

A very happy springtime to all members of the Wesley community!

As I write this, a constantly shifting bird chorus catches my ears and the many green buds and colorful flowers on the trees pull at my eyes. It was Earth Day this past Friday, and with all these signs of spring, I have nature on my mind. I beg your indulgence as I try to nudge you towards a heightened awareness of the miracles unfolding all around us, every minute.

We humans are quite good at surviving the winter, but most of us here in New England are deficient in vitamin D; who gets enough sunshine in the winter here? The past few days have given us some glorious moments of bright sunlight. When was the last time you simply stood outside, closed your eyes, and soaked in the sunlight for a solid minute? If you haven't, please take a moment the next time you notice a particularly bright spot in the day. Go outside and set a timer. Give yourself one minute, one minute to think of nothing other than the movement of air into and out of your lungs and the feeling of sunlight warming your skin. There is deep joy here, but there's a catch: you actually have to do this for it to feel good. Reading my words doesn't count.

Or here's another easy one. Look at a tree the next time one calls out to you, and notice the various stages of colorful growth all over its limbs. Look at a tiny bud, just barely showing its green, then look at one just a bit bigger, then find one that is starting to open up... see how many stages of growth you can witness on one single tree. It's like watching the tree blossom in stop motion photography. Children love looking at this level, so use the companionship of a child as an excuse to stare at a tree if you must. The tree is radiating joy at the final arrival of spring, and you can share in its exuberance.

I've found that the more I take time to simply *notice* what the planet Earth is doing at any given moment, the more I have come to derive a sense of grounding and connection from it. Given that it costs nothing and has tremendous healing potential, this practice seems like a wonderful antidote to the issues of loneliness and depression that plague us in the computer era.

It concerns me how much time we often spend indoors, blocked from the sun's warmth in sealed-off enclosures with artificial lighting and stale air, looking at glowing lights on a screen without moving our bodies for hours at a time.

*Continued on page 3...*

## LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS...

**The Tower** lighting for April is given in loving memory of Margaret A. (Swan) Fuller by David, Kathy, Nancy, and grandchildren.

**The Rose** window lighting for April is given in loving memory of Doris L. Tremblay by Tammy, Tracy, Allison, David, Nancy, and families.

**The Tower** lighting for May is given in loving memory of my parents, Norman and Mary Fletcher and my brother, David Fletcher by Barbara Fletcher.

**The Rose** window lighting for May is given in loving memory of Dorothy Aho, Axel Swanberg, and Clara Swanberg by Nancy Aho, Heidi O'Leary and family.

**The altar flowers** on May 8<sup>th</sup> are given in loving memory of Mrs. Florida Guttridge and Mrs. Estelle Clemons by Stanley Guttridge.

## WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK...

- † Family and friends of Gary Lambert of Spencer who died while on vacation in the Bahama's
- † For Harriet
- † Bricia that she may have a safe delivery
- † All children in the world
- † Friend of Laura Zoldak, Judy Perry, who has many serious health issues
- † Someone's mother who is in pain that she may be brought to good health
- † Someone's friends who are experiencing illness

**SAVE THE DATE (NOTE CHANGE OF DATE) ~ MAY 7, 2016, 8:30 AM TO 1 PM**

### **DRAWING NEAR TO GOD**

*A Spring Retreat with Lisa Fagerstrom, Retreat Leader*

Our day will begin with a light breakfast gathering and fellowship time. The retreat will begin at 9 a.m. and end with lunch at 12:30. During the retreat, we will reflect on Fredrick Buechner's quote: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." Through stories, prayer and meditation, quiet time, art, Labyrinth walking, and other spiritual practices... we will honor each other's experiences and journeys in seeking to find that place where our deep gladness meets the world's deep hunger. Come and rest for a while and make new friends on this life and faith journey. All are welcome!!!

## *Sharing in the Gospel continued...*

This seems to be the modern human in its typical dwelling. Does this sound like a healthy environment for a living creature on planet Earth, or a perverse cage we don't even know we inhabit?

