen at 508-853-5339.

DORCAS CIRCLE

It's that time again!! Get out your aprons and bowls. On Sunday, February 15th we will be packing our cookies for shut-ins and the staff. We will meet after church in the kitchen and join in the fellowship of helping others.

DORCAS CIRCLE will meet on Thursday, February 19th at noon. We will be gracing Tweeds on Grove Street with our presence. Menu choices will be Baked Haddock, Grilled Chicken Breast, or Open-Faced Steak Sandwich. All meals will include salad, veggies, rolls and strawberry short-cake. The cost of \$20 will include dinner, tax and tip. Any questions, call Emily Smith at 508-963-2920.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

“Race: The power of an illusion” – Invitation to a Conversation

The apostle Paul once declared that in Christ, *“there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, nor male and female”* – to which we might add *“neither black nor white”* – *“for all are one in Christ Jesus.”* (Galatians 3:28). What did Paul mean with such a statement when these differences are obviously visible to us? Furthermore, here at Wesley we feel called to embody a peculiar witness of multicultural ministry inclusive of all nations and races. What does a multicultural ministry really look like, we might ask? These questions and others often come to mind as we seek to live into our calling and witness. Often we are asking questions about how God’s grace is helping us to break barriers that divide God’s people, build-bridges across these divisions, and join hands in crossing boundaries that may seem to separate us.

Over the next few weeks, the program staff and I invite you to join us in a prayerful conversation to listen and to learn about what God may have to teach us about the challenges of multicultural ministry. During worship, I will be sharing three sermons (“breaking barriers,” “building bridges,” and “crossing boundaries”) reflecting on some biblical responses to questions related to engaging difference and diversity.

In addition, we invite you to conversations reflecting on the topic of race and racism. First, we invite to the “Chats by the Fire” offering on Sunday, January 25. We will have a group of panelist to share their stories as we invite you to listen and to share your own stories in this conversation. Second, we invite you to a viewing of the film entitled, *“Race: the power of an illusion”* on Sunday, February 1, 8, and 15. The film is a documentary in three episodes:

- Episode 1 – “The Difference Between Us” – examines the contemporary science – including genetics – that challenges our assumptions about human groups and differences.
- Episode 2 – “The Story We Tell” – explores the roots of the race concept, including the 19th century science that justified it and how it gained such a hold over our minds.
- Episode 3 – “The House We Live In” – examines the systemic ways that racial inequality has been perpetuated even after great strides such as the Civil Rights Movement.

We hope you can join us for this important conversation as we discern together God’s word to us in this age. May God bless you and keep you in your journey.

Pastor Shandi

WESLEY YOUTH GROUP

Meeting Times: First Wednesday of the month from 6:30-8:30 PM, and the third Sunday of the month after church.

YOUTH2015 EARLY REGISTRATION OPEN! Are you ready? Youth2015 is just around the corner (June 24-28)! Early registration ends on January 31st. Total trip cost is \$420+travel, and the \$105 registration fee goes toward the total cost. Please see Phil and Emi for more information on registration and on the event itself.

****Parents of Youth in our church, ages 12-18**** There will be a Meeting on Sunday, January 25th at 11:45 AM in the Youth Room. Pastor Shandi and the Youth Directors would like to go over information about the upcoming Youth2015 event in Orlando. All youth parents are invited to attend this brief meeting.

MISSION MATTERS

HOSPITALITY FOR EYEGLASSES MINISTRY NEEDED... Pastor Shandi has noticed that people seeking eye exams and glasses start lining up hours before our doors open. Since the cold weather has arrived, volunteers are needed to offer light refreshments and give out numbers from 4:30 to 6 pm on Mondays. We will start with two people every other Monday, when the optometrist is here giving eye exams and prescriptions. There isn't such a large crowd on the alternate Mondays, when people are dropping by to pick up glasses. If you could volunteer to offer hospitality, please tell Pastor Shandi or Betsy Pennino.

