

**WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS**

*“Come to me all of you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens.” ~ Matt. 11:28*

My maternal grandmother loved to sing. It often seemed to me like she had a song for every mood or situation in life. She was never taught how to read or write, so the main source of her knowledge about the Christian faith came from personal experience. And although she would often ask us grandchildren to read the Bible to her, her primary text of spiritual nurture were the hymns of our faith.

My grandmother had been an orphan. When the relatives who had taken her in to care for her took to abusing her, she ran away at the age of 15 in search of other relatives whom she hoped would take better care of her. She traveled a hundred miles through the jungles of Zimbabwe in search of safety and refuge. She survived the dangers of the wild, including being caught in between a skirmish battle between the armies of two warring villages. My grandmother believed she had a friend and companion in Jesus who protected her and guided her through that journey and beyond.

It is not surprising, therefore, that my grandmother’s favorite hymn—one she sang almost everyday—was “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.” I love this hymn, not only because it reminds me of my grandmother but also because it speaks of an intimacy in relationship we can have with Jesus. I remember learning about Jesus as a close and personal friend, as a child. But, somehow, as I grew older, Jesus became a distant figure.

In my adult years, I struggle with recovering that intimacy and connection with Jesus, but I know it is possible to regain it because on occasion I sense the connection and intimacy with Jesus in very strong and palpable ways. What has been your experience?

During the season of Lent, the worship team and I will be leading you in a worship series based on the book, “Come With Me” by Wendy Miller. We selected this book for several reasons, one of which is the book’s focus on Jesus’ invitation to journey with him and let him be our constant companion. In the book Wendy Miller points us to the ways in which Jesus comes alongside us in the daily work of our common routine. And though we are often unaware of this divine presence, we can cultivate a life of discipleship that brings us to a greater awareness of Christ’s presence in our lives.

So, I want to invite you to come journey with us this Lent in seeking this way of companionship and abiding friendship with Jesus.

*In faith and hope, Pastor Shandi*

## LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS

**The Rose** window lighting for February is given in loving memory of my mother, Virginia Ross by Chris and Earl Flagg.

**The Tower** lighting for February is given in loving memory of our parents and grandparents, Brad and Muriel Gibbs by Donna Grenier, Martha Vigeant, Jeff Gibbs and families.

## WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

- ✠ Brett Maguire for peace and the assurance of God's presence and grace in his life.
- ✠ Edith's sister Clara and her family who are grieving the loss of their husband and father TPJ who passed away on January 27.
- ✠ Charlotte, Jean and their families.
- ✠ For those facing biopsies and tests, that they may know God's presence and healing.
- ✠ For all struggling with addiction, that they may grasp recovery and hold on for dear life.
- ✠ Nana K. Oppong to recover.
- ✠ Edward O'Tetteh for strength and courage to overcome obstacles.
- ✠ Sharon Webb who continues to recover from knee replacement surgery.
- ✠ Ann Gorman who was hospitalized with a serious heart condition.
- ✠ For a successful graduate school interview at WPI for Mike.
- ✠ A good final undergraduate semester at Clarke for Jeanmarie and Mike.
- ✠ For families longing for love and peace and understanding of each other.
- ✠ Maude Meier who is recovering from kidney transplant.
- ✠ For God's guidance and protection for Eleanor Assie.
- ✠ The church leadership who wrestle with challenging issues and decision.
- ✠ Richard and Virginia Gow on the sudden death of their son, David (51 yo) on January 16<sup>th</sup>
- ✠ Philip Neiman, for comfort and healing, who was involved in a car accident and is suffering complications from his injuries. Also prayer for his wife Ruth Ann and his children for comfort and strength as they surround him with care and support.
- ✠ Those who are victims of human trafficking in the U.S. and around the world.



**The Tower** lighting for February and August is available for dedication. If you are interested in dedicating the Tower in memory or in honor of a loved one, please contact Debi in the office as soon as you are able to. The cost of the lighting is \$40/month.

## FROM THE SPRC

### Changes in the Ministry of Music Area

**BRETT MAGUIRE'S DEPARTURE...** For those who have not yet heard the news, we regret to inform you that Brett Maguire, our Director of Music Ministry since 2008, will no longer be serving in that capacity here at Wesley United Methodist Church.

After careful review and discernment, the Staff-Parish Relations Committee with Pastor Shandi determined that Brett's performance in the position was no longer meeting the requirements for the job, and that he was no longer functioning as an effective member of the staff and leadership team.

