

What a spring of singing it's been here at Wesley! Our church walls echoed with the numerous voices of the gathered Ghanaian Choirs, the children helped the congregation sing in a round, the Wesley Ringers played several times, and the Wesley Choir has been busy singing all over Worcester. If you were looking for music at Wesley, you'd have to try awfully hard to miss it!

After all this music, the season is ending and many of our groups break for the summer, including the Wesley Choir, the Wesley Ringers, and the children's music program. It is a perfect opportunity to remind the entire community that none of our groups are professional ensembles – they are made up of volunteers who give freely of their time so that we can all enjoy the fruits of their labors. This means that anyone reading this is welcome to join and make music with others.

This point bears some extra emphasis. I have seen churches where the music program is predominantly professional, or where there is a feeling of elitism among the musicians that keeps the “others” away. You don't have to have been born into a family connected with the choir, and you don't have to have exceptional skills. The choirs are open to all, and if you don't think you know enough, come and let us help teach you.

September is months away, however. I would like to use the summer to start nurturing the seeds of music in any congregation members who want to make some music in a low-pressure kind of way. I am imagining a pickup choir of people who don't have much experience coming together to make music. The emphasis will be on simple pieces and basic music reading skills, so that by the time September rolls around the thought of “Choir” with a capital C will be less scary. We could meet Sundays after the 10:30 service, though other times could be found as well.

If this sounds like something you'd be interested in, please leave me a voice mail (extension 107) and let me know. I would love to get to know some of the other musically inclined members of Wesley who are not yet in any ensembles. Remember: there are no requirements other than a desire to make music with others.

Wishing you all a safe and happy summer.

Brett Maguire
Director of Music

LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS...

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

The Rose window lighting for June is given in loving memory of our fathers, James Muncey and Claude Stephenson by Mark and Cindy Muncey.

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...

- ✠ Polly and Steve Boyns who give thanks to God for being brought back home after their recent flooding.
- ✠ Prayer of thanksgiving for the Ghanaian Esther Circle for their support in cleaning the Boyns condo after their flooding
- ✠ Thanks for your continued prayers. Pierre Bellil is at home preparing for the next steps in his care.
- ✠ Kristina O-Tetteh who recently celebrated her birthday
- ✠ Jill, as she celebrates her first year of sobriety
- ✠ Henritta Aryee as she recovers after delivering a 10 pound baby at home on May 27th
- ✠ Anthony and Jason Ruiz for forgiveness
- ✠ Those who lost their lives in the gas explosion in Accra, Ghana, last week. May they rest in peace.
- ✠ The people of God who were injured in the recent explosion and flooding.
- ✠ The people of Ghana. May God comfort all those who have lost their properties through floods in Accra last week.
- ✠ Jacquie, a friend of Carolyn Samanen, who was recently diagnosed with breast cancer
- ✠ The family of Evelyn “Lynn” Lowell, a matriarch of a former active Wesley family, who passed away on June 3. The funeral was in Milton on June 8th, Pastor Shandi officiated.
- ✠ Someone’s friend and daughter who was involved in a motor vehicle accident in CT on their way home to Worcester from a funeral in NY
- ✠ Tamra Montgomery Redman who lost her husband, leaving her with two young children
- ✠ Those mourning the death of Brian Tangney, a 25 year old who died in a motorcycle accident two weeks ago
- ✠ Parents who have children incarcerated and fearing losing their child
- ✠ Judy Sterns, one of the pre-school teachers, fighting cancer.
- ✠ The family of Wayne J. W. Aho who died May 29th. They are Heidi O’Leary, Nancy and Wayne, Jr. and grandchildren Erica and Evan Rioux.

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*



INVITATION TO VISIT THE WORCESTER ISLAMIC MOSQUE...

The congregation of the Worcester Islamic Mosque has cordially extended an invitation to Wesley members to a presentation during the Islamic observance of Ramadan. This is their holiest time of the year spent in prayers, doing good works, visiting the sick, and feeding the needy. The invitation includes a presentation on Ramadan and a tour of the mosque followed by an ethnic dinner. We have been seeking fellowship with members of the mosque and establishing connections and friendships with them.

The mosque is located at 248 East Mountain Street. The presentation will be given on Thursday, July 2 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. There is no charge for this event, but we are asked to make reservations so that we can establish a head count. If you and/or members of your family would like to attend, please contact Margaret Watson by Thursday, June 25 at margjkw@gmail.com or call (508)-856-0862 (OK to leave message).

MEMORIALS... There are many ways to honor those who have died recently or in the past. Birthdays, graduations, and weddings are reminders. At Wesley, a gift to Memorial Gifts Funds or flowers on the altar, or lights to brighten the church at night can honor those in the past. Speak with those at the Welcome Office for guidance.