What if we pretended for a moment that we weren't quite so separate from the other life all around us, and took our queuing from it? Why not try stretching to the sky like the trees and soaking in the sun, try running around like the squirrels and playing because it's joyous to move quickly, or singing like birds because it feels so good to be sitting out in the fresh air? We often wait until we're feeling joyful to act joyous, but what if we just ventured outside and noticed the joy of spring? As I said earlier, you simply have to do it. Open your ears, open your eyes, reach out a touching hand, and breathe deeply. With such pulsing life all around, you may just find your heart opening up to receive it.

*Shalom!*

*Brett Maguire, Director of Music*

## **NEW MEMBER CLASS**

**Beginning Sunday, May 8, 12:30pm-2:00pm**

A new member class will be starting at Wesley. Membership classes will run for six weeks, and will be held on Sundays, (beginning May 8), from 12:30pm-2:00pm. Please contact Pastor Shandi to enroll. If you're interested in becoming a member but the class schedule does not work for you, still contact Pastor Shandi and let him know. Contact info: [pastorshandim@wesleyworc.org](mailto:pastorshandim@wesleyworc.org) or 508-799-4191 x108.

**HERALD VOLUNTEER(S) NEEDED:** We are looking for a couple of volunteers to help put the Herald together on Wednesday mornings. They begin around 8:30/9 am. Often we will gather for coffee, snacks, and fellowship time afterwards. If you have a couple of hours every other Wednesday (sometimes a Thursday) and would like to help, please speak with Debi in the office. Thank you.

**HELP UMW HELP OUR NEIGHBORS AT THE FLORENCE HOUSE...** During this time we are collecting new articles for the young mothers at Florence House who will be moving into their first apartments, as the United Methodist Women have done for several years. Please put the household supplies in the red basket in the church pantry on Sunday morning.

*Thank you, Carolyn Bellil*

**DAUGHTERS OF ABRAHAM:** The Daughters of Abraham book club will meet next on Wednesday, May 18, at the YWCA located at One Salem Square in Worcester. The meeting will be held beginning at 7 p.m. in the conference room located on the second floor. The book under discussion is "Searching for Your Soul: Writers of Many Faiths Show their Personal Stories of Personal Recovery" by Katherine Kurs. The assignment for discussion is page 294 to the end of the book.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

### **Vacation Bible School!**

Please see the VBS page for information about this free, fun camp. Turn the Pre-registration form into the office or to Jean Grant, [grantgirl05@yahoo.com](mailto:grantgirl05@yahoo.com).

## MISSION MATTERS

### **Leaders Needed for Community Suppers-- Starting with June's**

*June 25, July 30, and Aug. 27 are available for you or your group to volunteer to lead a community supper.* Please talk with Betsy Pennino or Lisa Fagerstrom about which month to reserve and any questions you have.

Note: The May supper will be early (on May 21) because of the Memorial Day Weekend.

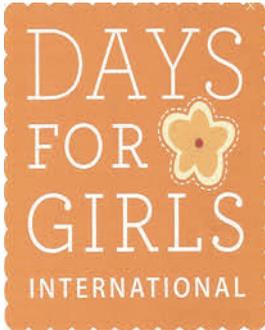
**IHN House Needs Volunteers in May...** Director Joanne Alley is looking for volunteers to cover the weeks of May 8 to 21, as no church is signed up. If you are able to cover the supper, evening, or overnight shifts during the half week of Weds., May 18 to Sat., May 21, please contact Mercy Peacock (774-922-3236 or [mercyp61@yahoo.com](mailto:mercyp61@yahoo.com)). She is now Wesley's IHN Coordinator... Thank you, Mercy! There will also be an IHN sign-up table on Sundays after both services.

**Give a Used Phone... Save a Life...** Safe Havens, an interfaith partnership against domestic violence, is again collecting used cell phones (not-so-smart phones only), with batteries and chargers. Newer phones will be reprogrammed *to allow victims of domestic violence or elder abuse to dial 911 and other emergency numbers.* Older phones will be sold for parts, and the proceeds will support Safe Havens' work to help victims and survivors. Often abusers try to prevent victims from phoning for help, so your used phone could become a lifeline.

