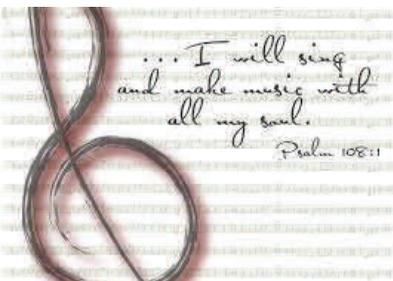


When I first came to work at Wesley, Vicki Woods used to joke about the part in my contract that said, “and other duties as necessary.” This line would often make its appearance when we’d be setting up tables or cooking food for an event. I think yesterday wins, however, in terms of the most hats I’ve worn for Wesley in one day: organist, choir director, preacher, and at the combined choral event that afternoon, accompanist and back-row bass. It was a good day to have my view point shaken around and experience church from a variety of perspectives.

As tired as I was by the end of the day, I was truly moved and inspired by everyone who participated in the Combined Choir Festival that took place at All Saints Church just down the street. When the choirs came together, we covered the altar space, and the audience, made up of congregation members from the five churches, was substantial. It was staggering to note how much exceptional music making happens in our neighborhood on a regular basis. The Wesley Choir sang beautifully, hitting high notes with ease and shaping phrases as though they had been rehearsing all day. It was a proud moment to be their director. And when everyone sang together, it was a choral sound to reckon with!

What really strikes me about this event is how easy it was to make happen, and how satisfying it was for everyone involved. There were enough scores among the choirs that churches were able to share, and with five music directors it was effortless to alternate conducting and accompanying duties. Planning was even straightforward, just a few shared e-mails and calendar checks.

This seems to be a good example of the types of activities that churches can really excel at right now. When we find our areas of common interest and can pool our resources, we can create experiences when the whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts.



I wish you all the best over these next few weeks of Lent.

*Brett Maguire
Director of Music*

LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS...

The Tower lighting for March is given in loving memory of Dr. C. James Brenneman by his daughter Betsey.

The Rose window lighting for March is given in loving memory of Heik P. and Irene B. Garabedian, and Robert Demers by Shirley and family.

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK...

- † Betsy and Bruce Pennino welcome the son of their daughter, Hope Badger, and her husband Jeff. Nikolai Allen Badger was born on Feb. 17th. All are doing well, including big sister Lia who's adjusting to no longer being the one and only.
- † John Hansen as he recovers from surgery on Monday, February 29th.
- † Diane Kane for continued recovery at home
- † All of those who are hurt or have disabilities
- † Three teens who are constantly fighting
- † Continuing to work towards tolerance, understanding, and equality for all— here and abroad
- † Margaret Craven, a retired missionary Wesley helped support at Red Bird Mission in KY. She lives at the Brooks - Howell retirement center in Asheville, NC.
- † Abby, 9 years old, recovering from having a brain tumor removed. She has a long year ahead of her with intense treatments.
- † Joyce Roy, Deb Ritacco's aunt, dealing with health issues.
- † Troubled marriages all over
- † Our country in this presidential election season as decisions are being made about candidates
- † The family of Julia Wilke who passed away on Thursday, February 25th, following complications from surgery



REMINDER... DAY LIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS

Saturday night, March 12th, before you go to bed be sure to turn your clocks ahead. You don't want to miss church on Sunday... *do you?*

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 9:30: GIFTS FROM THE DARK WOOD STUDY meets in John Wesley Room, co-led by Anthony Phillips & Lisa Fagerstrom. This DVD study is based on the book *Gifts of the Dark Wood: Seven Blessings for Soulful Skeptics (and Other Wanderers)* by Eric Elnes and parallels our Lenten worship themes. There will be time for reflection on the previous week's theme as well as time for sharing and discussion of the video presentation. Each Sunday will be a "stand alone" session and all are welcome to any or all of the Sundays! [Note: If there is interest, an additional evening session will be added for those unable to attend the Sunday group.] It's not too late to join!

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY: WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

THURSDAYS, 10:30 A.M.-NOON (BEGINS FEB. 25) - IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO COME!

Do you long to better know the stories of the Bible? Do you want to know how the Bible is organized and how those texts were chosen? Have you ever thought about all the different ways people approach the Bible and wondered for yourself what to think? Join us on Tuesday mornings as we consider these and other questions in exploring the many things that the Bible has to offer us.

