

THE JOURNEY OF THE LABYRINTH

As many of you know, Wesley has purchased a canvas floor-labyrinth for use in retreats and at other times in the life of the church and community. This labyrinth measures 24' x 24' and will entirely cover the width of the Chapel. Some of you may have had the chance to walk the labyrinth that Deb O'Driscoll set up in the Chapel a number of years ago during Advent. Our labyrinth is very similar to the one that was used for that service.

Labyrinths differ from mazes in that there is only one path in and out. A labyrinth is not a puzzle... you won't get lost or hit a dead-end in a labyrinth. The sole purpose of a labyrinth is to walk and pray. For many Christians, this process of praying and meditative walking is a very useful and meaningful spiritual practice.

Walking a labyrinth came into wide use as a spiritual practice for Christians in the Middle Ages. Historians record that labyrinths were sometimes used by the faithful as a "pilgrimage" practice when physically going on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land or other sites was too dangerous or financially impossible. The most well-known labyrinth in existence today is in the floor of the cathedral in Chartres, France (around 800 years old). Our labyrinth is a smaller version of the Chartres design.

We will be painting the path of the labyrinth (already drawn onto the canvas in pencil) this Sunday, March 8th. The children and youth will begin the painting process at Sunday School time, after a brief discussion about the labyrinth and its role in Christian spiritual practices and formation through the ages. All who would like to help with the painting are invited to join us in East Hall following the 10:30 worship service.

From 9:15-10:20 this Sunday morning, anyone who would like to print a favorite Bible verse or spiritual reflection quote (to live under the paint on our labyrinth) is welcome to join us in East Hall for that process. There will also be space and time to add a verse or quote after the 10:30 service.

Please join us for the painting, adding a verse or quote, saying a prayer, or simply being a part of the gathered community as we undertake the painting process this Sunday. There will be information sheets and people available to answer questions about the labyrinth and the painting process. All are welcome!

Lisa Fagerstrom, Dir. of Christian Formation an& Discipleship

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. & Irene B. Garabedian, and Robert Demers by Shirley and family.

The altar flowers on Sunday, March 15th are given in loving memory of my husband, Peter Mayhew Merrill on the 10th anniversary of his passing by Lorna Mattus-Merrill.

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK...

- ✠ Belinda Adams who just got out of the hospital due to a car accident.
- ✠ Alma Redding-Kyle and her family whose 25year old son passed away on the 19th. May God grant them strength and peace.
- ✠ Barbara Vietze (mom of Beth) who turned 80 on Sunday. Giving thanks for an abundant life, may it continue to be so.
- ✠ Safety for staff and students at North High and all schools.
- ✠ Kwaku & Akua on the birth of their daughter, Jody, who is still in ICU after being born prematurely. Pray for grace and strength.
- ✠ Michael Luperchio, and wife Linda Luperchio and their five children (friends of Sandi Pisarski). Michael is at UMass Memorial and in intensive care. He was admitted with a very aggressive infection and his status has turned extremely grave.

THANK YOU!!!

We were so touched by the outpouring of sympathy we received from you, our Wesley Family, after the recent passing of Cindy's mother. Thank you all for your prayers, flowers and personal notes of condolence. We are truly blessed by your love and fellowship.

Mark & Cindy Muncey

WESLEY CHURCH NEEDS: 1 lb Coffee cans (plastic or aluminum) are needed at church. The altar flowers are transferred out of the liners into the coffee cans so Wesley Shut-Ins can enjoy the flowers as they are donated. If you have any, please drop them off in the Welcome Office. Thank you.

EASTER FLOWER ORDERS are now being accepted. There are order forms in the Welcome office. Please be sure to place your form with payment in the box in the office or mail it to Wesley, Attn: Debi. The deadline for orders is March 25th. The cost for each flower is \$10.

MESSAGES FROM THE CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR

It's been a while since I've written, but now that all of my year end duties and the statistical report have been completed, I can, hopefully, resume normal operations! So, here goes...