MESSAGES FROM THE CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR

YEAR TO DATE BUDGET RESULTS THROUGH MAY

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Total Income	244,756	234,601	-10,155
Total Expense	289,080	287,596	-1,484
Difference	-44,324	-52,995	-8,671

*Note: Wesley UMC has been granted a reduction in the 2015 mission shares. The original total of \$78,521 has been reduced to \$44,382 and the new budget numbers are now part of the May numbers above.

PROJECT UPDATES

RETAINING WALL

As you know, the retaining wall collapsed during demolition. Fortunately, no one was injured, and there was little property damage. What did happen, however, is the loose stone wall below the original concrete wall was badly damaged. Since this wall was a boundary wall, we have since had to have the land surveyed to establish our property line before anything else can continue. This is now complete.

The second portion of the revised project is designed to build a new wall in place of the loose stone wall that will be of the same construction materials; namely, concrete block. This will consist of two rows of block along the property line, with a 10 foot terrace between this wall and the larger wall holding up the parking lot. The additional cost to construct this wall, along with the surveying and engineering costs has added approximately \$60,000 more to the original project which has been approved by the Trustees.

AUTOMATIC DOOR OPENER – STATE STREET RAMP DOOR

We have signed a contract to have the State Street doors become more accessible through the use of an automatic door opener. This feature will enable those in wheel chairs or who are unable to handle the weight of the large doors to open them with ease by pushing a button outside the door. This will benefit those coming to worship on Sundays, as well as clients who come for medical ministry and the food pantry. I do not have a completion date yet, but expect this will happen within the next few weeks.

THE NATHANIEL WHEELER TRUST GRANT

We received notice that our grant application has been approved for the requested amount of \$3,700. This funding will enable us to do some landscaping work at the front of the church, along with making a contribution to the installation of a new lawn. Further details will be determined by the Trustees at their meeting this week.

THIRD FLOOR MEN'S ROOM REPAIRS

Work has begun to repair the leak in the roof that has caused water damage to both the wall and the flooring in the third floor men's room. Our roofing contractor has reviewed the area and is ready to begin. Phil Johnson has spent some time tearing out the old wall and flooring. We will be discussing the refurbishment at the next Trustee meeting to determine the plan for the rest of the project.

Regards, Lorna



TRAVELING TO A NATIONAL PARK THIS SUMMER?

Encounter God in a truly awe-inspiring wilderness setting! Did you know you can worship in many of the country's major national parks this summer? Look for notices about Sunday services provided by A Christian Ministry in the National Parks (ACMNP). ACMNP is an interdenominational ministry that embodies and extends the ministry of Jesus Christ to those who live, work, and vacation in our national parks. For more information, ask Allison Hansen or visit acmnp.com.

UMW YEAR-END MEETING... The United Methodist Women will hold its end-of-the-year meeting on **Thursday, June 18**, starting with a potluck supper at **6:30 pm**. Let's make it a true POTLUCK—full of surprises: appetizer, salad, main course, dessert, beverages — whatever you'd like to bring. And bring a friend. All women of Wesley are invited to attend. We'll do some planning for next year so that the calendar can be ready for September.

The program will be an update on a topic that UMW at all levels has been following closely-- the scourge of modern day slavery: human trafficking. We see frequent reports in the media -- trafficking occurs everywhere—even in Worcester. As a mission organization that focuses on making a difference in the lives of women, children, and youth, we want to be aware of how we can be a force for good.

See you on the 18th! Questions? Please contact Allison Hansen at 508-853-5339.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

THANK YOU! Our congregation donated over \$870 to Heifer International, and the children had a great time visiting the Heifer farm located in Rutland, MA on May 30th! We learned all about the “7 M’s” (ask a child and they can tell you all about it!), Heifer’s mission, the animals they provide, and we even explored some of the “global village”.



One of our groups outside the Ghanaian house.

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 flyers on the children’s tables 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. Grantgirl05@yahoo.com

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

MISSION MATTERS

COMMUNITY SUPPER LEADERS STILL NEEDED FOR JULY... All months (starting with July 25) are available for you to volunteer with your group! Suppers are on last Saturdays, except for Oct. 24, and Linda D’Acri has volunteered for Nov. 28. Quite thorough guidelines have been developed and updated, based on experiences with the first 19 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.

JUNE 27 COMMUNITY SUPPER... Kimberly Lindsey-Amoah is in charge of the Saturday, June 27th from 4 to 6 pm Community Supper. The menu will be hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, green salad, baked beans, watermelon and beverage. Donations of cupcakes and cookies to go with the watermelon would be much appreciated.

