

## ADVENT HOPE

*“As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, ‘I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming.’ ”*

~ Luke 3:15-16

What do you hope for during this Advent? When I came to Wesley, I came with so many hopes and dreams. I came with hope to be a part of a multicultural ministry that brings together people from all backgrounds and traditions. I came with hope to see people from African, American, Asian, and Latin American origins coming together as one community to bear witness to God’s amazing grace. I came with hope to see the ministry of this church reach out to the community that would transform this community in ways unimaginably. I came with hope to see this church become more of a leader in the community, a beacon of light and hope for those longing for light.

Although at times I feel discouraged about whether this is truly becoming, my hope remains. In the gospel Luke we hear about a people who had heard John the Baptist’s message, and were filled with expectation for the advent of the messiah. In hearing their questioning, John responds and declares that, indeed, one who is more powerful than he is coming. In his response, John humbly redirects the people’s hope, and re-orientes toward Jesus. John’s message points beyond himself – toward God’s purposes and activity in the world. John’s message points us to Jesus, and in this way reminds us of the nature of Christian hope.

Christian hope, I have come to discover, is not so much about what we want but about what God wants. Christian hope does not look toward personal interest or personal desires. Christian hope looks toward God’s will and desire for the world. Christian hope is like the prayer Jesus would pray in the Garden of Gethsemane when he said, not my will but thine, O Lord. Christian hope cannot be disappointed because even if things do not turn out exactly the way we want, we can trust that God is able to make a way where there seems to be no way. So, what do you hope for this Advent?

Jesus is coming. So prepare the way of the Lord, and make your hearts and lives ready for the advent of God’s transforming love. This Advent season, make room for grace; commit yourself to those spiritual practices that open you up to God’s transformative work in you, in our community, and in the world. May you have a blessed Advent journey!

*In faith and hope, Pastor Shandi*

## LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS

**The Rose** window lighting for December is given in loving memory of Alice R. (Kokernak) Rand, Wesley B. Rand, Mildred A. Kokernak and Henri H. Kokernak by Henry Rand.

**The Tower** lighting for December is given in loving memory of Jean and Calvin Williams by Debbie, Gail and their families.

**The poinsettia's** on the altar on Sunday, December 3rd, are given in loving memory of Ralph Ellis.

## WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

- ✠ Families with poor or struggling relationships. Pray that they may grow to love and appreciate one another.
- ✠ Women and men, who are psychologically abused by their partners.
- ✠ The family of Ken Miller that they may find peace after Ken's passing.
- ✠ John Hansen whose health continues to decline and is the Life Care Center of Auburn.
- ✠ Alexander & Georgina Kwakye, who give thanks to God for the birth of their new grandson.
- ✠ The people of Zimbabwe in the aftermath of the coup that removed President Mugabe from power.
- ✠ People who experience sadness during the holidays that they may find comfort and peace.
- ✠ People living under oppression, injustice, and suffering; that God may make a way for them toward freedom and shalom.



**CHRISTMAS WREATHS FOR DEDICATION...** Once again this year, we will have 3 wreaths on the outside doors (on Main Street and State Street) that are available for dedication. The cost of each wreath is \$30. If you are interested in dedicating a wreath in honor or memory of a loved one or friend, please contact Debi in the office as soon as possible.

**POINSETTIA ORDERS are due to the church by Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>.** Please be sure to send your order into the office to Debi as soon as possible. Payment MUST accompany your order unless you plan to pay for it online via the Donate Now option on the website. Please be sure to check the box "Paid On-line" on the order form. Thank you!

**UPCOMING HERALDS...** There are only 2 Heralds left for 2017. They will be mailed on December 6<sup>th</sup> (deadline date Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>) and December 20<sup>th</sup> (deadline date Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>). The first Herald of the new year will be on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Please plan your articles accordingly.