This first course in the Massachusetts Bible Society's "Exploring the Bible" series gives a broad overview of the entire Bible, including chapters on how to select a Bible suitable for your needs, how the Bible is organized, how the collection of books that comprise the Bible were chosen, different ways that people approach the text, and what archaeology has to tell us about the text and its stories. Lisa Fagerstrom will lead this study group.

SARAH CIRCLE will again be collecting useful or edible items for Worcester shelters. On Sundays in Lent through Palm Sunday (March 20th), you're invited to leave any of the following in the purple bag you'll find in the church pantry:

- Soap, hand sanitizer, shampoo, toothpaste, lotion, deodorant
- First Aid supplies, sunscreen, Chap stick
- Chocolate, dried fruit, cereal bars, small bags of cookies or crackers, or other snacks which have some food value
- Packets of hot chocolate, small juice containers
- Socks, hats, washcloths, pens, Post-its, Scotch tape
- whatever else you think a person at a shelter would appreciate

The items will be delivered to shelters on Easter weekend. Questions? Contact Betsy Pennino.

DAUGHTERS OF ABRAHAM BOOK CLUB... The Daughters of Abraham Book Club will meet on Wednesday, March 16, at 7 p.m. at the YWCA next to the Worcester Public Library. Prior to the the discussion please read Katherine Kurs' book "Searching for Your Soul: Writers of Many Faiths Share Their Personal Stories of Spiritual Discovery." Donations for a potluck meal are encouraged. Please, no pork products or alcohol. Meat dishes should be plainly indicated. Thank you.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Please note some important dates.

THANK YOU! Our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper was a success, with about 40 attending. Thank you to all who volunteered to make this a reflective and fun evening.

Easter Egg Hunt Sarah Circle and Christian Education will be hosting the annual Easter Egg hunt at Wesley on Saturday March 26th, from 10 -11:30 a.m. Please bring 12 filled plastic eggs for each child that attends. We will watch a video about Easter, have crafts, participate in an Egg hunt, and enjoy snacks. Volunteers welcome! Contact Jean Grant grantgirl05@yahoo.com. Eggs can be filled with stickers, candy, trinkets/toys, etc. For the younger children, you can fill eggs with Goldfish, animal crackers, and Cheerios, and put stickers on those eggs so the older kids won't collect them. Please invite your relatives and friends.

MISSION MATTERS

Volunteering with Habitat for Humanity on April 23rd... We're looking for a team of 12 to 15 Wesley folks to work on Habitat's new Homestead Ave., Auburn build site. Nine have volunteered so far. We have signed up for Saturday, April 23, 8 am to 4 pm, the last Saturday of the public school vacation week. Working for a half-day is possible, and lunch provided by several people would be much appreciated! Cold water and coffee will be available all day. More info is posted on the new Mission Spotlight bulletin board. Please tell Betsy Pennino or Lisa Fagerstrom if you're 16 or older and would like to volunteer. Thank you.

Future Community Suppers... April, June and the months following are available for you or your group to volunteer to lead a supper. Please talk with Betsy about which month to reserve and any questions you have.

Community Breakfast on Easter Sunday, March 27th... Thanks to the Linda and Lou D'Acri family, Wesley people can again enjoy an Easter Sunday breakfast from 7:15 am (after the Sunrise service) to 12:15 pm. Scrambled eggs, bacon and sausage, French toast, pancakes, English muffins, corned beef hash, juice, and fruit will be served. Our Community Supper guests have also been invited to share the breakfast, the fellowship, and our Easter services.

Thanks to IHN Volunteers... IHN expressed their thanks for all Wesley did last week in caring for the homeless families who live there until they can regain housing, often because they have also found new jobs. Thank you Allison and Peter Hansen, Beth Vietze and family, Bill and Michael Kilmer, Bruce Pennino, Caroline Sherman, Chloe Sundberg, Chris Kerns, Cindy Muncey, Donna Hirtle, Emmanuel Okrah, Esi Korsah, Gladys Poku, Kimberly Lindsey-Amoah, Maria Gorsuch-Kennedy, Marilyn Baptist, Nancy Cook, and Paul Arsenault. Thanks also to those who contributed Big Y food cards. One person asked to volunteer at IHN during the months before Wesley's next IHN week (10/23 to 10/29/16). If you would also like to do that, the Director would be most grateful, so please tell Betsy Pennino.

Spring has Sprung!

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S BAKE & CRAFT SALE

PALM SUNDAY ~ MARCH 20, 2016

To support UMW Mission Projects, including Wesley Summer Camperships

Cookies - Breads - Pies - Cakes

Knives, Towels, Wesley Plates, Note Paper, Jewelry, etc.

