

Discerning Priorities

A continuing conversation...

As you recall, on Sunday, March 4, the Church Council led us in a church-wide round-table conversation reflecting on our 5-Areas of Passion, which are:

Spiritual Growth
Welcome, Hospitality, & Inclusion
Diversity & Multiculturalism
Mission & Outreach
Lay Leadership Development & Empowerment

The Council asked three general questions for reflection: (a) what we have done to date, (b) what you would like to see happen in the coming years, and (c) how might you contribute to help the church live into these 5-areas of passion more fully? After reviewing your responses from the March 4 meeting, the Council concluded that, three themes emerged from these round-table conversations:

1. There is a desire among the people at Wesley *to be in community* and *to be connected* with one-another in deeper and meaningful ways.
2. There is a desire for us to involve and engage the *children* and *youth* more in the ministries of the church.
3. There is a desire for there to be more focused attention on *lay leadership development*.

These three themes have been helpful to provide the Church Council a sense of what is important to you in the congregation. We will therefore seek ways to deepen our relationships with one another, engage our children and youth, and invite your gifts and passion for leadership and service in the church. While it is the responsibility of the Council to develop a framework out of which these things can happen, it is ultimately all of our responsibility to implement them and put them into practice. So we invite you to continue the journey with us.

Invitation to further reflection...

In the spirit of connecting with you in more meaningful ways, the Church Council will hold a second phase of round-table conversations to reflect on leadership needs for our way forward. One of the motivating factors that led the Council to hold these round-table

LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS

The Rose window lighting for April is given in loving memory of Doris L. Tremblay by Tammy, Tracy, Allison, David, Nancy, and families.

The Tower lighting for April is given in loving memory of Margaret A. (Swan) Fuller by David, Kathy, Nancy and grandchildren.

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

- ✝ Rebecca Aidoo who celebrated her birthday this past week, that God may grant her many blessings and good health.
- ✝ Daniel Kwakye who celebrated his birthday on April 14th.
- ✝ Gloria & Jorge Mendoza's sister-in-law, Lily Mendoza, who lives in South San Francisco, CA, and had brain surgery on April 16.
- ✝ Those having financial hardships that they might find help.



POTLUCK INTERNATIONAL LUNCHEON... The Church Council leadership will host a Potluck International Luncheon as part of our next Expanded Church Council meeting on Sunday, April 29th. Stephanie Smyth, together with the Hospitality Committee, will coordinate the efforts. We are looking for more volunteers to make this a successful event. If you're interested in helping out, please contact Stephanie at 508-864-1268 or smyth0822@gmail.com. In the meantime, please start thinking about what meals you would like to contribute. There is a sign-up list for meals and there are serving pans available on a table in Brewer Hall following the service. Please sign-up by April 22.



Thank You, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

More Small Gifts for Shelters this year than before... Sarah Circle thanks everyone who donated personal care items and healthy snacks to Worcester shelters. There were enough donations to make collections for Abby's House (a shelter for battered and homeless women and their children), the Homeless Veterans' Shelter, the S.M.O.C. shelter for the homeless, and Worcester Fellowship (the outdoor ministry on Worcester Common). Special thanks to the Youth Group who did a great job of removing the packaging and sorting the gifts according to which shelter has men or women and children only, etc.

conversations was a response to your desire to be included in the decision making process of the church, and our desire to invite meaningful input on the difficult decisions we, as your church leadership, have to make. One such area where we need to make difficult decisions is in the staffing of our church work. So, the next phase of round-table conversation will focus on this particular subject.

On Sunday, April 29th, during the International Potluck Luncheon, the Church Council leadership will facilitate round-table conversations to reflect on what you see as the staffing priorities for our church. The objectives for this exercise are as follows:

- (i) To invite you to an exercise of holy imagination as we simulate some of the types of conversations we as leaders might have when we need to make difficult decisions;
- (ii) To expose you to some of the dynamics and challenges we as leaders face when we seek to make difficult decisions; and
- (iii) To gather input from you about what your sense is regarding important staffing needs for the church.

To accomplish these objectives, the Church Council will ask the following set of questions:

- (1) Assuming that the level of ministry stays the same as it is currently, **Imagine** for a moment, that Wesley can only afford a part-time pastor to lead the church, what three things would you want the pastor to focus on, and why?
- (2) Now imagine that the pastoral position becomes full-time, (a) what other priorities would you add? (b) How would the top three priorities change and why?
- (3) Imagine you could add only one program staff position, (a) what would that position be and why? (b) What three things would you want that position to focus on and why?

We will then invite you to repeat the third question a few times in order to gather from you your sense of what staffing needs you consider to be a priority. At your tables, you will work together to come up with your priorities and thus you will need to somehow come to an agreement about your priorities. Church Council members will only facilitate and record your responses because they have already engaged in this exercise themselves. Remember, this is only an exercise—a simulation—but one through which we also hope to glean some data about what is at the heart of this congregation in terms of staffing needs. So, please come join us as we continue these important reflections.