First, I'd like to give you some project updates.

State Street Roof Repairs – these were completed just before the first snowstorm. The work included installing all new copper flashing around the 5 separate flat roofs, and then installing new roofing. The heating cables are still left to be installed—unfortunately, this didn't get done in time for the first snowstorm, and we are currently experiencing some ice dams. We will be working to clear the roofs and free up the ice backups with special ice melt. (This is a challenging area because it never gets any sun.) Once the roofs are clear, the cables will be installed, and this problem should not reoccur.

Mary Ellis Bathrooms – As some of you may know, the bathrooms are nearly complete. We have a few more accessories to install and are waiting for our final plumbing inspection. The rooms, however, can be used. You'll notice the men's room has a functioning shower, and the ladies' room has a 'mother's room' for nursing or changing diapers. A small carpet for this room is on order, along with a wall-mounted changing table. We will also be purchasing a chair for the corner of the room, and will be obtaining a separate water heater to complete the plumbing inspection requirements. One of the nice features is the lights automatically turn on and off. We are extremely grateful to Jerry Warren for all of his hard work and management of this project, and to Chloe Sundberg for her generosity in covering the cost of this renovation project. Thank you so very much for this and for all you both have done for Wesley!!

Lower Parking Lot Retaining Wall – Jerry Warren, one of our Trustees, has been working to obtain bids for the project to replace this retaining wall. We expect to select the final contractor by April 1. Once the work begins, we believe the job will take 8 to 10 weeks to complete. I will be attempting to find alternative parking spaces during the time of this construction, and will keep you posted as things progress.

Lower Level Carpeting Replacement - In between his regular duties, Phil Johnson has been spending time on clearing out items in the lower level offices and removing the current carpeting in preparation for new carpeting. This will include the Ghanaian Choir room. I expect this project to be completed by the end of the Spring.

2015 Budget Actuals

February	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	26,821	38,338	-11,517
Expense	<u>60,272</u>	<u>60,811</u>	<u>-539</u>
Net Loss	-33,451	-22,473	-10,978

<u>Y-T-D through 2/28/2015</u>	Actual	Budget	Difference
Income	58,636	78,948	-20,311
Expense	<u>107,685</u>	<u>119,606</u>	<u>-11,921</u>
Net Loss	-49,048	-40,658	-8,390

Because of the weather and worship cancellations, our general fund pledges are down. Please make every effort to bring them up to date. Remember, you can also use our web page to make donations—check out www.wesleyworc.org.

Thanks, Lorna



ONECALL TELLALL... If you'd like to receive a call when worship or another service/event is cancelled due to bad weather, or a reminder call of an upcoming event, please stop by the Welcome Office and sign up on the list. If you are unable to come to the church, contact Debi in the office at 508-799-4191 or email her at office@wesleyworc.org. Thank you.

CARTY CUPBOARD FOOD PANTRY

The following is part of a press release that was sent out by Mr. Feinstein...

"Feinstein's Foundation to Suspend \$1 Million Challenge to Fight Hunger..."

The Feinstein Foundation has suspended its annual \$1 Million Giveaway to Fight Hunger for 2015 until further notice in order to concentrate on its ever increasing number of Feinstein Jr. Scholars, now over 150,000 strong, pledged to help better the lives of others."

While we are very grateful for the many, many years of Mr. Feinstein's generous giving, we have always relied on the thousands of pounds of food and thousands of dollars donated during past challenges to help keep our shelves full. **This is a very big loss for us.** So as we enter the Lenten Season please remember those men, women, and children who are hungry and in need of what our mission provides.

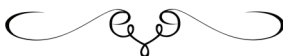
At this time of year we never have enough **Low Sodium Hearty Soups & Meals in a Can** on the shelves. Just one can of either will help us keep up with the demand.

We have two volunteer opportunities open for you to consider... We are still in need of a person who is able to lift 40lbs to work on Friday morning's distribution giving out the pre-packed food bags. The time required is from 9:15 AM until 12:15 PM from now until the beginning of May.

