

RADICAL HOSPITALITY
Philoxenia, Kenosis, and Agape

Over the next several months, the program staff and I will be leading the church to reflect on Robert Schnase's five practices of fruitful living/congregations. These are: radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk-taking mission and service, and extravagant generosity. We will explore these ideas in various contexts, including worship, committee meetings, and small groups. The first practice to explore is radical hospitality. Hospitality in the Greek is *Philoxenia*, which literally means "love of strangers" or "love of the strange." When in Romans 12:13, Paul urges us to welcome the stranger (*Philoxenian diakontes*), in the Greek, he actually invites to love strangers with our "service." *Diakontes* is derived from the same root word Jesus uses when he instructs his disciples that the greatest in God's kingdom are "servants of all" (Mark 9:35). Love and service are thus integral components.

In Philippians, Paul invites us to let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus, (Phil.2:5). When Paul goes on to describe this mind, he describes how Jesus "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave" (Phil 2:7). For Jesus, service and servanthood is characterized by a sense of emptying (*kenosis*) oneself. *Kenosis* is related to a life of humility which Paul describes in the same passage when he says, Jesus "humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death" (Phil 2:8). For Jesus to make room for us in God's kingdom, he loved us so much, though sin had made us strangers to God. Yet, Jesus chose to love the strange in us in such a way that he emptied himself in order to take on our burden to the point of death or cross. He demonstrated such a humility that would put him on his knees in order to wash the feet of his disciples – all this because of God's love for us!

Agape (love) is the love that God has for us. Jesus taught that, "no one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for others" (John 15:13). *Agape* is other-regarding; that is, love that puts the needs of the other above one's own. This is the love God demonstrated in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If we are to talk about hospitality at all, the Christian understanding of hospitality is RADICAL. Such hospitality is not only left to ushers, greeters, coffee-hour volunteers, or community supper and Carty Cupboard volunteers. Christian Radical Hospitality is for ALL of us to practice. It is even more so important in a diverse and multicultural congregation such as ours. We experience strange things all the time, whether it is strange foods or strange music. In the midst of all of this, we are urged to have a love of the strange that is expressed in humble, self-emptying, and other-regarding service. If that is not radical, then I don't know what is! Join us as we reflect on how to embody and practice Radical Hospitality in our lives and congregation.

In faith and trust, Pastor Shandi

LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS...

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 Tower lighting for June is given in loving memory of Hazel and Sherman Langille by The Bellil Family.

The June Rose window lighting is available for dedication. The cost of the lighting is \$40. If you are interested in this lighting, please contact Debi in the office at 508-799-4191 or email at office@wesleyworc.org. Thank you.

The August Tower and September Rose window lightings are available for dedication. The cost is \$40 for the month. If you are interested in one of these lightings, please contact Debi in the office at 508-799-4191, ext. 102. Thank you.

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK...

- ✠ Those mourning the death of Brian Tangney, a 25 year old, who died in a motor-cycle accident this week.
- ✠ Family and friends of Annabelle Dostoler who passed away on Friday, May 22nd.
- ✠ Those who are struggling.

A BIG THANK YOU!

I want to extend a deep note of gratitude to everyone who helped to make the Annual Conference of the Ghana Methodist Choirs a success. There was an incredible amount of work taking place behind the scenes. So many people were involved, contributing to its success. I also know that it was challenging in many respects to have all things come together. But, thanks be to "God, who makes all things work together for the good," the event was spirit filled and enriching. I want to thank YOU for helping us extend a ministry of radical hospitality and welcome.

Thank you! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

~ Pastor Shandi

CELEBRATING THE MINISTRY OF PHIL & EMILY SMITH
JUNE 14, 2015 12:00PM - 1:30PM

On June 14, 2015, following the 10:30 worship service, you are invited to join us in celebrating the ministry of Phil and Emi Smith as we bid them farewell. A lunch meal, Chicken Parmigiana, will be served for everyone.

