

Conquering Challenges

Me: God has the power to comfort!

Child: Hold on! (as she motions her arms across her chest in a hug)

You: Huh?

Me & Child: (smiling)

If you see a child make this gesture as you say one of our five powerful phrases of the day from Vacation Bible School (VBS), don't be alarmed! Each time that we heard the phrase of the day, we hugged ourselves demonstrating God's power to hold on to us...to comfort, provide, heal, forgive, and love us forever! Over 40 children attended our VBS camp where we learned how we could conquer life's challenges with God's mighty power.

What an amazing experience VBS was for this newbie. I had always heard of it, but my kids had been too young to participate until now... but wow, to finally experience it! During the days leading up to and during VBS, I, too, got to experience challenges. Each time, I felt God's mighty power guide me to overcome it. I was living what we were teaching the children.

No matter the size of the challenge, be it doing better in math, healing broken relationships, or climbing a mountain (the size of Mount Everest!), God is there to provide the strength we need. Although conquering implies physical strength, it may show itself in a variety of subtle ways. I was recently upset about something dear to me, and God provided comfort, provision, healing, and love all in two simple gestures by others. First, a friend called and shared an interesting idea with me that filled me with inspiration and hope. Second, the next day a family member offered to do something for me that really helped take a burden off my shoulders. Neither knew what had been upsetting me, yet there they were: comforting, providing, loving. I've said before that I don't believe completely in coincidences, and there it was again: God's power to hold on to me and to help me conquer the challenge that was gripping me.

What challenges are you working with? There is no such thing as a challenge too big for our mighty God. I leave you with the five key verses from VBS as you contemplate the challenges in your life:

"And God will generously provide all you need." (2 Corinthians 9:8)

"He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others." (2 Corinthians 1:4)

"He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds." (Psalm 147:3)

"You are a God of forgiveness." (Nehemiah 9:17)

"Everyone who believes in him will have eternal life." (John 3:15)

...and don't forget to cross your arms in a hug, and shout "Hold on!" because God is surely holding onto you.

Jean Grant, Director of Children's Christian Education

LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS...

The Tower lighting for July is given in loving memory of Mable and Luther Marsh, and Evelyn & Martin Samanen by Carol, Dave, Steve and Jeff Samanen.

The Rose window lighting for July is given in loving memory of Lois and Bill Bird and Paul Carlson by Timmy and Charlie Bird.

The Rose window lighting for August is given in loving memory of Rena Stephenson by Mark and Cindy Muncey.

***The August Tower** lighting is available for dedication. The cost is \$40 for the month. If you are interested in this lighting, please contact Debi in the office at 508-799-4191, ext. 102. Thank you.*

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK...

- ✠ Rachel Sailer and her children, Jacob and Amy, on the death of Rachel's husband and my friend, John Sailer (submitted by William Kilmer).
- ✠ Edith's son, "K" who will be undergoing another open heart surgery.
- ✠ Melissa (at Channing) who is recovering from foot surgery, and who is living through difficulties as a single parent of two children.
- ✠ Johnelle Demery and Family, that they may find peace and comfort at this time as they grieve the death of Mary Demery
- ✠ Paul and Cora Arsenault who are celebrating 30 years of marriage
- ✠ Pastor Shandi who is attending a Bishop's Preaching Institute at Princeton Seminary this week
- ✠ Richard MacCracken and family on the loss of his wife, Marilli on July 16th. This is a cousin of Allison Hansen.
- ✠ Dean who has quickly been overwhelmed by Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.
- ✠ The families of those servicemen who were killed in Tennessee.
- ✠ Jane (visiting) who was married 70 years ago at Wesley.
- ✠ Those searching for work.
- ✠ Someone's daughter who is celebrating her birthday this week.

Thank You, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

Thanks for your thoughts and prayers for Pierre Bellil. He is slowly improving, but still can only walk for 5 minutes at a time. ~ Carolyn Bellil

YOU ARE INVITED.... to join a small group which will meet once a month at the home of George and Lorraine Kronberg.

Join together with other church friends and share a time of fellowship and investigate what “Radical Hospitality” is all about. We have heard a series of Sunday sermons on this topic and now we can begin to investigate it a bit deeper.