JANUARY 31ST COMMUNITY SUPPER... UMW is in charge of the next community supper, led by Kimberly Lindsey-Amoah and Sandy McManus. They will be preparing and serving BBQ chicken, rice pilaf, green beans, salad, rolls, beverage and dessert. Donations of cupcakes, brownies, or bars are requested. Additional workers are welcome! Also, could someone put together a craft for children? Starting at 5:30 pm, Lisa Fagerstrom will lead a "vesper recovery church service" in East Hall.

2015 COMMUNITY SUPPERS ARE LAST SATURDAYS... Easier to remember this year is the plan that the community suppers will be on the last Saturday of each month, except for October. (Halloween is on Oct. 31st, so our supper will be on Oct. 24th.)

IMAGINE NO MALARIA (INM) UPDATE... Our New England Conference calculates that Methodists here have saved over 68,000 lives by our donations from fundraising efforts. The annual death rate from malaria is down 54% in Africa since 2000. The Mission Committee is planning our 3rd INM Event at Wesley on a Sunday in May.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

“CHATS” ...

A number of folks have been in conversations about gathering small groups of people from the Wesley UMC family together for “Chats by the Fire/Fireside Chats.” These conversations would be an intentional effort to allow members of the Wesley family to get to know each other better and to listen to each other’s hopes and struggles in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. The conversations will be “lightly facilitated” around a current topic of importance in the world as well as to Wesley UMC.

The first group of these “Chats” will be held this week around the topic of “Race and Ethnicity” (and will include a panel of folks from Wesley beginning each session by sharing their own experiences) Two groups will meet this Sunday, January 25th. One “Chat” will be in the John Wesley room from 9:30-10:30 a.m. The second will be from noon-1 p.m. in the Parlor. Two other “Chats” will be held on Wednesday, January 28th—one from noon-1 p.m. in the Parlor, and one from 6-7 p.m. in John Wesley. Our goal is to have diversity within each group (age, race, time at Wesley, ethnicity, gender, interests) to allow for differing viewpoints and perspectives.

The plan is to hold these “Chats” quarterly and to have a different topic of conversation each time. The main point of these small groups is to build community and to deeply listen to each other...to be “Christ-like” with each other—listening with the heart and soul as well as with our ears. If some ideas spring up from the “Chats” that folks want to work on as projects/ministries at Wesley, it will be a bonus!

I hope that you will prayerfully consider being a part of one of these small groups in the coming weeks and in the future. Please speak with me or e-mail/phone me if you would like to talk further about this opportunity or have thoughts about a topic for a future set of “Chats.”

“A QUIET PENTECOST” BOOK DISCUSSION...

A number of people have been reading Dwight Judy’s book “A Quiet Pentecost” over the last few months. I would like to begin convening opportunities for groups of folks to discuss the book—observations and reflections and any ideas to bring forth for consideration as ministries/activities/programs at Wesley.

There will be a table designated in Brewer Hall at the 9:30 a.m. time between services and at coffee hour over the next 3 Sundays for anyone wishing to enter into discussion about the book. I will provide some “starter questions” for reflection at the tables as well as some blank sheets to record ideas that are generated during the discussions. Additionally, there will be a small group discussion in John Wesley from 6-7 p.m. on two Wednesdays in February 4th & 11th. If you are interested in participating in a small group discussion and none of these times work for you, please call or e-mail me and I will organize some groups at different times.

I would like to create an on-line “chat stream” via e-mail in addition to the times to talk “live” in small groups. If you would like to be a part of this e-mail “chat stream,” please send me an e-mail at: Lisa@wesleyworc.org.

I look forward to lively and fruitful discussions on this engaging and inspiring book!

Blessings on the journey, Lisa

2015 CENTRAL MASS DISTRICT “MOVERS & SHAKERS” LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS ~ FEBRUARY 28, 2015...