We are also in need of someone to be able to fill in when needed to get bread from the Price Chopper on the corner of Park Ave & Highland Streets, on Tues and Friday between 8:00 and 8:30 AM.

If you can help with either of these please call Nancy at 508-887-1481.

~ Sincerely, Nancy Spencer



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY... Do you have 30 minutes to spare on Monday or Tuesday? Wesley is looking for a volunteer to walk through the chapel and sanctuary and clean up from Sunday services. If you have some spare time and would like to help, please speak with Debi or Lorna in the office. Thank you.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

There is a lot going on in Sunday School this spring!

Please note some important dates.

Easter Egg Hunt Sarah Circle and Christian Education will be hosting the annual Easter Egg hunt at Wesley on **Saturday April 4th, from 10 -11:30**. 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.



VBS! It's time to pre-register for Vacation Bible School. This free camp will be offered **July 6 - 10, from 5 - 8 p.m.** (dinner for kids at 5 p.m.). Our theme this year is "Everest: Conquering Challenges with God's Mighty Power." The kids will "trek" through VBS while discovering God's power and promises all along the way. Registration is open to children in grades Kindergarten through 5th. We will also have a special group for middle-schoolers to meet in discussion on the same theme. **See Jean Grant to pre-register or volunteer.** More detailed registration information will follow.

Lent Mission Project: "Fill the Arks" for Heifer This past week we handed out little "arks" (boxes) for children and the congregation to collect money toward our mission project with Heifer International, a non-profit organization that provides resources and animals to countries in need, where they can use the animals for food and materials to promote self-sufficiency. Filled boxes will be collected after Lent. We will learn about Heifer's mission throughout Lent. The mission retreat to Heifer Farm in Rutland is on **MAY 30th** (drop off at church at 11:30 a.m., with a drive to the farm. Pick up is at 4:30 p.m.). **See Jean Grant to pre-register or volunteer.**

Cans for Carty Cupboard To help out Carty Cupboard, we will be doing a food drive during March. Imagine if every child brought in just 2 canned or boxed items each week, we could collect 200 or more items to donate to this cause! Please think about Carty on your next grocery trip. We will have a collection box upstairs.

THANK YOU! Our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper was a success, with around 40 attending. Thank you to all of those who volunteered to make this a fun and meaningful night!

CHRISTIAN FORMATION OPPORTUNITY...

In the fall, the “One Book, One Church” opportunity was launched as the Wesley community was invited to join together in reading “A Quiet Pentecost” by Dwight Judy. The second “One Book, One Church” book for this program year is “One Day at a Time: Discovering the Freedom of 12-step Spirituality” by Trevor Hudson. All are invited to participate in reading this book during the seasons of Lent and early Eastertide.

Trevor Hudson is a South African Methodist pastor, author, and spiritual practices teacher, who has written a book about reflecting on our lives as individuals and within the church through the lens of recovery. Trevor shares his own experiences and insights as an invitation for others to explore areas within our individual and communal lives that could benefit from the lessons of 12-step spirituality.

Throughout Lent, there will be an on-line chat stream as well as in-person small group discussions (on Sundays) for all interested persons. Four sets of discussion questions will be posed that will be grouped around chapters/steps in the book. [Steps 1-3, 4-7, 8-9, 10-12]

If you have questions or would like a copy of the book, please see Lisa Fagerstrom on Sunday or contact her at: Lisa@wesleyworc.org.

FAURÉ REQUIEM ~ SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2015 - 5:00 PM

ALL SAINTS CHURCH

10 Irving Street, Worcester

Don't miss this free performance of a stunningly beautiful choral work next Sunday! The Wesley Choir is joining up with choirs from All Saints, Trinity Lutheran, and Our Lady of the Angels for this special concert at All Saints Church. For once, I don't have any playing or conducting responsibilities and am looking forward to singing with the basses. I hope you'll come hear this lovely work!