You may leave your discarded phones in the Brewer Hall box labeled for Safe Havens. Pastor Shandi will take them to Annual Conference on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Our Habitat Build Day...** Thank you to all who participated in the Habitat for Humanity mission on Saturday, April 23. The build team was Becca and Tim McBrayer, Bill Robbins, Chris Kerns, Gerard Piscitelli, Munah Wisner, Spencer Ferdinand, Bruce and Betsy Pennino. Thanks also, Donna Hirtle, for making sandwiches, Polly Boyns for baking yummy cookies, and Yvette Ferdinand for bringing us cold drinks. It was great that you all provided enough goodies to share with our Habitat project managers, the other group of volunteers, and the adults who will each own half of the duplex and were contributing their "sweat equity."





**A MISSION FOR ALL THE WOMEN OF WESLEY**

**DAYS FOR GIRLS**

**A SIMPLE SOLUTION TO MAKE A BIG IMPACT**

**INFORMATION MEETING**

**FRIDAY, MAY 13<sup>TH</sup> AT 10:00 AM**

**We, the women of Wesley, are beginning a new mission journey that will change the life of girls all over the world. We will be making washable, sustainable hygiene kits to give girls back their dignity, protect their health and give them back months of missed education and opportunity.**

**Feminine Hygiene Kits consist of the following:**

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Drawstring Bag</b>           | <b>5. Travel sized soap</b>               |
| <b>2. Moisture barrier shields</b> | <b>6. One-gallon zip lock freezer bag</b> |
| <b>3. Absorbent tri-fold pads</b>  | <b>7. 2 pairs panties</b>                 |
| <b>4. Washcloth</b>                | <b>8. Instruction sheet</b>               |

**Girls miss school and work for up to five days a month because they do not have access to feminine hygiene items. Girls worldwide suffer indignities, infection, even exploitation trying to stay in school. Some make do with newspaper, corn husks, and rags. In our world today this is unacceptable. We women need to do everything in our power to change this situation.**

**We will begin by sewing the first three items in the kit. You do not have to sew because we need your support in all areas: sewing, shopping, washing fabric, tracing and cutting patterns, and much more.**

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN CHANGING A GIRLS LIFE JOIN US AT OUR ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING, FRIDAY, MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>. AT 10:00 AM**

**We will meet in the Prayers and Squares sewing room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.**

**For more information call: Lorraine Kronberg 508 852-6629**

**Check the website: [Daysforgirls.org](http://Daysforgirls.org)**

## WESLEY'S CHURCH DIRECTORY

An updated Wesley Church Directory is now available to access online or a copy can be picked up at church. If you are unable to come to church and would like a copy of the directory, please call me or email me to make arrangements.

*Thank you, Debi Ritacco*

***How can you access the directory online?*** First you have to be in the church directory, and second, you need to have an active email address listed within the directory as well. If both these are the case for you, follow the instructions below.

If you would like to access this but your email is not currently in the directory, please email me with your name, address and phone number and I will be sure to add you to the directory. After I add you, you will receive an email from me that you are all set to access the directory.

### ONLINE ACCESS TO WESLEY CHURCH DIRECTORY

If you have a computer/laptop and a valid email address that is published within the directory, you can now have instant online access to the church directory on your item.

Follow these easy steps:

- ◆ Go to: <https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/>
- ◆ Select: [Create a login now](#)
- ◆ Type in the email address you have given Debi to list within the directory
- ◆ Enter a password, then reenter the password to confirm it.
- ◆ Within a couple of minutes you should receive an email. Within the email, select the link provided.
- ◆ You can then log into the directory at any time.
- ◆ Be sure to bookmark the directory page for future use.

When the directory is updated in the office, the directory online is automatically updated as well. Therefore, you will always have current information.

Questions? Please email me.

*Thank you, Debi Ritacco*

## **John in Ultra-High Context: John 21:15-25**

**{notes from the Brewer Hall Study Group, April 17, 2016}**

### **Tying Up Loose Ends (re Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple)**

(vv. 15-19) This first conversation of the risen Jesus with Simon Peter deals with Peter's disloyalty (three times) at the time of Jesus' interview with Pilate. Such disloyalty would normally require satisfaction on the part of the one dishonored. The sort of satisfaction taken by the risen Jesus is marked by three successive questions [that paralleled Peter's three prior denials (18:17, 25-27)].