Support the UMW in this Mission fundraiser and enjoy "home-made" baked goods for your Easter Celebration.

John in Ultra-High Context: John 19:16b-37

{notes from the Brewer Hall Study Group, February 21-28, 2016}

Crucifixion

(vv. 16b-18) Jesus carries his cross *eautō* (“to himself”; i.e., for his own purposes) to “the place of a skull” (Heb. *Golgotha*), where his cross is lifted up at the center of a crucified threesome. The phrase “lifted up” is a central theme in Johannine theology, signifying that point in time when: everyone believing in Jesus may have eternal life (3:14-15); it will be known that Jesus speaks only as taught by the Father (8:28); Jesus will draw all men (i.e., all Israel) to himself (12:32). John divides the crucifixion into five scenes, each with a defining “word” that underscores the meaning.

(vv. 19-22) In the first scene, the defining word is Pilate’s, in the form of the title that he had placed on the cross (L. *titulus*; “legal charge”), “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Judeans” (in Roman context, “Judean” referred to all Israelites), written in three languages (Hebrew/Aramaic for the Judeans; Greek, the international, cultural language; and Latin, the official, administrative language).

In Johannine context, Pilate unwittingly reveals who Jesus really is, whose origin in Nazareth, where “the Word became flesh” (1:14), marks the low end of the social scale, and “King of the Judeans” marks the high end of that scale, thereby joining opposites. Although the chief priests tried to have Pilate change the title, he authoritatively stated (Gk perfect tense), “What I wrote (and stands written), I wrote (and continues to stand written)”. For those **believing into** Jesus, his kingship continues to stand written.

(vv. 23-24) The second scene describes a Roman military custom where soldiers claim the clothing of the condemned person. The defining word is the fulfillment of Psalm 22:18, “...they divide my garments among them, and for my raiment they cast lots”.

Although the parting of the garments is mentioned in all of the Gospels, only John mentions that the soldiers left the seamless *chitōn* (“tunic”; inner garment) intact. The Johannine context here might be provided by their statement, *mē schísōmen autón* (“Let us not tear it...”). John uses the noun *schisma* (“division”) for a split or schism among people (7:43; 9:16; 10:19), and in this context may allude to Jesus’ undivided in-group, left intact by the lifted-up Jesus, for which he had prayed at their last meeting (17:11).

(vv. 25-27) The defining words in the third scene are from Jesus to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!”, and to the beloved disciple, “Behold, your mother!”

With the emotional intensity typical of the Mediterranean mother-son bond, Jesus continues to think of his mother to the end. Yet symbolically, Jesus hands over to the unnamed beloved disciple the care of his faithful disciples (represented by his mother).

This is the trusted disciple to whom Jesus reveals himself, who can authoritatively interpret Jesus, and whose witness evokes loyalty (faith) and attachment (love).

(vv. 28-30) In the fourth scene, the defining word is from Psalm 69:22b (69:21b in English versions), “...and for my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink”.

Jesus now acknowledges that all things “have been finished” (*tetélestai*; i.e., the work entrusted to him has been “fully accomplished”), that scripture “might be fulfilled”. The usual Greek verb for “to fulfill” (Scripture) is *plērō* (as in v. 24), but John uses the verb *teleiō* (as previously in 4:34; 5:36; 17:4), which has the nuance of the Scripture attaining its perfection.

John’s prior allusions to thirst (4:13-15; 6:35; 7:37-39) finally explain that the real thirst quencher is the Spirit (7:39). A sponge full of vinegar (sour wine, the painkiller of the day) is brought to Jesus’ mouth on a *ussōpō* (“hyssop”; an aromatic herb, the twigs of which were used in ceremonial sprinkling, e.g., Lev 14:49-52; Num 19:18; Psa 51:7). Alternatively, it has been suggested that *ussōpō* is a graphic error for *ussō* {“pilum”; a Roman two-meter, shield-penetrating/embedding javelin}.

Repeating v. 28, Jesus proclaims “It is finished”, bows his head and delivers up his spirit. [Normally, one struggling for life against suffocation will stop breathing and the head will drop. But here, Jesus first bows his head and *then* delivers his spirit. This can be taken as the act of sanctioning by a king, i.e., to “give the nod”]. Now that Jesus has been “lifted up” (i.e., “glorified”) he delivers his spirit over his own.

(vv. 31-37) In the fifth and final scene, the defining words are from Psalm 34:20, “He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.”; and from the oracle in Zech 12:10b, “...when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a first-born.”