*Thank you, Debi Ritacco*

## *Mark Your Calendar...*

### **Christmas Eve Services**

**9:30 am** Advent 4 Worship Service (in the Sanctuary)

**4:30 pm** Christmas Eve Family Service

**11:00 pm** Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols

#### ***You're Invited:***

**Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> ~ 12—2 pm**  
**UMW Christmas Program ~ Open to All**

POTLUCK lunch — bring your favorite salad, casserole, dessert, snack, etc. A True Potluck!

PROGRAM — The Taize Experience. Wesley young adults who went to Taize France this past summer will share their experiences.

The Mothers and Children from FLORENCE HOUSE will be our guests. (Please consider some “kid-friendly” foods for the Potluck.)

CHILD CARE will be provided.

Questions? Contact Barb Ingrassia 508-829-6359

**ORGAN PEDAL REEDS ARE BACK!** If you haven't noticed, I've been trying to highlight the pedal reeds in postludes these past few weeks. Water coming in from the roof damaged a number of pipes in the pedal division, and they are the pipes that give our organ such a noticeable kick of power and gravitas. It is such a joy to have them back and repaired.

Have you ever been up to see the organ console up close? Unlike being on an airplane, there is no security clearance or locked doors leading up to the control panel. If you are ever curious, please just come right up after the service and let me know you're interested in seeing the organ! I'm never too tired to pull out some stops to demonstrate how the instrument works, where the pipes are located, and what makes our organ particularly amazing. If you've never seen the E. M. Skinner console up close, you're missing out. I hope to see you some Sunday soon after church!

*Brett Maguire, Director of Music*

**GROCERY GIFT CARDS MAKE CARING GIFTS...** Ready or not, the season of giving is upon us. Why not give a gift that gives back? Buy a gift card for your friends and relatives, Secret Santa or Thanksgiving basket and support Hope for Housing at the same time. The cards sold each Sunday in Brewer Hall help prevent homelessness, because a percentage of each card contributes to a fund to offset back rent, car repairs or utility cutoff.

Denominations range from \$10 to \$100 for grocery stores Big Y, Shaw's, Stop & Shop and Hannaford, plus CVS, Panera Bread and Dunkin' Donuts.

Stop by the Hope for Housing table near the coffee next Sunday, checks or cash in hand. Enjoy that warm feeling of helping others!

~ Allison Hansen

## MISSION MATTERS

**NOVEMBER COMMUNITY SUPPER SERVES 165 MEALS!** Linda D'Acri and her family prepared a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner on the last Saturday of November, and many diners expressed their thanks for the great meal. Linda and the D'Acris also volunteered to bring us a supper on Dec. 30th! Saying "thank you" to the family for their loyalty and service hardly seems adequate. The menu will be ham, potatoes, vegetables, salad, drinks and dessert. If you could donate desserts, serve and/or clean up, please tell Linda.

**COLLECTING FOOD FOR AT RISK AND HOMELESS YOUTHS...** Standup for Kids (SUFK) runs an Outreach Drop-in-Center where a youth can get a meal, shower, meet with a counselor, and get hygiene items. SUFK also does Street Outreach to find homeless kids and give them food bags. The Mission Committee is giving SUFK \$250 for bus passes and invites the congregation to donate snacks for the food bags such as the following:

- *single serving juices, water bottles, individual packs of crackers, cereal bars, pita chips and salsa, dried fruit*, all in unbreakable containers. The Director said that the teens would NOT prefer items labeled "low salt, low sugar, or low fat."

Your contributions may be left on Sundays in an orange box on a table next to the offices.

**HELP WITH SECRET SANTA...** IHN (Interfaith Hospitality Network) has lost the coordinator of their Secret Santa program and the schools who have bought the gifts. They have no one to buy Christmas/Holiday gifts for their children, 8 right now. *Would someone like to "adopt" a child or children, or would a circle, committee or other Wesley group want to do this?* If so, please let Director Joanne Alley and/or Betsy Pennino know. Joanne notes that they get gifts for only the children who are currently in the program (or any child moving in/out in December).