Your ideas and sharing can be the beginning of change at Wesley Church. Could “Radical Hospitality” be as simple as:

...committing yourself to offering a simple and gracious word of greeting in worship to one person whom you do not know each week?

...using a person’s name as you pass the peace each week?

...remembering how it felt the first time you entered a new church for worship?

...wearing a name tag the first Sunday of the month and learning the name of the person who always sits near you?

This small group is your group.... a place to share your ideas, joys and frustrations.... a place of acceptance. Please come and bring your thoughts and ideas as we grow together and become a place of “Radical Hospitality”.

Let us know if you are coming: Contact Lisa Fagerstrom (LFAGE@aol.com) or Lorraine Kronberg (Lorrgo@aol.com) or call Lisa at Wesley Church 508 799-4191 ext. 106 or Lorraine at 508 852-6629.

We will meet: Tuesday, August 11, 2015 at 10:30 am. George and Lorraine Kronberg, 5 Suburban Rd., Apt. 403, Worcester (Off of Highland St. opposite Doherty High School)

MISSION MATTERS

JULY 25 COMMUNITY SUPPER... Jean and Chris Grant are partnering with Deanna and Bill Wong to bring us the July 25th Community Supper. The menu will be hearty beef sloppy joe sandwiches, Jean's famous Amish Macaroni Salad, corn on the cob, watermelon, beverage, and dessert. Donations of cupcakes and cookies will be much appreciated. Please join us!

FUTURE COMMUNITY SUPPERS... Lisa Fagerstrom will be leading the August 29th supper, and Linda D'Acri has volunteered for September 26th. Thanks to all supper leaders and workers for stepping out in faith to offer Wesley's hospitality to our neighborhood!

For any person or group considering making this contribution of time and effort, there are in the Welcome Office newly updated explanations of what's involved. Members of the Mission Committee and Wesley Staff will assist you before and during the event.

COMMUNION SUNDAY, AUGUST 2ND we will be serving breakfast. Please join us during this fellowship time.

SUNDAY SCHOOL



VBS... Thank you to all the volunteers who helped make Vacation Bible School a wonderful success! Over 40 children attended from Wesley, the Korean church, and friends and family of members. Kids from age 5 through middle school experienced “Everest: Conquering Challenges with God’s Mighty Power” through interactive Bible stories, Glacier Games, Imagination Station (fun crafty gizmos), KidVid Cinema (real life examples of our themes of the day), dinner and Mountaintop Treats, and of course our Base Camp singing and Summit Celebration!



Thank you all – over 25 youth and adults helped! It was an energetic, spirit-filled week for young and old!



IT'S CHRISTMAS IN AUGUST...

Once again we are coordinating a “*Christmas in August*” drive for the Economic Ministry in Salem, Maine. This year our goal is 1,500 new toys and other items.

We need your help! How?

♥ Take advantage of sales you see to acquire items that can be used for the Ministry's Christmas Shop—clothing, housewares, toys, sports items, batteries, videos, personal care items, tools, gift cards, etc. ♥ If you do not want to “shop” and would rather make a donation, we will be happy to shop for you. ♥ We have a red and green box in Brewer Hall where you can leave your **unwrapped** gifts. A general gift list is below, otherwise a complete list of gift ideas is on that box. **Please bring your new, unwrapped gifts to the church by Saturday, Sept. 6.** ♥ Or you could deliver your gift directly to the truck at Epworth UMC parking lot on Saturday or Sunday, September 6 or 7, from 9 am to 1 pm.

Items For All Ages - socks, underwear, sleepers/pajamas/nightgowns, slippers, robes, shirts, pants/jeans, sweaters, sweatshirts/pants, (warm clothing) coats, gloves, hats, scarves, personal care items, books, music CD's, music players, videos/DVD's, McDonalds/Burger King coupons. **NO MUSIC WITH FOUL OR VIOLENT LYRICS.** (Please include batteries when needed.)