We are grateful for Brett's contribution to Wesley's music program over the last ten years. Brett did a tremendous amount of good work during his time here, helping us to create a music experience that was unique to Wesley. Brett's contributions at Wesley will be missed and we wish Brett the utmost good fortune in all of his future endeavors.

**NOTES OF APPRECIATION FOR BRETT...** Recognizing that you did not have time or opportunity to bid farewell to Brett, the SPRC invites any members of the congregation who would like to send Brett a note of appreciation for his years of service, to please bring your cards to the Church by Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup>. We will gather all the notes submitted and send them out to Brett as a token of our appreciation for his years of service with us.

**MARJORIE NESS TO LEAD MUSIC MINISTRY...** We are pleased to announce that, the SPRC have contracted with Marjorie Ness to help provide leadership to our music ministry over the next couple of months, through Easter, while we conduct a search for an Interim Director of Music Ministries. Marjorie is known to many in our congregation, and she comes with some history and experience of having led our music ministry here in the past.

Marjorie will assume a lead role in rehearsing the three choirs (Wesley, Ghanaian, and Bell choir) in preparation for worship, as well as providing leadership in the two Sunday morning worship services. Marjorie comes with extensive experience of serving in interim positions and capacities, so she not only comes with gifts in church music but also gifts for ministering in contexts in transition and providing a sense of stability and continuity there.

We are excited about this opportunity and we are confident that we can continue to maintain a strong and vibrant music ministry while we look toward a future of new possibilities. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Shandi or any member of the SPRC.

## COME WITH ME: A LENTEN WORSHIP SERIES

In her book **Come With Me: Daily Living with a New Monastic Rule of Life**, Wendy Miller describes how, early in his ministry, Jesus forms a rhythm in his relationship with those who follow him. The rhythm includes three movements that are integral to the formation and transformation of disciples: coming to Jesus, being with Jesus and each other, and being sent out. This rhythm becomes a norm and a rule for the life of the disciples.

Wendy Miller then describes how, as United Methodists, we have adapted this rhythm into our baptismal and membership vows, whereby we covenant to be faithful to walk as disciples by our Prayers, Presence, Gifts, Service, and Witness. This year, the Lenten worship series will lead us to explore how we can enter more deeply into this rhythm and rule of life. We will examine how this five-fold rule expressed in our baptismal vows can be a living expression of the way of Jesus in the world. Jesus says, “Come with me. Come follow me.” So this Lent, we invite you to heed his call and respond to his invitation.

Below is a thematic outline for the series. We invite you to come journey with us.

**2/18** Lent 1: ***Baptism and Being Named***—We will reflect on the new name we receive with our baptism and how our name informs the journey to which Jesus invites us.

**2/25** Lent 2: ***Baptismal Covenant***—In this service will reflect on how our baptismal vows informs a new rhythm or pattern for living in the world.

**3/04** Lent 3: ***Prayer and the Baptismal Covenant***—in this service we will reflect on our prayer lives, and invite us to consider how we can settle into a new rhythm of prayer.

**3/11** Lent 4: ***Presence and the Baptismal Covenant***—in this service we will reflect on how Jesus is present to us and consider how we can be present to others in the world.

**3/18** Lent 5: ***Gifts and the Baptismal Covenant***—in this service we will reflect on the gifts God has blessed us with and consider how to bless others with these same gifts.

**3/25** Palm Sunday: ***Service and the Baptismal Covenant***—in this service we will reflect on how, through our gifts, we can revive the heart of service in our walk with Jesus.

**4/01** Easter: ***Witness and the Baptismal Covenant***—in this service we will point to a new Eastertide worship series in which we will further examine what it means to bear witness to resurrection life in the world.

**OFFICE VOLUNTEER(S) NEEDED...** With the change of our hours that has taken effect, the office is in need of volunteer(s) to help answer the phones, the doors, and other small office tasks. I currently have 2 volunteers, however I am looking for one or two more to help from 9 am to 1 pm, Monday-Friday. Having a few people will make it easier to create a schedule and have a backup person if need be. If you have time in the morning on one or more days and are interested in helping, please contact me in the church office (office@wesleyworc.org or 508-799-4191 ext 102). Thank you.