## HARVEST RESULTS AS OF NOVEMBER 27, 2017

<b>Appeal for Funds</b>	<b>Sanctuary Auction</b>	<b>Silent Auction</b>	<b>Women's Mini</b>	<b>Men's Mini</b>	<b>Children's Mini</b>	<b>Kofi &amp; Ama</b>	<b>Chair persons</b>	<b>Total</b>
22,853	1,577	1,094	1,200	1,916	1,012	2,128	5,700	37,480

### Post Dated

<b>Appeal for Funds</b>	<b>Sanctuary Auction</b>	<b>Silent Auction</b>	<b>Women's Mini</b>	<b>Men's Mini</b>	<b>Children's Mini</b>	<b>Kofi &amp; Ama</b>	<b>Chair persons</b>	<b>Total</b>
900	0	0	0	0	0	200	500	1,600

### Pledges

<b>Appeal for Funds</b>	<b>Sanctuary Auction</b>	<b>Silent Auction</b>	<b>Women's Mini</b>	<b>Men's Mini</b>	<b>Children's Mini</b>	<b>Kofi &amp; Ama</b>	<b>Chair persons</b>	<b>Total</b>
1,025	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,025

### Balance Due

<b>Appeal for Funds</b>	<b>Sanctuary Auction</b>	<b>Silent Auction</b>	<b>Women's Mini</b>	<b>Men's Mini</b>	<b>Children's Mini</b>	<b>Kofi &amp; Ama</b>	<b>Chair persons</b>	<b>Total</b>
640	250	0	0	0	0	0	0	890

### Grand Totals

<b>Appeal for Funds</b>	<b>Sanctuary Auction</b>	<b>Silent Auction</b>	<b>Women's Mini</b>	<b>Men's Mini</b>	<b>Children's Mini</b>	<b>Kofi &amp; Ama</b>	<b>Chair persons</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>25,418</b>	<b>1,827</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>1,916</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>2,328</b>	<b>6,200</b>	<b>40,995</b>

## THANKSGIVING RESULTS

Budget	\$ 3,500
Actual	\$ <u>4,074</u>
Difference	\$ 574 more than budget

Thank you for your generous donations!

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS...

### Thank you, Lori!!

After almost twenty years of working in the Wesley United Methodist Church nursery, Lori Conlon is taking a well-deserved retirement. We are deeply grateful for the love, care, and compassionate commitment Lori has shown to more than a generation of Wesley infants and children. We will have a formal time during coffee hour to thank Lori later this fall. However, we did not want to let her leave us upstairs without saying a heartfelt thank you.

With much appreciation and love,  
Jean, Lisa, and all of us in the Wesley Christian Education ministry



## UMW ASSEMBLY: May 18 – 20, 2018 Columbus, Ohio

### The Power of BOLD

UMW Assembly, held every four years, will be in Columbus, Ohio next May 18-20. We will be celebrating the legacy of 150 years of UMW history at that event.

Celebrating 150 years of transforming lives...

150 years of serving communities...

150 years of putting faith, hope, and love into action

*(The original group was started 150 years ago by a small group of women in BOSTON.  
We want to be part of the celebration!)*

Early bird registration ends November 30 and hotel rooms are going fast (see details below). Here at Wesley, we're thinking "road trip" with the church van. We hope to be able to offer some scholarship funding. Please register -- call for a hotel room (easy to share among 4) -- and let me know if you're interested in going. **Barb Ingrassia 508-829-6359**

### UMW Assembly details

The Residence Inn by Marriott, Downtown Columbus is the hotel they set aside for New England Conference units. The rate is \$169 and their telephone is 800-331-3131.

Registration for Assembly can be found at <https://umwassembly.org/register/>

Early bird fee is \$295, going up to \$330 after November 30.