The CMA District Congregational Development Team will be sponsoring the annual Church Leadership Workshops and we are inviting you and members of your church to come and experience a world-changing journey. There will be great music and outstanding work-shops, life-changing conversations, yummy food, and authentic people. All of our workshops will be designed to equip church leaders to bring about a personal and cultural transformation to their local congregations. The workshops seek to give practical tools you will need to begin the work or to share with your congregation. More details to come soon. For more information please visit the CMA District website: www.neumc.org/cma.

JOHN IN ULTRA-HIGH CONTEXT: JOHN 1:35-2:12

(notes from the Brewer Hall Study Group, January 11-18, 2015)

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Chapter 1 concludes (vv. 35-51) with the nucleation of a new group around the leadership of Jesus, either by: abandoning John's group (Andrew and another/unnamed); or by networking (Simon/Peter, through brother Andrew); by direct call, such as Philip; and again by networking (Nathanael, through Philip).

vv. 35-39 For Andrew and the unnamed disciple, John's re-identification of Jesus as "the Lamb of God" conveyed group leadership authority, which Andrew recognizes by addressing Jesus as Rabbi, and soon afterward as Israel's Messiah. The verbs *remain* and *follow* encode the UHC meaning of loyalty or deep attachment to Jesus. The verb *see* (as in "Come and see") encodes the meaning of belief. **vv. 41-42** Jesus' renaming of Simon as Peter indicates assignment to the group's core membership. **vv. 43-49** Just the fact that Philip was from the hometown of Andrew and Peter (Bethsaida) would have carried a favorable impression for Jesus. In the first century, persons were typically assessed by stereotypical categories (such as place of origin/residence). Conversely, Nathanael (from Cana, 21:2) is *not* initially impressed by Philip's report that Jesus is from Nazareth, until he actually meets Jesus, whereupon he respectfully addresses him as Rabbi, and recognizes him as the *Son of God* and *King of Israel*, both UHC titles (20:31). **v. 51** Jesus' use of the preamble *amēn amēn légō umîn* ("Truly truly I tell you") means "I give you my word of honor". In John, the "Son of Man" is a sky being – one who can descend from the realm of God (e.g., 1:9) and ascend into it; a point of contact between heaven and earth, and thus a broker or mediator for God.

Chapters 2 through 11 recount Jesus' public ministry, marked by a series self-disclosures ("signs") whereby the author demonstrates how Jesus brings life and light to the Israelite world (1:4-5). The wedding at Cana marks the first of these signs (2:1-11).

vv. 3-5 That the bridegroom's family had run out of wine for the celebration threatened a serious loss of honor, and prompts Jesus' mother to discreetly ask him to volunteer his services as an impromptu member of the family's "wedding association" (specific role of wine supply). In John's Gospel, Jesus is rarely approached for help, except by family or close friends, and his response in such cases (such as this) is always one of delaying reluctance, followed by compliance {perhaps reflecting God's answer to prayer "in due course}. **vv. 7-11** The transformation of water to wine (*living* water) carries a UHC "life-bringing" significance to this action. But even beyond this, there is a metaphorical significance of the transformation of believers, such as happens with the disciples (v. 11).

– Charles Kiefer {& the members of the Brewer Hall Study Group (open group; Sundays, 9:30)}
Marshall, A. The R.S.V. interlinear Greek – English New Testament. London:Samuel Bagster and Sons Ltd., 1958.

DID YOU KNOW?

This past Sunday we sang two of our hymns to tunes other than the one with which they were printed in the hymnal. Hymn tunes are often composed independently of the hymn texts and it is possible to pair a given tune with a variety of texts, and also to use several different hymn tunes for a given text. Tunes that are interchangeable with a variety of texts are known as *common tunes*. Other tunes that are linked fairly specifically to a single text are known as *proper tunes*. The interchange of several tunes for a given text is based on the hymn meter, the pattern of how many syllables there are in each line of the poetry of the text.