*Debi Ritacco*

## **MISSION MATTERS**

**THIS IS WESLEY'S IHN WEEK, THROUGH SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10<sup>TH</sup>**

*"I was homeless and you gave me a room."* Matthew 25:35 (Message Bible)

**YOUTH GROUP IN CHARGE OF FEBRUARY 24<sup>TH</sup> COMMUNITY SUPPER...** The menu will be chicken alfredo, corn, rolls, lemonade and desserts. Please plan to attend! If you could contribute baked desserts (finger food), please contact Adrienne Hall-Phillips.

**THREE OF THE 2018 COMMUNITY SUPPERS NEED LEADERS...** Community Suppers in 2018 are all on last Saturdays of the months, except for March 31 which is the night of the Easter Vigil and followed by the Easter Breakfast. The March supper will be on March 24. *Please tell Betsy Pennino if you could take charge of a supper in June, July, September or October.* Judy and Jim Hoffman have helpfully offered to lead June or July.

**VOLUNTEERING WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY ON JUNE 2...** We're looking for a team of 12 to 15 Wesley folks to work at Habitat's Northborough build site on Main Street (Rte. 20). That's the same location as last year. We have signed up for Saturday, June 2, 8 am to 4 pm. Working for a half-day is possible, if someone else can fill in for the other half-day. Please tell Betsy Pennino if you're 16 or older and would like to volunteer.

Some have asked how the Northborough project has progressed. The siding is up on the smaller house, and there is still interior framing to do in the big house. Note: The Habitat Restore will re-open soon at the new 640 Lincoln St. location.

## CHRISTIAN FORMATION AND DISCIPLESHIP

**During the Lenten season**, we will be using the book **“Come With Me”** by Wendy Miller. “Come With Me” serves as a vehicle for contemplation, reflection, and spiritual direction to discern what God is cultivating in our personal lives and in our neighborhoods.

Author Wendy Miller describes “Come With Me” in this way:

“Come With Me is designed to be a guide and a workbook, giving you the kind of map that can help with the inward and outward journey [of the Christian faith]. In its pages you will find guidance as you explore the landscape of your own life and soul, and as you engage with an outward journey, encountering people you may never have met or spent time with before—all kinds of people. That is the way of Jesus, tending our inner being, even as we are engaging with other people.”

We will be engaging with this book in our worship sermon series during Lent, and we will also offer two different times to be a part of small group journeying and discussions:

- ✧ **The 9:30 Adult Sunday School Class** (meeting in the John Wesley Room) will be using the “Come With Me” as a companion study to the weekly worship service. All are welcome to this small group reflection and discussion time.
- ✧ **On Tuesday Evenings in Lent** all are invited to join in a simple supper followed by a time of small group reflection and discussion of “Come With Me.”

The evening will begin with a simple supper of soup, bread, and fruit at **5:45 p.m.**... followed by the small group time from **6:45-8 p.m.**

We hope that you will come and be a part of any or all of these opportunities to reflect on your faith journey and how to engage more fully with the Wesley family and our neighbors in offering our gifts, our prayers, our witness, and our service.

## NEW PLAN FOR HERALD MAILINGS

As you may know, the church is undergoing a discernment period to restructure our ministry and church operations in order to live into a goal of responsible stewardship. Many changes will be explored in the coming months, and some changes are already underway. One such change is in regards to the bi-weekly herald publishing.

**Beginning in April**, Wesley Church will publish one Herald a month. This move will help us to be good stewards in a few areas. First, the move will help us to be good stewards of resources in creation. We believe that a reduction in the paper we use is good for the environment. Second, we believe that this reduction will help us to be good financial stewards, since it will provide cost savings on paper, ink and postage. And third, we believe that this move will help us be good stewards of our staff time and gifts, particularly since we have reduced staff hours in all the full-time positions.

The Herald publishing schedule for the next several months is as follows...

**Article Due Date:**

Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup>

Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>

Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup>

Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup>

Monday, April 9<sup>th</sup>

Monday, May 14<sup>th</sup>

Monday, June 11<sup>th</sup>

**Publishing Date:**

Wed., February 7<sup>th</sup>

Wed., February 21<sup>st</sup>

Wed., March 7<sup>th</sup>

Wed., March 21<sup>st</sup>

Wed., April 18<sup>th</sup>

Wed., May 23<sup>rd</sup>

Wed., June 20<sup>th</sup>

Please note that while the Herald is published on a Wednesday, the due date for articles to the Herald is on the second Monday before the publishing date (see schedule above, this works out to be 10 days before the Publishing Date).