Although Phil and Emi have been lay volunteers, they have been like staff to us, giving an incredible amount of time and energy to oversee our ministry with the youth. In my tenure here as Pastor, I have witnessed the youth ministry reach new and incredible heights thanks to the vision and leadership of Phil and Emi. Phil and Emi will be moving to Indiana, shortly after the YOUTH2015 trip, where Emi has attained a teaching position. We want to wish them Godspeed and to pray for their journey and ongoing ministry. Please come and celebrate with us following the service on June 14th.

~ Pastor Shandi

UMW REMINDER... UMW Steering Committee Meeting, **8:45 a.m. Saturday, June 6th**. Could all UMW officers and circle leaders please attend our next Steering Committee meeting on Saturday, June 6 at 8:45 a.m. in Mary Ellis Lounge. We will be discussing next year's calendar of events. If the circle chair can't make it, please send another representative from your circle.

HELP PREVENT HOMELESSNESS ONE GIFT CARD AT A TIME!

The Hope for Housing ministry sells gift cards to grocery stores you shop in every week: Stop & Shop, Shaw's, Big Y, Hannaford's, plus CVS and Panera. Five percent of each card's face value goes to a fund that keeps people in their homes -- when they have difficulty paying rent or a utility bill, Hope for Housing steps in to prevent families from becoming homeless. Our ministry needs more volunteers to help sell these gift cards after the 8:30 and 10:30 services. Volunteer sign up sheets are at the table near the coffee and donuts. We'd like to set up a regular rotating schedule. Talk to Allison Hansen to find out more, email her at AChis4788@aol.com or give her a call at 508-853-5339. Thank you!

CARTY CUPBOARD

The Items of the month for May and June are... condiments... in plastic please. To those of you who continue to donate food items, (and it's less than 12 folks!) we really do appreciate your thoughtfulness! If you have not donated, please consider picking up some condiments for the food pantry on your next shopping trip.

Thank You!! ~ Nancy Spencer

SUMMER CAMP IS NOT OUT OF REACH!

Summer camp experiences can last a lifetime for a child, and we want to make sure that any Wesley family interested in sending their child to a Methodist summer camp can do so. Thanks to the generosity of the hungry customers at United Methodist Women bake sales, we can offer "camperships" -- funding to help a child attend camp this summer. Children's Christian Education Director Jean Grant will have request forms for interested parents to fill out. Camp registration season is soon, so please let Jean know if you'd like to apply for a campership. All requests remain confidential.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

A CELEBRATION OF HOSPITALITY! We want to thank the 18 youth and adults who helped make our Sunday Children's Activities such a success during the Ghanaian Choir Festival service on May 24th. We created a fun, enriching, and activity-filled time with the Wesley and visiting children. We had almost 60 children in attendance and received numerous thank-you's for all the hard work put into the program we offered. Thank you so very much!

Blessings, Lisa and Jean

FIELD TRIP THIS WEEKEND... Just a reminder that our Heifer field trip is this Saturday, May 30th. Parents and Chaperones will be receiving a reminder email. Please drop off children between 11:30-12:00 for lunch (before departure to the farm). Pick up at church is between 4-4:30. Questions, email Jean at grantgirl05@yahoo.com.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL! July will be here before we know it. Looking for an enriching (and free!) activity for your children during the summer? Seeking an opportunity to serve the church? Please see the VBS insert for child and volunteer registration. Volunteers can help in all aspects: before, during, or after VBS, from cooking to crafting to games or teaching. Thank you! Questions, ask Jean Grant.

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH SUNDAY... Mark your calendars for this special children and youth-led worship service on June 14th!

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL... Just because school ends for the year, doesn't mean that it will end at church! We will continue to offer the 10:30 a.m. Sunday School program throughout summer. If you have never volunteered before and would like to help out, summer is a great time to start as a greeter or floater, so you can assist teachers, and observe our growing ministry. Contact Jean Grant if you are interested.

MISSION MATTERS

IMAGINE NO MALARIA (INM) SUCCEEDS

We are hoping for more donations to INM, and contributions made in New England before 6/30/15 will be matched (doubled). INM contributions can be sent to the church office, attention Lorna.