The pious Judeans, wishing to keep holy the “great Sabbath” (a Sabbath on which the Passover falls) petition Pilate to hasten the deaths of the crucified three before sundown (per Deut 21:23). Pilate’s implied consent is implemented by the soldiers, who break the legs of the two crucified men on either side of Jesus (inducing a quick suffocation).

{Suspecting Jesus dead}, one soldier *énuxen* (“jabbed”) Jesus’ side *lógchē* (“with a lance”), but too hard, so that “there came out immediately blood and water” (i.e., blood and colorless pericardial fluid). These witnessed events following Jesus’ death were interpreted as fulfillment of Scripture (cited above), so “that you also may believe”.

Marshall, A. *The R.S.V. interlinear Greek – English New Testament. The Nestle Greek Text with a literal English Translation.* London: Samuel Bagster and Sons Ltd., 1958.

Malina BJ, Rohrbaugh RL. *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. pp. 268-272.

Did You Know?

This past Sunday, the organ in the sanctuary played a prominent role in the sermon offered by our Music Director Brett Maguire. Did you know that Wesley's first Minister of Music, A. Leslie Jacobs, came to Worcester in 1926 before the building of the church was completed to help select the specifications for the Skinner organ to be built in the sanctuary? Since our church thus has a large pipe organ that was in place even before the dedication of the church, over the years our congregation has perhaps tended to take it for granted that the organ plays a very prominent role in our worship services. Did you ever wonder how the organ came to be one of the main musical instruments used in churches? Believe it or not, in ancient times the early predecessors of the organ as we know it now were very much associated not with worship, but with secular entertainment such as theater. Because of these associations, the writings of the early church theologians contain objections to the use of the organ in worship.

It is unclear when the organ began to be used in Christian rituals. It is known that there were organs in churches in Europe as early as the 8th Century, but it is uncertain whether they were used in any way that was connected to liturgy. (One speculation is that they may have been used for teaching music.) By the 10th Century there are records of organs (and bells) being used at least for special occasions by monastic communities such as the Benedictines. By this time there are also written descriptions of large loud organs located in churches throughout most of Western Europe. It is not until the 12th Century, however, that it is clear that the organ was serving a defined liturgical function and certainly by the 15th Century its use in worship was widely accepted.

In the Roman Catholic tradition the organ assumed a very central role in the celebration of the mass, with the playing of organ pieces called versets, based on chant, often substituting for or alternating with the singing of the chant. In a similar way, after the Reformation, in the Protestant Lutheran tradition the organ was used in alternation with the choir and congregation in the singing of hymns, and by the early 17th Century eventually came to actually accompany the singing. The Calvinists, on the other hand, removed organs from their churches thinking that the use of the organ prevented the active participation of the congregation in worship. Similarly, the Puritans in England destroyed organs during the English civil war, but this trend was reversed during the Restoration era. Finally, the "Modern Revival" of the organ which began with the Romanticists of the mid-19th Century, led to the widespread acceptance of the organ as a means to support the large group singing that is an essential part of Christian worship.

In addition to the hymns, the vast musical literature for the organ written over the centuries is filled with pieces written for use in Christian worship. Often these pieces are based on hymn tunes, liturgical chant, or passages of scripture. Of course, even pieces not written with such a specific liturgical theme can add to our worship both as sources for inspiration, reflection, and meditation and as expressions of God's gift of creativity.

Submitted by, Deborah A. O'Driscoll

2016 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., March 14	Weds., March 16
Mon., March 28	Weds., March 30

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

office@wesleyworc.org

2016 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.



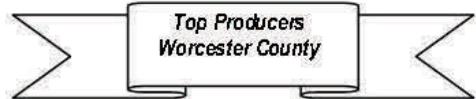
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Director of Music Ministries	Brett Maguire
Ghanaian Choir Master	Kwaku Dankwa
Music Assistant	Deborah O'Driscoll
Director of Children's Christian Education	Jean Grant
Director of Christian Formation & Discipleship	Lisa Fagerstrom
Toddler Care Leader	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
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Ghanaian Association	Emmanuel Okrah
Hospitality Team	Paul Arsenault Vivian Assie
Layleader	Deborah O'Driscoll
Medical Ministry	Ron Ramsay
Memorial Gifts	Carolyn Bellil
Mission Coordinator	Betsy Pennino
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United Methodist Women Co-Chairs	Barbara Ingrassia Allison Hansen

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WESLEY HERALD

MARCH 2, 2016

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