CALLING ***ALL*** WESLEY WOMEN

THIS SATURDAY at Wesley!!

Women's Retreat

Saturday, March 7, 2015

8:30 am - 1:30 pm

Theme: **SHINE OUT GOD'S LIGHT**

What dark places can we light up today?

Join women from all of the Worcester area United Methodist Churches for a time of worship, singing, fellowship, and workshop sessions. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

Free will offering.

Childcare will be provided.

Invite a friend!!

Ingathering of household goods to help the Florence House mothers get started in their own apartments.

To Register please call Barb Ingrassia at 508-829-6359 or email:
umw@wesleyworc.org.

LET GOD'S LIGHT SHINE OUT THROUGH YOU.

MISSION MATTERS

COMMUNITY SUPPER LEADERS NEEDED FOR MAY, JUNE, JULY...

All months (starting with May 30th which is after Memorial Day) are available for you to volunteer with your group! Quite thorough guidelines have been developed and written, based on experiences with the first 16 suppers, and needed support will be given. Food purchases will be reimbursed by the Mission Committee. If you can volunteer, please tell Pastor Shandi or Betsy Pennino.

FEBRUARY AND MARCH COMMUNITY SUPPERS...

The Wachusett Regional High School "Mission Possible" group, led by Rachel and Cordelia Ferdinand, fed about 110 at the February community supper. Thank you for a great meal, and for expressing your happiness in helping others!

On March 28, Linda D'Acri's team will be preparing and serving corned beef and cabbage, carrots, potatoes, salad, beverage and dessert. If you could volunteer to set up, serve or clean up, please contact Linda. Donations of cupcakes, brownies, or bars are also requested.

THE MISSION COMMITTEE WOULD WELCOME NEW MEMBERS.

If you would like to join us, please tell Pastor Shandi or Betsy Pennino. Our meetings are second Wednesdays at 7 pm-- March 11, April 8, May 13 and June 10.

HOSPITALITY NEEDED FOR EYEGASSES MINISTRY ON MARCH 9 AND 23...

Pastor Shandi has noticed that people seeking eye exams and glasses start lining up hours before our doors open. On days which are very cold or raining/snowing, volunteers are needed to offer light refreshments and give out numbers from 4:30 to 6 pm. If you could volunteer to offer hospitality on some 2nd Mondays of the month, please tell Betsy Pennino.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

Please save **May 17th** for an **Imagine No Malaria** program and lunch, after our 10:30 service!

SMALL GIFTS FOR SHELTERS... Sarah Circle will again be collecting useful or edible items for Worcester shelters. On Sundays through Palm Sunday (March 29th), 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 at betspenn35@hotmail.com.



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JOHN IN ULTRA-HIGH CONTEXT: JOHN 4:1-45

(notes from the Brewer Hall Study Group, February 22—March 1, 2015)

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On the way back north to Galilee from the Passover in Jerusalem, Jesus and his disciples had to go through Samaria, where Jesus encountered a woman at Jacob's well (v. 5). This encounter and its sequel conclude at v. 42, when the trip back to Galilee resumes.

vv. 1-4 Jesus himself did not baptize (v. 2) because his personal baptism was with the Spirit of God, not with water (1:33). That Jesus learns of the Pharisees' awareness of him suggests an evaluative gossip network that serves to underscore and identify changing leadership roles – Jesus' growing reputation and John's receding role (3:30).

vv. 5-6 The author carefully notes the general and the specific circumstances of the encounter with the woman (Samaritan city of Sychar, Jacob's well, noon, a woman alone at the well). The Judeans considered the Samaritans' Israelite pedigree to have been polluted by intermarriage with the Assyrian colonists (post-721 BC). Purity rules connected people with their land, so in Judean eyes, both Samaritans and their land were impure/unclean.