Children - Toys for boys and girls from infant through pre-teens stuffed animals, dolls, board/card/handheld games, skates, sleds, sports toys, stocking stuffers. **NO GUNS OR WAR TOYS.**

Youth/Teens – Games, watches, hair dryers, curling irons, razors, brushes, hair accessories, purses, wallets, luggage, sports items, phone cards.

Adults/Elderly - Work gloves & hats, gas cards, phone cards, gift certificates, postage stamps, watches, razors, hair dryers, Bibles, cans of nuts, popcorn, candy (some sugar-free).

Household and General – Blankets/comforters, sheets, pillows, bath/kitchen towels, toaster, mixer, other kitchen appliances, pots and pans, utensils, glasses, dishes, bowls, hot pads, radios, clocks, thermometers, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, small hand/power tools, cleaning supplies, snow shovel, ice melt, sand pail, ice scraper, dry gas, deicer, lamps, flashlights, home decorating items, batteries for necessary items, Walmart gift cards.

If you have any questions, please contact Betsy Pennino or Donna Hirtle of the Mission Committee. Thank you, in advance, for your gifts.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2015 GRADUATES

HIGH SCHOOL

Amelia Hirtle graduated from Wachusett Regional HS. She will be attending Framingham State University in the fall to study management.

Rachel Ferdinand graduated from Wachusett Regional HS. She is undecided where she'd like to attend in the fall.

Casey Nevers, grandson of Dick & Betty Nevers, graduated from Landmark School in Beverly, MA. He will be attending Plymouth NH State University in the fall.

Josephine Agyen graduated from Doherty HS and will be attending Harvard University for biology.

Eleanor Assie graduated from Burncoat HS and will be attending UConn in the fall.

Kelsey Rose Crisostomo graduated from Holden Regional HS. She will be attending Quinsigamond Community College in the fall. She is the granddaughter of Julita Crisostomo and a niece of Jorge and Gloria Mendoza.

Grace Lee Naylor graduated from Granada HS, Livermore, CA. She will be attending University of the Pacific in Stockton, CA in the fall to become a Physician's Assistant. She is the granddaughter of Jorge and Gloria Mendoza.

COLLEGE

Kayla Crisostomo graduated with her Nursing Degree from Quinsigamond Community College, Worcester. She is a granddaughter of Julita Crisostomo and a niece of Jorge and Gloria Mendoza.

Jennifer Ellis graduated from UMASS Amherst with a degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management, she has accepted a position at Mechanics Hall in Worcester.

2015 SPIRIT-FILLED SUMMER WORSHIP

Sunday Evenings in July & August 6 pm join us for an outside service at Epworth UMC, 64 Salisbury Street for worship. Bring a lawn chair or blanket. (Rain? Worship will be held inside.)

July 26	The Rhythm of Life — Drumming with God
August 2	Holy Communing
August 9	Artistic Flare
August 16	Ghanaian Worship
August 23	Camp Family Fun
August 30	Emerging Responses

*Be prepared to **Catch the Spirit***

REGISTER NOW FOR FINANCIAL PEACE U STARTING SEPT. 20, 2015!

Are you looking for a change in your life or how you handle personal finance? Financial Peace University (FPU) is a 9-week life-changing program that empowers and teaches you how to make Bible based money decisions to help you achieve your financial goals. We'll walk you through the basics of **budgeting, dumping debt, planning for retirement and college tuition, understanding all kinds of insurance, and much more.** Stop wondering where your money went and start telling it where to go!

FPU offers financial hope to newlyweds, young families, families with college bound children, and retirees. It is not just for those who are in debt but offers more.

- Stop the money fights.
- Create a plan that gives you freedom.
- Know your kids are taken care of.
- Be free to give like you've always wanted.

For more information or to sign up for the program, contact Bill Wong via email at bill922@gmail.com or (508) 320-5620. Classes begin September 20, 2015 at 5:30 pm in East Hall, for 1.5 to 2 hours each time. Through a special grant, FPU now only costs \$50 (a \$149 savings) per family for Wesley Church attendees in which the book "Total Money Makeover," workbook, audio CDs, and starter envelope system are provided. Child care will be provided, if needed.

For more information about Dave Ramsey and FPU, visit www.daveramsey.com and look for Financial Peace University under classes.