We will re-evaluate how this new schedule is working during the summer. In the meantime, we are grateful for your cooperation and support for this new plan.

*Yours in faith,  
Pastor Shandi*

## **STEWARDSHIP MOMENT**

### **Love and Stewardship**

The “love passage” of the Bible, that being 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, the one that starts with “Love is patient, love is kind....”, makes us wonder how love and stewardship relate to each other. Love is the spiritual portion of how we manage everything for God and what should drive us towards our goals. To be a good manager in anything we do, there has to be a basis of love, a passion. We need to have passion for our careers, our families and our goals in life.

With Valentine’s Day coming up, February is a great time to have that dream date with your significant other or dream meeting with someone you trust. In that meeting, with all distractions gone, TVs off, kids in bed, sit down together and discuss where you all want to be 20 years from now. Put everything on the table, we’re just dreaming at this point. Don’t worry about how to get there just yet but have everybody agree to what those goals and aspirations by being on the same page, this is where some compromise will have to come into play. From here, this is where you now plan the how. How much do we have to save to reach our dreams? What can we give up to make our dreams a reality? What debts do we need to get rid of to make our dreams come true? What choices and sacrifices do we have to make?

Love will be the driving force to help you reach those dreams and goals. When someone you love comes to you and says let’s buy that new gaming console, buy that new car, or have that new kitchen, the answer may be a loving *No* because you have some goals that you as a family or individual want to reach. When we heard 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 at a funeral, it reminded us that they, the person who has passed away, have steward their life in a loving way for their friends and family.” It (love) always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres.

## *Thank you! Thank You!! THANK YOU!!!*

To our Wesley Family,

Thank you to all who made our Dad's Memorial Service on January 20<sup>th</sup> a true celebration of his life. Thank you to Pastor Shandi for his spiritual guidance during this difficult time, to Linda D'Acri and UMW for the delicious and lovely collation, to Lorna and Debi for making sure all went smoothly before, during and after Dad's service, to Brett for the beautiful music, and most of all to each of you for your love and support to us, and for your presence in our Dad's long and laughter filled life.

With much appreciation and blessings,

*The Brad Gibbs Family – Donna, Martha and Jeffrey*

**Thank you** to all the Wesley women (and a few men) who helped put on a great Community Supper on January 27. Including take out boxes, we served 110 meals, and lots of dessert options, with leftovers! Special thanks to Emily Smith and her prep team who planned the meal, bought the food and then got the mac & cheese, ham and peas mixed together in the right quantities. It was a blessed event for all involved!

*~ Allison Hansen*

*I would like to extend an appreciative Thank You to Nan Gibbons for making the replacement hymn numbers for the sanctuary board. The new numbers work great! Thank you Nan!*

*~ Sincerely, David Dagle*

*Thank you* to everyone who was able to wear **RED** on Super Bowl Sunday to "**Stand in the Red Zone**" to Intercept Human Trafficking. Wesley UMW is also standing up to combat human trafficking by enabling **R.I.A. House** to establish an indispensable physical presence in Worcester.

**R.I.A. House (Ready Inspire Act):** *A Sisterhood for Change* is a 501c 3 nonprofit organization supporting and standing with women who have experiences in the commercial sex industry, sexual exploitation, and/or sex trafficking.

**R.I.A. House** trains and educates various local groups, offers case management/mobile peer counseling and accompaniment, hosts weekly support groups, and participates in community efforts. Staff includes survivors and allies in recovery from addiction, DV, sexual trauma and exploitation; these staff members specialize in trauma and substance abuse recovery.

A *Mission Possible* special projects grant to R.I.A. House from Wesley UMW's Isabel Smith funds provided the needed monies to cover the rental of office space. We are pleased that the Board of R.I.A. House chose to rent space at Wesley.

*~ Barb Ingrassia*

## REGISTER NOW FOR FINANCIAL PEACE U

**STARTING MARCH 4, 2018!**

It's not too late to start thinking about your New Year's Resolution. If one of them is to get better control of your personal finances, why not consider taking FPU? Financial Peace University (FPU) is a 9-week life-changing program that empowers and teaches you how to make Biblical 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.**

It is not just for those who are in debt but offers more.