{Although the English translations of the three questions all state, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?", for the first two questions (vv. 15a and 16a), Jesus uses the verb *agapâs me* ("lovest thou me?" – in the universal, unconditional sense), and had added in v. 15a, "... more than these?" [i.e., more than the other disciples loved him], recalling Peter's stated readiness to lay down his life for Jesus (13:37). Peter responds both times *philō se* ("I love thee" – in the sense of brotherhood or friendship). For the third question (v. 17a), Jesus now asks *phileîs me* ("lovest thou me?" – in the brotherhood/friendship sense), and Peter responds as before. It's as if Jesus were probing Peter's level of commitment and found it less than unconditional but at least as solid as that for a friend.}

The responses Jesus gave Peter for each of his answers ("Feed my lambs", v. 15c; "Shepherd my little sheep", vv. 16c, 17c) [suggest care for the younger and more tender part of the flock – the weak believers], possibly referring to Isa 40:10-11 ("The Lord God ... will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms..."). Jesus concludes this reconciliation with Peter by his word of honor (*amēn amēn*) about Peter's fate. {A martyr's death} for Johannine group members is another way of "glorifying God".

(vv. 20-23) The second conversation is initiated by Peter's question re "the disciple whom Jesus loved" following them: "Lord, what of this one?" Jesus replies with the last quote of John's Gospel, "If I wish him to remain until I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me."

Although not specifically mentioned in the beginning of the Gospel, multiple clues indicate that from chapter 11 onward, "the disciple whom Jesus loved"/"another" or "other" disciple, was Lazarus {11:1, 3, 5, 36; 13:23; 18:15-16; 19:26-27; 20:2-4, 8; 21:7, 20, 23}. There seems to have been a rumor in the Johannine gossip network that the resurrected Lazarus ("the beloved disciple") would not be allowed to die a second time. {This final conversation neither confirms nor denies that rumor.}

[According to Eastern Orthodox tradition, sometime after the resurrection of Christ, Lazarus was forced to flee Judea because of rumored plots on his life (cf. John 12:9-11) and came to Cyprus. There he was appointed by Paul and Barnabas as the first bishop of Kition (present-day Larnaka), where he lived thirty more years, and on his death was buried there for the second and last time. Further establishing the apostolic nature of Lazarus' appointment was the story that the bishop's omophorion {a vestment worn about the neck and shoulders} was presented to Lazarus by Jesus' mother, who had woven it herself. Such apostolic connections were central to the claims of autocephaly (from 325-431) made by the bishops of Kition {to be self-governing, although still in full communion with the hierarchy from which it left (that of Jerusalem)}. The church of Kition was declared self-governing in 431 AD at the Third Ecumenical Council.]

### **Epilogue-2, and Attestation to the Author's Veracity**

(vv. 24-25) This conclusion states that the disciple referred to in vv. 20-23 is the witness and author of what has been written in the Gospel of John, {at least the author of chapters 11-21}. The Johannine group at the time the Gospel was completed (the anonymous "we") attests to his veracity. Like the first conclusion at the end of the previous chapter, the selective character of the presented information is acknowledged. The final comment about "many other things which Jesus did" suggests further descents/appearances of Jesus, which the Johannine group also experienced, at least up to the time that the Gospel was completed.

The beginning of chapter 21 begins with the Johannine transition, "After these things..." which has led to the suggestion that this chapter was appended the same way as Mark 16:9-20, because the author ended chapter 20 with a solemn close and an epilogue (Epilogue-1). However, chapter 21 has several points of contact with the style and language of previous chapters, and the Nestle-Aland critical text of the New Testament lists only three surviving copies of John's Gospel dating to the 4<sup>th</sup> century or prior, all of which include chapter 21. So if John 21 were added by the original author to record an additional incident, it was so early and so widespread that no evidence of a prior form has survived.

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. 290-291.

Gill, J. *John 21.* In: *Exposition of the Old and New Testament.* 1746-63.

Wikipedia. *Lazarus of Bethany.* 04 September 2015.

Wikipedia. *John 21.* 23 March 2016.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Especially during the Great Fifty Days of Easter (from Easter Sunday until Pentecost), the celebratory nature of our Sunday morning worship makes it fairly obvious that we are an Easter people. However, we are not people of the Resurrection just on Easter Sunday and not even just during the Great Fifty Days but throughout the liturgical year. From earliest times, Christians have included celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus as an important part of worship. One of the main reasons that Christians have adopted Sunday (rather than the Jewish Sabbath, Saturday) as the day for worship relates to the fact that Sunday is the day of the Resurrection.