John in Ultra-High Context: John 10

{notes from the Brewer Hall Study Group, June 28 – July 19, 2015}

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Jesus as the Door

(vv. 1-5) The first part of this parable (vv. 1-3a) indicates that the way to approach the “sheep”, is through a “door” (RSV; “gate”, NRSV), guarded by a “doorkeeper” (“gatekeeper”, RSV & NRSV). The doorkeeper allows passage of the legitimate shepherd, with whom the sheep are familiar by voice. The second part of the parable (vv. 3b-5) describes the care of the shepherd for the sheep, e.g., leading them out of the sheepfold (to pasture). However, the sheep will run from anyone for whom there is no voice recognition. The double negative of v. 5 is an emphatic form.

(v. 7) {Decoding the parable}, the “door” is Jesus and the “sheep” are the members of Jesus’ (and later John’s) antisociety. In the metaphorical context of another “I am” statement (vv. 7, 9; the third of seven in John’s Gospel), *thúra* (“door”) now becomes part of the group’s antilanguage, i.e., another UHC term. {The identity of the doorkeeper is ambiguous – either Jesus takes on this role as well, &/or it falls to the later leadership of John’s antisociety.}

(vv. 8-10) Referring to those not voice-recognized by the sheep, the terms *kléptai* (“thieves”) and *lēstai* (“robbers/bandits”) are used. These terms are not normally synonymous. The first term (vv. 1, 10) is an ordinary thief, while the second (v. 1) is a social bandit or insurrectionist who stole from the elite. Rival group leaders are viewed by both labels. Basically, Jesus becomes the only access to his (and later John’s) antisociety and to his care.

Jesus as the Good Shepherd (10:11-14a)

Jesus now identifies himself with the shepherd who is central to the prior parable (vv. 3b-5), making this the fourth “I am” statement, and establishing a new UHC metaphor for John’s group. This may allude to the appointment of *Joshua* (Heb. form of *Jesus*), prior to Moses’ death, as a shepherd for the “congregation of the Lord” (Num 27:16-17).

But the imagery of this Gospel passage goes beyond Moses. {Ezekiel 34 is a prophesy against the faithless “shepherds of Israel”, feeding themselves and allowing the sheep to scatter and become prey “for all the wild beasts”. Ezekiel 34 goes on to describe the Lord God as a shepherd who: “seeks out his flock when some of his sheep have been scattered abroad”, who “will bring them out from the peoples... and into their own land”, who “will bring back the strayed,... bind up the crippled, ... strengthen the weak, ...”.

This passage thus metaphorically criticizes the Judean leadership of Jesus’ day.

Dyadic relationships (vv. 14b-18)

This passage describes the close interpersonal, dyadic relationships between Jesus and his Father, and between Jesus and his own. The UHC shepherd-sheep metaphor highlights the interpersonal bonding theme. A dyadic relationship of trust and loyalty is a safeguard against attacks from outside the group. Verses 15b, 17-18 may refer to Jesus’ anticipated death in the story, and/or reflect the depth of loyalty between Jesus and his followers, as asserted later (15:13).

Hanukkah in Jerusalem: Another Challenge – Deviance Accusations against Jesus

(vv. 19-21) Here, the concern of Jesus' opponents is over his words – from the power of evil or of good? This was their third attempt to stick him with the label “demon possessed”, and so destroy his honor and ostracize him from the community {cf. 7:20, 8:48}. The question they posed directly to Jesus is whether he were the Messiah. [Previously, he had revealed himself as such only to the Samaritan woman (4:26).]

Evidence is scarce for the RSV/NRSV translation, “keep us in suspense”. In modern Greek, however, the phrase is an idiom meaning “provoke us”.

Jesus' Riposte Nearly Erupts in Violence

(vv. 25-29) Jesus' deflects the Judeans' challenge by pointing to the works that he has done in God's name, and claims that his opponents do not believe because they are not part of his group. Then, alluding to his earlier metaphor of the sheep and shepherd (10:1-5) to describe the close, interpersonal relationship with his loyal followers, he twice repeats the claim that no one will seize the sheep from his hand or the hand of God. This would refer to inter-group rivalry for members {and/or to attempts to publically discredit Jesus in the presence of his followers}.