Workshops are filling up, I'm told.

## CHRISTIAN FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES AT WESLEY

### Three New Small Group Opportunities forming in December (for the New Year)—

- 1) ***Spiritual Formation : A Wesleyan Paradigm***—Based on a book of the same name by Diane Leclerc and Mark A. Maddix, this group’s invitation is to help faithful disciples grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, while learning more about Wesleyan spiritual practices.
- 2) ***Living in Sacred Balance***—Are you soul-weary? Do you struggle to make time for God in the midst of a packed schedule? In their book *The Cycle of Grace: Living in Sacred Balance*, Trevor Hudson and Jerry P. Haas invite participants to utilize practical spiritual exercises and devotional times to restore/keep balance and to live grace-filled lives.
- 3) How can we help transform the world? ***Make a Difference*** draws upon biblical wisdom to provide practical guidance to help people connect their passion with the world’s great need. Real stories of how real people found their place to serve will inspire and encourage you to do the same.

**Interested in leading or being a part of one of these small groups?** Please contact Lisa Fagerstrom or sign-up on the sheets provided in Brewer Hall. We will be polling interested persons who indicate/have indicated interest in being a part of one of the groups and setting a day and time to meet beginning in January.

~~~~~

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>

**CALLING ALL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS (for Children and Youth)**... and anyone interested in helping out upstairs with the children on Sunday morning!! Following the 10:30 worship service on Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will be holding a teacher orientation and question & answer time. Nan Gibbons and Lisa Fagerstrom will meet with teachers to talk about curriculum and scheduling for Sunday School and to answer any questions that current or perspective teachers might have. Grab your breakfast and join the group in the John Wesley room for this noon meeting!

**ADVENT WORKSHOP AND RETREAT** Also following the 10:30 service on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will be holding an *Advent Workshop and Retreat*. Grab some breakfast following the worship service and join in making a wreath, creating an Advent Devotional, or coloring Advent Prayer Mandalas.

There will also be a retreat time from 1-3:30 pm to prepare our hearts, minds, and souls for the coming season of Advent. The retreat will reflect on this year’s worship theme for Advent: *Out of the Darkness, Into the Light*. Contact Lisa Fagerstrom at 508-799-4191, ext. 106 for more information or to sign up for the retreat. All are welcome to this time of fun, festivity, faithful reflection, and fellowship! Childcare will be provided.

## DID YOU KNOW?

On Sunday, December 3, we will light the first Advent candle during morning and begin our observance of Advent, which marks the beginning of the Christian Liturgical Year. Although we often refer to four weeks of Advent, the season of Advent, which begins four Sundays before Christmas, can be between three and four weeks long, depending upon which weekday is December 25 in a particular year. The first Sunday of Advent can occur any time from November 27 to December 3; the fourth Sunday of Advent can be as early as December 18, an entire week before Christmas, or as late as December 24 (as it falls this year). Technically Advent lasts from the first Sunday in Advent until the afternoon of December 24, since Christmas Eve marks the beginning of the Christmas season. This year the fourth “week” of Advent will last less than a day!

At one time the season of Advent was longer than four weeks. In the evolution of the Liturgical Year, the origins of Advent emerged later than those of the Lent/Easter cycle. The season was developed in the Western church as a preparation for the festival of the nativity as Christians came to see that Christmas and Epiphany needed a preparatory season analogous to Lent in the Easter cycle. Initially the structure of Advent was modeled on Lent. There are references to a penitential period of six weeks before Christmas in Gaul in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century.

The word “Advent” is derived from a Latin root meaning “coming” or “arrival”. There are two different theological themes for the waiting for the coming of Christ for which we prepare during Advent. In the most obvious sense, Advent has come to mark preparation for the coming of Christ as we prepare to celebrate Christmas, commemorating his incarnation as the babe of Bethlehem, and as we allow him to be born again in our hearts. However a less obvious and probably ultimately more significant aspect of Advent is that we also remind ourselves that we are at the same time preparing for Christ’s final coming at the end of time.