The title of a hymn at the top of the page of the hymnal usually is based on the first portion of the text of the hymn, but did you know that the hymn tunes themselves also have names? For example our bulletin this past Sunday informed us that one of the hymns was to be sung to the tune DUKE STREET. The tune name of a hymn as printed in the hymnal appears in capital letters in the right lower corner of the page above the metrical designation. If you have ever paid attention to these hymn tune names, you probably have noticed that many of our hymn tunes have interesting and unusual names which are derived from various origins. Some examples of the basis for hymn tune names include:

- Geographical locations: DUKE STREET (Jesus Shall Reign) named after the street on which the composer lived
- Some aspect of the text such as the first words of the hymn in its original language
 - ◆ English: WERE YOU THERE
 - ◆ German Chorales: HERZLIEBSTER JESU (Ah, Holy Jesus)
 - ◆ Latin Plainchant: VENI EMMANUEL (Oh Come, Oh Come Emmanuel)
- The general subject of the hymn: HOLINESS (Take Time to Be Holy)
- Psalm numbers OLD 100th (All People that on Earth Do Dwell; also the tune we usually use for the Doxology)
- Name of the composer: BRADBURY (Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us)
- Author of text with which it is associated: HANKEY (I Love to Tell the Story)
- Friend or relative of the composer: ELIZABETH (Jesus is All the World to Me) named after the author's wife

These are just a few examples which may help to pique your curiosity the next time you notice the name of a hymn tune.

Submitted by, Deborah A. O'Driscoll

2015 HERALD SCHEDULE

Below are the next Herald mailing dates along with the deadline dates.

<u>Article Deadline Date</u>	<u>Herald Mailing Date</u>
Mon., Feb. 2	Wed., Feb. 4
Tues., Feb. 17	Thurs., Feb. 19

If you have an article, please email it as a Word attachment to:

office@wesleyworc.org

2015 ALTAR FLOWER calendar is now available in the Welcome Office. If you would like to donate flowers on a particular Sunday in honor, celebration or in memory of a loved one or friend, stop by the office and reserve the date. You can reserve the chapel or the sanctuary. After church you are welcome to take the flowers home to enjoy or you may leave them to be delivered to a shut-in. The cost for the two arrangements in either the chapel or sanctuary is \$50. Please be sure to complete a form with the dedication and return it to Debi with the payment as soon as you are able.



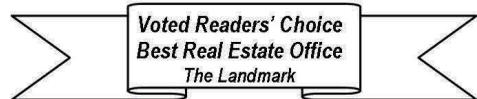
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WESLEY HERALD
JANUARY 22, 2015

***DON'T MISS OUT...
READ THE HERALD TODAY!***

WESLEY STAFF & LEADERSHIP TEAM

Pastor	Shandirai Mawokomatanda
Director of Music Ministries	Brett Maguire
Ghanaian Choir Master	Kwaku Dankwa
Music Assistant	Deborah O'Driscoll
Director of Children's Christian Education	Jean Grant
Director of Christian Formation & Discipleship	Lisa Fagerstrom
Toddler Care Leader	Lori Conlon
Building Superintendent	Phil Johnson
Business Administrator	Lorna Mattus-Merrill
Church Secretary	Debi Ritacco
Custodians	Carol Flionis, Gerard Piscitelli, Steve Boyns
Head Usher	David Dagle
Administrative Council	Ron Ramsay
Board of Trustees	Annelle Benson
Carty Cupboard Food Pantry	Nancy Spencer
Communion Steward	Earl Flagg
Education Work Area	Chris Flagg
Finance & Stewardship Co-Chairs	Michael Edmunds William Wong
Ghanaian Association	Emmanuel Okrah
Events & Fellowship	
Layleader	Deborah O'Driscoll
Medical Ministry	Ron Ramsay
Memorial Gifts	Carolyn Bellil
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