(v. 30) This statement generated much comment in the early trinitarian controversies, even though the Greek clearly states that Jesus and the Father are one *én* (“thing”).

(v. 31) Stoning of anyone who blasphemes “the Name” is understood in relation to Lev. 24:16. But here (v. 33), his opponents charge “you, being a man, make yourself God”. Being outsiders to Jesus' group, they didn't understand his assertion of a dyadic unity between himself and the Father (v. 30). That Jesus' opponents decided to stone him on the spot (rather than initiating a judicial proceeding) suggests that their real motive was losing their challenge to him (vv. 24-30).

(vv. 32-38) Jesus forestalls the violence by continuing the counterchallenge. His basic argument (vv. 34-36) derives from Ps. 82:6 – those who judge, i.e., perform the work of God (Deut. 1:17) are unjust judges (“gods”), unjustly doing god-like work. Thus, if the term *gods* can be applied in this situation without blasphemy, then surely in the case of One whom God has “sent”, the title “Son of God” is appropriate. Hence, the charge of blasphemy is rejected altogether. In vv. 37-38, Jesus summarizes the final argument of the escalating debates of chapters 7-10: (1) his works are the works of God (not disputed by his opponents); (2) the works in themselves demonstrate Jesus' claim to be in a dyadic relationship with God (vv. 30, 38). Nevertheless, Jesus' final argument is rejected by the Judeans as they seek to arrest him once more.

(vv. 40-42) This brief narrative summarizes the outcome of the debates in the minds of the observers – their public acknowledgment of John's claims for Jesus.

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. 179-192.

DID YOU KNOW?

Each week we gather for Sunday morning worship, and for the month of July the theme of the sermon series has been “passionate worship.” Did you know that the English word *worship* is used to translate several different words from the Hebrew and Greek in Biblical references to worship? Our basic English word *worship* is derived from the Anglo-Saxon meaning *worth-ship* and refers to our expressing our veneration and adoration towards God. To truly define what worship is, however is difficult because it involves both attitudes and actions. The concept of worship of God is also much older than our English language. Knowledge of the meaning of these words in their original languages and the context in which they are used in the Bible helps us to understand more fully the totality of what it means to worship God.

In the Old Testament the term *worship* most commonly translates the Hebrew word *shachah*, meaning “to bow down, prostrate oneself,” certainly a posture which reflects reverence and homage to the Lord. In the New Testament a corresponding Greek word *proskuneo* also carries the primary meaning of bowing down. Even in our worship today, posture and other types of physical movement are important aspects of how we express ourselves and various attitudes of worship. These physical movements include actions such as bowing down or kneeling, lifting hands, clapping, dancing, and processions, all of which can be found in various scenes of worship in the Bible and which we incorporate into modern worship.

Other aspects of what it means to worship are captured by different words used to refer to worship in the Bible:

- *Yare'* (Hebrew) and *phobeomai* (Greek) are verbs that denote the awe and reverence with which we approach God.
- *Hodah* (Hebrew) and *exomologeō* (Greek) translate literally as “to give thanks.”

Certainly all of these elements—homage, reverence, awe, praise and thanksgiving—are central components to our worship. However perhaps the most key element is that which is expressed by the Hebrew *avad* and Greek *latreuo* meaning “to serve.” It is this Greek word used by Paul in the epistle reading we heard this past Sunday: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.” (Romans 12:1, *NIV*)

In the sense of service, then, passionate worship is not just for Sunday morning—it is in fact a way of life. We are called to offer all that we have and all that we are in the service of God, not just in our formal worship services, but also in how we live our lives.

Submitted by, Deborah A. O’Driscoll

Reference: Robert Webber, *Worship Old and New: A Biblical, Historical and Practical Introduction*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994

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., Aug 3	Wed., Aug 5
Mon., Aug 31	Wed., Sept 2

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.



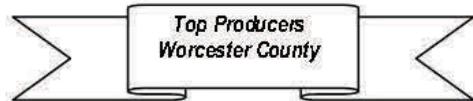
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114 Main Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01608

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

WESLEY HERALD
JULY 22, 2015

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