vv. 7-15 That the woman is at the well alone in the heat of midday suggests that she had been ostracized by the other women of the city during their usual gatherings at the well (the cool of the morning or evening). The woman is surprised that Jesus (a male outsider) would speak to her (a female Samaritan), assuming that he would have shared the ritual purity concerns of Judeans, even though he was a Galilean (and thus an outsider to both Judeans and Samaritans). The meaning of "living water" (v. 11) at first eludes her (double meaning: both naturally flowing water and John's anti-language for "life"), but Jesus gradually enlightens her so that by v. 15, she is becoming part of the group of disciples forming around Jesus. **vv. 16-19** The command that Jesus gives the woman to call her husband leads to a candid dialogue, indicating that they both understand this as a "private" and confidential conversation – transforming the social space they shared from public to private. As her incorporation into Jesus' group continues, she is able to identify him as a prophet (v. 19). **vv. 20-26** Jesus' explanation that worship will no longer be centered at public shrines provides the basis for the woman's full incorporation into the group, and Jesus' revelation that he is the Messiah.

vv. 27-31 The disciples were astonished at finding Jesus conversing with the woman (they were unaware that she had become part of the group), nevertheless, they refrained from asking questions (which they likely assumed that he would have taken

John in Ultra-High Context continued...

as a public challenge). The scene is full of cultural anomalies. Disregarding Jesus' instructions, the woman leaves her water jar and goes to the city's public square, the most public, male space available, and with no hesitation, tells the men about her conversation with Jesus – not only admitting her own questionable behavior (a fact presumably known to her audience), but also indicating that she had talked about these matters with a total stranger in their neighborhood (i.e., Jesus). But as a result of this unconventional disclosure, she sets in motion the transformation of the men of the city to become part of Jesus' fictive kin. **vv. 32-38** As the theme turns to harvest, the intervening conversation between Jesus and his disciples plays on the pattern of misunderstanding followed by explanation, describing what is going on back in the city where the woman is spreading her story about herself and Jesus. **vv. 39-42** The note that many Samaritans believed because of the woman's testimony suggests an expanding circle of fictive kinship into which the woman had been drawn. Just as the public space (i.e, the well) in which the woman and Jesus initiated their conversation was transformed into the private space of a fictive kin group, so now the public square is being transformed as those occupying it join the Jesus kin group, which Jesus confirms by agreeing to their invitation to remain (two days). The UHC verb *meînai* ("to remain") indicates loyalty or deep attachment (cf. 1:38-39). In v. 42 occurs the only use of the term *Savior* in John's Gospel (the only other Gospel use of the term is in Jesus' birth narrative found in Luke). The title is more commonly used of the resurrected Jesus in other New Testament documents. But here in John, the title refers to Jesus as rescuer of all Israel, including the Samaritan branch considered the illegitimate offshoot by Judeans. What has unfolded in 4:1-42 becomes a pattern of the social transformation experienced by members of the Johannine group (late first century).

vv. 43-45 The journey back to Galilee (interrupted at 4:5) is resumed. The saying in v. 44 that prophets had no honor in their own country had to do with the ancient concept of limited good (land, wealth, or honor). For one to "get ahead" of others within his group (i.e, within a closed society) creates a social imbalance that must be rectified. The closed community had ready arguments for rejecting an achiever (Matt 11:19, Luke 7:34). But here in John it is juxtaposed to a report in v. 45 that Jesus is in fact welcomed in Galilee {– presumably because of his actions and signs at the Passover in Jerusalem (2:13-25)}.

– 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.

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., March 16	Wed., March 18
Mon., March 30	Wed., April 1

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.



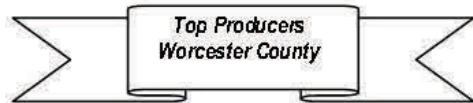
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Worcester, Massachusetts 01608

Church Phone: 508-799-4191
Fax: 508-799-3725
E-Mail: office@wesleyworc.org
Web page: www.wesleyworc.org

WESLEY HERALD
MARCH 4, 2015

***DON'T MISS OUT...
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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
Mission Coordinator	Betsy Pennino
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