THANK YOU FOR IMAGINE NO MALARIA DONATIONS! Special thanks to Esther Circle for the great meal of Ghanaian foods, enjoyed by about 140 people. Our total donation is \$651, which will be matched for a total of \$1,302. Of the New England Conference’s \$1 million goal, \$800,000 has been committed. And, of UMC International’s goal of \$75 million by 2015, \$65 million has been contributed.

Interfaith Ramadan Invitation

You are cordially invited to attend a special
Interfaith Dinner!

*Please extend the invite to interested parties in
your congregation.*



Thursday, July 2nd 6:00 – 8:30 PM
Presentation, Tour & Dinner
At the Worcester Islamic Center
248 East Mountain St. Worcester, MA

*For Reservation or Information
please contact Margaret Watson at
margjkw@gmail.com or call 508-856-0862.*

John in Ultra-High Context: John 8:21-59

(notes from the Brewer Hall Study Group, May 31—June 7, 2015)

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Jesus Counterchallenges with a Riddle (8:21-30)

Still in the temple treasury (8:20), Jesus continues the controversy with the Pharisees that began with the second of his “I am” statements (“I am the **light** of the world”; v. 12a), and their challenge that he is testifying to himself, in violation of their two-witness rule.

(vv. 21-24) In the first section of Jesus’ counterchallenge, he reformulates his prior statement (about going to the one who sent him, and being sought but not found; 7:33-34), but this reformulation uses the familiar Johannine pattern of cryptic statement/misunderstanding/explanation. That his hearers misunderstand derives from the fact that they are outsiders to Jesus’ (and later John’s late first century) antisociety, and therefore ignorant of the UHC terminology. The contrasting pairs of this reply draw sharp boundaries that separate Jesus’ (and later John’s) antisociety from Judean society. His statement that his opponents would die in their sins unless they **believe into** him intensifies the contrast.

(vv. 25-30) The second section of Jesus’ counterchallenge addresses his opponents’ question, “Who are you?” (v. 25a). Because identity in the ancient Mediterranean world derived from the group (especially family) in which one was embedded, the questioners were asking Jesus to what group or family he belonged. Although v. 25b interlinearly translates “Why do I speak to you at all? (as in the NRSV, and implying impatience on Jesus’ part), {this Greek idiom should actually be translated “Even what I have told you from the beginning” (as in the RSV)}. In the context of this idiom, then the rest of this section (vv. 26-30) makes sense by summarizing one of John’s major motifs – that Jesus was sent by God, that he does not speak on his own, and that his solidarity with God validates his words.

The allusion in v. 28 to Jesus being lifted up {i.e., crucified} is in keeping with the Johannine {theme} that everything Jesus does and says becomes clear at the hour of his exaltation/glorification/public honor. {Unlike the Synoptics}, Jesus never uses the words “death” and “dying” in John’s Gospel, because that is the perspective of the outsiders – not those of {Jesus’ (and John’s) antisociety}. That many **believed into** Jesus (v. 30) signifies that some of the previous outsiders (vv. 23-24) have now become insiders.

Jesus’ Five Challenges to the (Allegedly) New Believers (8:31-59)

In v. 31, the interlinear text correctly translates the Greek particle *oun* in the consequential sense (“Therefore, Jesus said...”), i.e., it is *because* many (allegedly) **believed into him** (v. 30) that Jesus now put the matter to the test (the NRSV loses this point in its translation as “Then, Jesus said...”). Jesus now judges the presuppositions of these new believers that underlie their faith in him, to smoke out the pseudo believers – the uncommitted hangers-on (always a problem in antisocieties). John repeatedly uses the familiar pattern of *cryptic statement/misunderstanding/explanation* five times in this section (vv. 31-36, 37-40, 41-47, 51-55, and 56-58) in challenging the faith of these allegedly new believers.

First challenge (vv. 31-36). The issue of being free was significant in ancient agrarian economies, where enslavement was common. Freed persons were of significantly lower social status than those who had never been enslaved. To tell free persons that the truth will “free them” is insulting if taken in the prevailing context (that genealogy is linked with subsequent behavior and character), but the UHC explanation (“slave of sin”) reveals the outsiders from the insiders (those who truly **believe into** Jesus).

Second challenge (vv. 37-40). Although Jesus acknowledges their genealogical claim to honor, he then accuses them of intent to murder – that there is no room in them for his **word**. If character derives from breeding, their claim to be Abraham’s descendants (which they reiterate in v. 39) is now being undermined.

Third challenge (vv. 41-47). Jesus again uses the “birth equals character” argument to counter his opponents’ claim that God was their father also, because if that were true, then they would have loved him {as offspring of the same Father}, but as they don’t, they couldn’t have the same Father as Jesus. The challenge/riposte series then takes a hostile turn, wherein Jesus’ assessment of his challengers’ conduct indicates that their ancestry actually traces back to “your father the devil” – the father of lies. To call someone in this society the offspring of the devil is a truly harsh and demeaning insult.