Among the Hebrews of the Old Testament the seventh day of the week (Saturday) was observed as the Sabbath, a day consecrated to God as Creator of the Universe and time. It was set aside as an occasion for the adoration of God and for commemoration of divine acts of grace. For Early Christians Sunday began to replace the Jewish Sabbath as the day set apart for worship because Sunday not only is the day that Jesus rose from the dead but also the day he appeared to his disciples and gave the promised gift of the Holy Spirit.

Sunday is the first day of the week in the Jewish calendar. For Christians it also is the first day—the day Christ has claimed by victory over death and the start of new life for all of us. However, in its fullness Sunday is also the *eighth* day of the week. Seven is considered the number of completion, but eight, extending beyond seven, is the number of redemption and goes beyond the completion of creation to the emergence of a new age. Eighth-day symbolism appears in the church through octagonal architecture and furnishings (the baptismal font in the Wesley sanctuary is octagonal).

The word “Sunday” itself is non-biblical and comes from the Graeco-Roman tradition of naming the days of the week after planets. The word *Sunday* came into being in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century as a pagan term which was adopted by Christians as they made the analogy between Christ’s rising from the dead and the rising of the sun. Although the word *Sunday* comes from the Latin *dies solis*, meaning “sun’s day,” (the name of a pagan Roman holiday) Christians worship not a pagan sun god but Christ as the Light of the World. The word *Sunday* is still used in both English and German, but in other languages the word used to designate the first day of the week translates as the *Lord’s Day*.

It is important to remind ourselves that throughout the year our weekly Sunday worship is in fact the major festival of the Christian faith. According to Laurence Stookey in *Calendar: Christ’s Time for the Church*: “On any given Lord’s Day, the worshiping church in the present moment grasps both the past (by commemorating...the Lord’s resurrection and all that served to prepare for it) and the future (by affirming the fulfilled reign of God, the Day of the Lord). Both of these are made present to us as we experience the transforming power of the resurrection in our lives and thereby begin to live even now in the ways of the future.”

*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., May 9	Wed., May 11
Tues., May 24	Thurs., May 26

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

**office@wesleyworc.org**

**ALTAR FLOWERS** on Sundays are available for donation in honor, celebration or in memory of a loved one or friend. Stop by the office and reserve the date in the Altar Flower book. 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 or member/friend in the hospital or in rehab. 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.



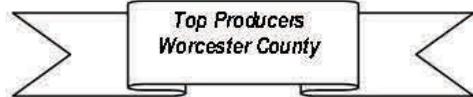
**United Methodist  
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**

Providing full-service financial products  
and services to United Methodists

New England Branch  
207-591-6449

**www.umfcu.org**

California Headquarters  
toll-free 800-245-0433



**Gibbs**  
REALTY INC.  
A Smart Move



Jeffrey Gibbs  
Broker/REALTOR®



Christy Gibbs  
REALTOR®

Your Wesley Family REALTORS®  
Proudly Servicing All of Worcester County

GibbsRealtyInc.com • 508-886-6100



**Wesley United Methodist Church**  
**114 Main Street**  
**Worcester, Massachusetts 01608**

**Church Phone: 508-799-4191**  
**Fax: 508-799-3725**  
**E-Mail: [office@wesleyworc.org](mailto:office@wesleyworc.org)**  
**Web page: [www.wesleyworc.org](http://www.wesleyworc.org)**

**WESLEY HERALD**  
**APRIL 27, 2016**

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

**WESLEY STAFF & LEADERSHIP TEAM**

- Pastor Shandirai Mawokomatanda
- Director of Music Ministries Brett Maguire
- 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 Paul Hayfron
- Hospitality Team Paul Arsenault Vivian Assie
- Layleader Deborah O'Driscoll
- Medical Ministry Ron Ramsay
- Memorial Gifts Carolyn Bellil
- Mission Coordinator Betsy Pennino
- Staff-Parish Relations Co-Chairs Mark Muncey Gifty Bentum-Asante
- Youth Directors Lisa Fagerstrom Anthony & Adrienne Phillips
- United Methodist Women Co-Chairs Barbara Ingrassia Allison Hansen

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
WORCESTER, MA  
PERMIT NO. 236