- ◆ 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 by email at [bill922@gmail.com](mailto:bill922@gmail.com) or (508) 320-5620. Classes begin March 4, 2018 at 6:00pm in John Wesley Room, for 1.5 to 2 hours each time. Through a special grant, FPU now only costs \$50 (a \$159 savings) per family for Wesley Church attendees in which the book "Total Money Makeover," workbook, audio CDs, and starter envelope system are provided.

Also for new signups, the lessons will be available online for 1 year as well as access to the Every Dollar Plus (valued at \$100), one of the best budgeting apps out there. You can even attend all 9 weeks for free by just listening in class, taking notes, and participating in the group discussion (no materials provided).

For more information about Dave Ramsey and FPU, visit [www.daveramsey.com](http://www.daveramsey.com) and look for Financial Peace University under classes or enter the following link, <https://fpu.com/1058834>.

## DID YOU KNOW?

On Wednesday, February 14, we will begin our season of Lent with the observance of Ash Wednesday. Most people are aware that the name relates to the ceremonial imposition of ashes on the foreheads of worshippers that occurs in the liturgy for the day in many denominations. Such liturgical use of ashes dates back at least to the 10<sup>th</sup> Century. However, the concept of ashes as a symbol of penitence is even older than that. In the early church, when public penitence was observed, penitents sprinkled ashes on their heads or received from the bishop a garment sprinkled with ashes. Ultimately this symbolism derives from the Bible in which the imagery of ashes centers primarily on the fragility of life. The association of ashes with death arises from the ancient military custom of burning enemy cities, and appears in the Old Testament stories of warfare as well as in prophetic and apocalyptic passages. Since the word *ashes* is an image of total destruction, ashes are used in the Bible in expressions of intense grief and loss.

Imposition of ashes was not part of the official liturgy in the United Methodist tradition until relatively late in the 20<sup>th</sup> C. Daniel Benedict, retired elder and former Worship Resources Director of the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship (now known as Discipleship Ministries), explains:

“While many think of actions such as the imposition of ashes, signing with the cross, footwashing, and the use of incense as something that only Roman Catholics or high church Episcopalians do, there has been a move among Protestant churches, including United Methodists, to recover these more multisensory ways of worship. This is in keeping with a growing recognition that people have multiple ways of learning and praying. Worship that is oriented to the intellect or to the emotions, both interior, leaves out those who engage in prayer through vision, smell, touch, movement, and so forth. We are increasingly aware that people are formed in faith when practices become embedded in memory, nerves, muscles, and bone through sensory engagement. United Methodists have had resources for worship that include the imposition of ashes since 1979 when *Ashes to Fire* was published...This practice became part of our official worship resources in 1992 when General Conference adopted *The United Methodist Book of Worship*.”<sup>1</sup>

For at least 10-15 years now, the Ash Wednesday service at Wesley had included the option for worshippers to receive imposition of ashes. Ashes, a symbol of death and mortality, are put on the forehead not in some random pattern, but in the shape of a cross. Since ashes are a meaningful symbol of our mortality, there is no more powerful way to remind us of our need for repentance and renewal. Our Ash Wednesday service links us with our biblical and historic predecessors in faith, but more importantly, on Ash Wednesday we begin our pilgrimage through Lent, a liturgical season which offers us opportunity not only for repentance but for recommitment to our faith.

*Submitted by, Debbie O’Driscoll*

<sup>1</sup><https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/when-did-united-methodists-start-the-imposition-of-ashes-on-ash-wednesday>

## 2018 HERALD SCHEDULE

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

<b>Article Deadline Date</b>	<b>Herald Mailing Date</b>
Mon., Feb. 12	Wed., Feb. 21
Mon., Feb. 26	Wed., March 7

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.



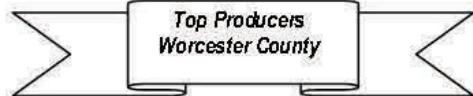
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**Fax: 508-799-3725**  
**E-Mail: [office@wesleyworc.org](mailto:office@wesleyworc.org)**  
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**WESLEY HERALD**  
**FEBRUARY 7, 2018**

***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 Children's Music                   | Nan Gibbons                                       |
| 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>Judy Hoffman                      |
| Medical Ministry                               | Ron Ramsay                                        |
| Mission Coordinator                            | Betsy Pennino                                     |
| Staff-Parish Relations                         | Gifty Bentum-Asante                               |
| Youth Directors                                | Anthony & Adrienne Phillips                       |
| United Methodist Women<br>Co-Chairs            | Barbara Ingrassia<br>Allison Hansen               |

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