Through INM, the United Methodist Church has partnered with organizations such as the American Red Cross and UNICEF to contain malaria. For the 1st time ever, total world deaths from malaria fell below 575,000 per year, but 400,000 of those were still children. 90% of deaths from malaria are in sub-Saharan Africa which has the deadliest strain of malaria. In that region, the decrease in malaria deaths since 2000 is 54%.

New health clinics and medical professionals funded by INM helped with the Ebola Crisis also. Because the presenting symptoms of Ebola and malaria are exactly the same, many Africans were screened for both diseases, and treated earlier than they would have been.

The use of insecticide-treated bed nets is one important reason for the decrease in deaths. INM has distributed 2.3 million bed nets. Health workers have accompanied every bed net to explain the most effective use, and they have returned a year later to review proper use of the nets.

MAY COMMUNITY SUPPERS

On Saturday, May 30, Linda D'Acri and her family will be preparing a meal of BBQ chicken, potato salad, macaroni salad, mixed veggies, green salad, beverage and dessert. Donations of cupcakes, brownies, or cookies are requested.

FREE MEALS IN WORCESTER

There's now a schedule of free hot meals that are available in Worcester, with a map of the locations on the back. You can give this sheet to anyone you meet who is looking for assistance, or leave copies in places where needy people might find them. The Mission Committee gathered the info, and Debi Ritacco produced the chart and map. Help yourself to copies which are outside the Welcome Office window.

Worcester organizations have worked together to offer breakfast M - F at St. John's Church, and on Saturday at the John St. Baptist Church. Sally's Place at the Salvation Army has food from 9 am to 2 pm M - F, and dinner on Sunday. Mustard Seed provides dinner M - F, and 3 churches (including Wesley) offer dinners on the various Saturdays. Questions? Ask Betsy Pennino.

YOUTH2015 ~ FUNDRAISING DATES & LOCATIONS

Have a night off from cooking and help support the youth get to Youth2015 in Orlando, Florida, June 24-28th. Here are some upcoming locations...

June 3 at Dairy Queen, W. Boylston Street, Worcester. Please bring the flyer with you. Wesley gets 10% of all sales.

June 9 at Mexicali Restaurant in Holden. No flyer is needed. Wesley gets 10% of all sales.

WHEN CANCER STRIKES A FRIEND: WHAT TO SAY, WHAT TO DO, AND HOW TO HELP

**The Public is Invited to a Workshop:
Sunday, June 7, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.**

Hawes Hall, Sudbury United Methodist Church
251 Old Sudbury Road, Sudbury, MA 01776

Rev. Bonnie Draeger, author of the book *When Cancer Strikes a Friend* will lead a workshop Sunday, June 7 from 3:00 to 4:30 PM at the Sudbury United Methodist Church. She will address six questions frequently asked by those looking for guidance on how to care for someone close to them who has received the devastating diagnosis of cancer:

1. Where and how do you begin when cancer strikes a member of your community, family, congregation, or workplace?
2. How can you appropriately and effectively respond when you first learn of another person's cancer?
3. How can you continue to support and help patients and their families throughout the cancer journey?
4. What should friends know about the cancer journey?
5. What do we need to know about good communication during cancer and ways to share "help, hope, and humor?"
6. What can you do to help the larger community assist and support cancer patients and their families?

Contact Alexandra Plotkin, alexandra@sudbury-umc.org or at 978-443-0351 for more information.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

Upcoming Christian Formation Retreat — On Saturday, June 13th from 9 a.m. -1 p.m. there will be a retreat at Wesley UMC focusing on “The Soul of Hospitality.” We talk often in churches about our call as Christians to offer hospitality to others. What about offering hospitality to ourselves? While at first glance this question may seem like a self-centered one... this retreat will invite a different perspective as we focus on what “self-care”/ “self-hospitality” means for our capacity to offer hospitality to others.