Counter-insult (vv. 48-50). The reaction of the new “believers” to Jesus’ first three challenges (especially the third) is to “slur” his lineage (“Samaritan”) and to repeat their earlier charge when he began his teaching at the temple that he is controlled by a demon (7:20). Jesus answers their insult by citing his own honorific behavior toward God, who does the judging. The implication is that it is he, not they, who is a true Son of the Father. [To defend (seek honor) for himself would be contrary to the claim that he is the true Son.]

Fourth challenge (vv. 51-55). With an opening word of honor (“Truly truly”), Jesus cryptically addresses his relationship to Abraham (“Whoever keeps my **word** will never see death”). Failing to grasp the UHC interpretation of this statement, his now exposed false believers add the prophets who mediated God’s **word** to their list of ancestors. Jesus again deflects any charge of being a disloyal son (not seeking his own honor).

Fifth challenge (vv. 56-58). Closing with a word of honor, Jesus notes his existence from the beginning – UHC terminology (regarding his mission in the world: 1:1-5, 10-13) which his outsider opponents fail to grasp.

(v. 59) Challenge and riposte is always a game of wits. An overquick resort to violence indicates that wits have failed, giving way to bully tactics. That the listeners took up stones against Jesus {thus bearing out the truth of Jesus’ charge all along that they intended to kill him} indicates who won the exchange.

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.

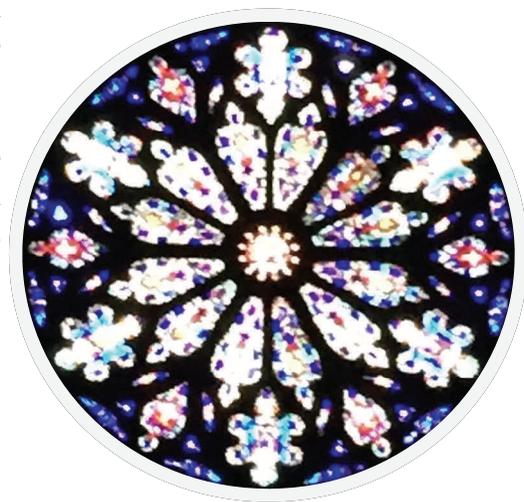
Malina BJ, Rohrbaugh RL. *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. pp. 158-163.

DID YOU KNOW?

You may have noticed in the bulletin this past Sunday that the lighting of the rose window in the rear balcony of the sanctuary is available for dedication. Lighting the window at night makes this beautiful feature of our church visible to passersby even in the dark. One of the very distinctive features of the Wesley sanctuary overall is the marvelous stained glass, but did you know that at the time of the dedication of the church, the rose window in the rear balcony was the only window that actually had stained glass in it? Rose windows are characteristic of Gothic architecture and have been built into churches since the 12th century, although the specific term *rose window* was not actually used until the 17th century, deriving from the old French word *roué*, meaning *wheel*. A rose window is a circular stained glass window with the glass arranged in a pattern that radiates from the center as do the spokes of a wheel. The name also perhaps relates to the resemblance of the window to a rose and its petals. The rose window as an architectural structure probably is based on the older Roman *oculus*, (Latin, *eye*) which originally referred to a circular opening in the center of a dome, but later also referred to round windows in general. In the great Gothic churches of Europe the rose windows were meant to embody the medieval concept of beauty, which was based on 3 characteristics: wholeness, harmony and radiance. The symmetry of rose windows manifests various geometric patterns that encompass the symbolism of numbers.

The number twelve is prominent in the geometry of Wesley's rose window. The importance of this number in the Bible, and hence in religious symbolism, originates in the twelve tribes of Israel, but carries over into the New Testament as well with Jesus' appointment of twelve apostles as a symbol of the restoration of Israel. The central medallion of Wesley's window contains twelve white flames for the twelve apostles. There are also twelve six-pointed stars in the twelve petals that radiate from the central medallion serving to recall the twelve apostles, the twelve minor prophets, and the twelve tribes of Israel.

*Submitted by,
Deborah A. O'Driscoll*



2015 HERALD SCHEDULE

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

<u>Article Deadline Date</u>	<u>Herald Mailing Date</u>
Mon., June 22	Wed., June 24
Mon., July 13	Wed., July 15

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.



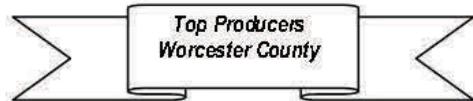
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Church Phone: 508-799-4191
Fax: 508-799-3725
E-Mail: office@wesleyworc.org
Web page: www.wesleyworc.org

WESLEY HERALD
JUNE 10, 2015

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

WESLEY STAFF & LEADERSHIP TEAM

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

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