The seasons of the liturgical year reflect various aspects of the life of Christ and salvation history. It is through the observance of the liturgical seasons in worship that we become most aware of our present lives as related to both the past and the future, and this is the essence of the concept of liturgical time. In his book *Calendar: Christ’s Time for the Church*, Laurence Hull Stookey writes of *anamnesis* “bringing the past into the present” and *prolepsis* “bringing the future into the present” and notes that:

“The great festivals of the church celebrate in our present experience what has occurred or what we resolutely believe will happen: The birth, ministry, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus; the reign of Christ in glory and the final sovereignty of God over all things... liturgical anamnesis and prolepsis constitute a primary means by which we maintain contact with past and future, both so integral to our identity and sense of mission in the world as a people of the resurrection.”

Hopefully during this Advent season we will experience the fullness of the coming of Christ into our midst—past, as we prepare for the celebration of Jesus’ birth on Christmas; present, as we remind ourselves of the way in which Christ comes to us continually in our lives every day by the power of the Holy Spirit; and future as we await the fulfillment of time. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

*Submitted by, Deborah O’Driscoll*

## 2017 HERALD SCHEDULE

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

| <b>Article Deadline<br/>Date</b> | <b>Herald Mailing<br/>Date</b> |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mon., Dec, 4                     | Wed., Dec. 6                   |
| Mon., Dec, 18                    | Wed., Dec. 20                  |

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

**office@wesleyworc.org**

## ALTAR FLOWERS

On Sundays altar flowers 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 \$60. Please be sure to complete a form with the dedication and return it to Debi with the payment as soon as you are able.



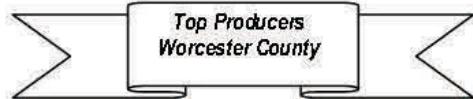
**United Methodist  
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**

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** A Smart Move  
**REALTY INC.**



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**  
**NOVEMBER 29, 2017**

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

**WESLEY STAFF & LEADERSHIP TEAM**

|                                                |                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Pastor                                         | Rev. Shandirai Mawokomatanda                      |
| Director of Christian Formation & Discipleship | Lisa Fagerstrom                                   |
| Director of Music Ministries                   | Brett Maguire                                     |
| Director of Children's Music                   | Nan Gibbons                                       |
| Asst. Director of Ghanaian Choir               | Wesley Hall                                       |
| Music Assistant & Layleader                    | Deborah O'Driscoll                                |
| Building Superintendent                        | Tim Murphy                                        |
| Business Administrator                         | Lorna Mattus-Merrill                              |
| Church Secretary                               | Debi Ritacco                                      |
| Custodians                                     | April Dylewicz<br>Tom Friend<br>Gerard Piscitelli |
| Security                                       | Steve Boyns                                       |
| Head Usher                                     | David Dagle                                       |
| Church Council                                 | Tom Ingrassia                                     |
| Board of Trustees<br>Co-Chairs                 | Yaw Enyim<br>Gary Robinson                        |
| Carty Cupboard Food Pantry                     | Nancy Spencer                                     |
| Communion Steward                              | Linda D'Acri                                      |
| Finance & Stewardship<br>Co-Chairs             | Michael Edmunds<br>William Wong                   |
| Ghanaian Association                           | Paul Hayfron                                      |
| Hospitality Co-Chairs                          | Vivian Assie<br>Kimberly Lindsey-Amoah            |
| Medical Ministry                               | Ron Ramsay                                        |
| Mission Coordinator                            | Betsy Pennino                                     |
| Staff-Parish Relations                         | Giftly Bentum-Asante                              |
| Youth Directors                                | Anthony & Adrienne Phillips                       |
| United Methodist Women<br>Co-Chairs            | Barbara Ingrassia<br>Allison Hansen               |

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