A light breakfast and lunch will be provided. There will be a basket available for donations. However, there is no fee for attending the retreat. All are welcome to this day of spiritual reflection and renewal! Sign-up sheets will be available on Sunday the 31st and the 7th between services and after the 10:30 service.

Topical Discussion Adult Sunday School Class — All are welcome to this class which meets on Sundays in the John Wesley Room from 9:40-10:25 a.m. The class uses the Faith Link curriculum from Cokesbury Publishing to engage in rich and diverse discussion about each week’s topic. Upcoming topics are: A Culture of Prayer (May 31st), Race and Excessive Police Force—Part 1 (June 7th), Race and Excessive Police Force—Part 2 (June 14th), “Nones” and Faith: What the church has to offer those who currently don’t attend church—Part 2 (June 21st), Water Crises (June 28th). If you would like to be added to the e-mail list for notifications about the class and distribution of materials, please contact Lisa at Lisa@wesleyworc.org.

New Small Groups Forming — In May/June, two new small groups are forming to discuss Robert Schnase’s book “Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations: Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development, Risk-taking Mission and Service, and Extravagant Generosity.” There will be a group that will meet at the home of Lorraine and George Kronberg from 10:30 a.m.-Noon. This group will meet first on Tuesday, June 1st and for their second session on Tuesday, July 6th. There will also be an evening group that will meet at the church from 7-8:30 p.m. The groups will meet once a month and will begin with prayer and fellowship time followed by a facilitated discussion of one of the practices. The plan is to spend two months discussing each practice detailed in Schnase’s book. The first month’s discussion will focus on the Scriptural and theological perspectives of the practice, and the second month’s discussion will focus on practical steps that we can take as a church to implement the practice.

Please call or e-mail Lisa (Lisa@wesleyworc.org) if you are interested in being a part of one of the groups. There will be an informational meeting in the Parlor after services on June 7th for anyone interested in being a part of this evening group or learning more about the small group process.

John in Ultra-High Context: John 8:12-20

(notes from the Brewer Hall Study Group, May 17, 2015)

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Jesus' Revelation as Israel's Light: Controversy over His Testimony (8:12-20)

(v. 12) This verse continues the narration from 7:52, and the controversy marked by his statements at the Feast of Sukkot (from 7:2) now accelerates. This “**light** of the world” metaphor is the second of the “I am” statements in John (cf. 6:35), and like the “rivers of living water” allusion made earlier (7:37-39), is another UHC allusion to a traditional feature of the feast. {The “living water” allusion of chapter 7 was to the Celebration of the Place of Water-Drawing, commemorating the drawing of the water for the water-libation on the Altar}, whereas the “light of the world” allusion is to the large golden candelabrum set up at the feast.

In UHC code, “**light**” and “**life**” are synonymous (1:4). Thus, the declaration “I am the **light** of the world” = “I am the **life** of the world”.

(v. 13) The Pharisees' concern about Jesus' self-testimony derives from the fact that in nonliterate societies, the validity of the spoken word depended heavily on corroboration by another witness. Concern over false testimony permeated first century life, e.g., business transactions and contracts (including marriage). An attempt to {pad one's résumé} by self-testimony (i.e., bragging) was considered shameful behavior.

(v. 14) In the progression of John's Gospel, Jesus' knowledge of his origin and destiny derives from his unique relationship with the Father. Thus, only Jesus knows where he came from and where he is going. Jesus points out that his opponents lack this unique social information that would allow them to judge him. {But the Father could not be called as a witness, which leaves Jesus' opponents to rely on just the logic of his argument.}

(v. 15) The literal phrase “according to the flesh” (and not the NRSV “by human standards”) is used only by John, and elsewhere in New Testament writings only by Paul (2 Cor. 5:16). This correctly reflects the ancient/collectivist belief that physique determined character (physiognomics), i.e., “a person's movements,

postures, colors, facial expressions, hair, skin type, voice, flesh-tone, parts of the body and overall physique". Jesus has assumed that his opponents have made judgments about him based on his appearance and form.

(v. 16) This claim of Jesus, that the authority of his judgment rests with the Father, {relies on the same logic as used in v. 14}.

(vv. 17-18) The Greek syntax places Jesus at a distance from elite Judean tradition requiring two corroborating (i.e., human) witnesses. Rather, Jesus reinterprets the two-witness rule as requiring only himself and the Father who sent him. This solidarity of the Father and Jesus is a significant motif throughout John's Gospel.

(v. 19) The question to Jesus re the location of his Father confirms that the questioners are outsiders to his group without the necessary social basis for judgment of him (cf. v. 14). He then adds the Middle Eastern truism, "like father, like son" (v. 19b), reflecting the scriptures: Deut. 23:2; 2 Kings 9:22; Isa. 57:3; Hos. 1:2; Eccles. 23:25-26, 30:7. For daughters, the analogous truism, "like mother, like daughter" is found in Ezek. 16:44.

(v. 20) This is the fifth time in the course of Jesus' teaching in the temple that his precise location is noted.

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. 156-158. *Sukkot.* Wikipedia. 18 April 2015.

Pseudo-Aristotle. *Physiognomics* 805a, 7-15.

DID YOU KNOW?

Our Pentecost worship service which occurred in conjunction with the celebratory Sunday morning worship service of the Ghanaian Choir Festival included the chanting of the *Te Deum*. The *Te Deum* is a wonderful text of the early church that is the inspiration for the beautiful stained glass window above the altar at Wesley. However, did you know that at the time of the dedication of the church in 1927 the only window that actually had stained glass in it was the rose window (in the back balcony)? The work on the stained glass of the other windows was not completed until more than 20 years later.

The marvelous window *Te Deum* window is filled with images derived from the text of the very ancient hymn, *Te Deum Laudamus* (We praise you, O God), which is not only a testimony of praise and thanksgiving but also an expression of the faith of the church. The window depicts events of the life of Christ from the Annunciation and Nativity through the Resurrection, Ascension, and Enthronement. It also contains images of saints throughout the ages: Old Testament patriarchs and prophets, New Testament apostles, martyrs and other leaders of the early church.

The exact origin and authorship of the text of the *Te Deum* is unknown despite much conjecture and speculation. Most scholars at least agree that it was composed at the beginning of the fifth century and most likely originally was used in the context of a Mass of baptism. In the Roman Catholic Church, the *Te Deum* has traditionally been used during Matins (a very early morning service in the cycle of the canonical hours) on Sundays (except during Advent and Lent) and feast days. In the Anglican rite, it is a canticle at Morning Prayer. In addition, as a “Hymn of Thanksgiving” (as it is termed in modern liturgical books), it has also long been sung during worship in thanksgiving to God for some special blessing and also at both religious and secular ceremonies such as coronations and celebrations of victory in battle.

The text of the *Te Deum* appears in the *United Methodist Hymnal* as the *Canticle of the Holy Trinity* (UMH 80). In addition the hymn *Holy God, We Praise Thy Name* (UMH 79) is a metrical English version of this text.

Throughout the centuries of Christian worship this text has been set to music as well as depicted in visual art in the form of stained glass and sculpture. Both visual arts and music enable us to express meaning that goes beyond words. At Wesley we have inherited a tradition of commitment to the use of the arts to enhance our worship. This commitment is manifest visually by the beautiful sacred space in which we worship as well as aurally in the voices of our wonderful E. M. Skinner organ, choirs and congregation, and it is fitting to offer thanksgiving to God for these blessings that are our heritage.

Submitted by, Deborah 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., June 8	Wed., June 10
Mon., June 22	Wed., June 24

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 United Methodist Church
114 Main Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01608

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



WESLEY HERALD
MAY 28, 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
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- 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
- Staff-Parish Relations Co-Chairs Brent Drajesk, Mark Muncey
- Youth Directors Phil & Emily Smith
- United Methodist Women Co-Chairs Barbara Ingrassia, Allison Hansen