In faith and hope, Pastor Shandi

ACOLYTE COORDINATOR NEEDED... The worship team is looking for someone to coordinate the acolyte ministry. Responsibilities include creating the schedule for the acolyte calendar for our weekly services, and scheduling training and resourcing meetings for the acolytes with Pastor Shandi. If you're interested in serving in this capacity, please contact Pastor Shandi via email.

MARKETING, PUBLICITY AND COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY TEAM... Pastor Shandi will be convening a ministry team to help us enhance our publicity, marketing and communications as a Church. If you're interested in helping Wesley have a consistent presence via Facebook and Twitter, if you're interested in helping improve our Website, or help us to get word out into the community about our ministries and events, please join us on this team. For more information contact Pastor Shandi at pastorshandim@wesleyworc.org.

VISITATION MINISTRY... Pastor Shandi and the Hospitality Team would like to expand our visitation ministry and include lay visitation ministry. We are hoping to form three teams to visit (a) shut-ins or homebound members, (b) hospitalized members, (c) visitors, guests and other members we want to connect with. If you're interested in being part of one or more of the teams, please contact Pastor Shandi at pastorshandim@wesleyworc.org.

VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTERS (VOAD) are now partnering up with Southern Baptists and Latter-Day Saints because we don't have full teams responding to these natural disasters that recently have occurred in New England: Swanton, VT, Quincy, Weymouth, Marshfield, and Scituate, Mass. (areas on the south shore). We had four Nor'easters hit the south shore recently and I would like to put a team together to assist in cleanup. Work will be physical and hard at times, so I will need people in good health and able to work.

It will be an all-day trip on a Saturday or Sunday. No date has been picked as I will want to form a team to decide on a date together. We have a van now so we can go down together. Lunch will be provided.

Please contact Gerard Piscitelli (Disaster Response Coordinator for Central Mass) for more information at 774-253-7362.

UMVIM (United Methodist Volunteers in Mission) is also looking for volunteers for disaster cleanup in Puerto Rico. If you interested in being part of this trip and would like to receive more information please see me. *Gerard Piscitelli*

SCHOOL SUPPLIES NEEDED... Anthony Nana Marfo is involved in a mission project to collect school supplies for a school in Asonomaso, Ghana (the Junior Secondary School). We seek your support. Items needed include: Notebooks, Pens, Pencils, Rulers, Mathematical Sets, used Laptops, and Shoes (sneakers sizes 6-10).

Anthony will be gathering these items between now and June 30th and they will be shipped to Ghana in the summer. A donation box is located in Brewer Hall. More valuable items can be given directly to Anthony, and if you have any questions please contact Anthony at 508-304-9009. Thank you for your support.

HIGHLAND GROUP invites you to join us for our monthly meeting as we begin to discuss a new book entitled **“Breaking the Worry Habit...Forever”** by Elizabeth George. Going beyond the simple “just pray and give your troubles to the Lord.” Elizabeth acknowledges how hard it can be to “let go and let God”. She offers practical step-by-step advice to help readers...

- ✝ change their focus
- ✝ find the positive in negative situations
- ✝ understand what they can and can't change
- ✝ know what to do when feeling overwhelmed
- ✝ develop proactive skills to head off anxiety
- ✝ understand that Christ is with them always

Insightful discussion questions for each chapter will help us apply the biblical principles and insights to our lives...and break the worry habit forever.

Where: The home of George and Lorraine Kronberg
5 Suburban Rd., #403
Worcester

When: Monday, May 14, 2018 (second Monday of the month)

Time: Coffee fellowship at 10:00am

This is a group of Wesley friends who join together each month for fellowship and sharing. Please consider joining us. If you have any questions contact Lorraine (508 852-6629) or speak with Lisa Fagerstrom.

CARTY CUPBOARD FOOD PANTRY

At this time we are looking for grocery bags with handles like the ones you would get at Trader Joe's, and of course plastic grocery bags are always good too.

The items of the month for April are Diapers ...sizes 3, 4, and 5.

The items of the month for May are Mayonnaise, and Salad Dressings...in plastic please.

The items of the month for June are Ketchup, Mustard, and Relish...In plastic please.

I would like to take this time to thank everyone who continues to support our mission to help those who are hungry by generously donating.

Thank You, Nancy

MISSION MATTERS

April 28th Community Supper... Rebecca Aidoo will be catering the April community supper to give thanks for 70 years. She'll celebrate her 70th birthday this month, and wants to share her gratitude with Wesley people and our community supper guests. The menu will be baked chicken, jollof rice, tossed salad, rolls, drinks and dessert. *Rebecca asks that Wesley bakers contribute dessert items.*

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 st. (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. Tasks at all levels of building skills will be available. Please tell Betsy Pennino if you're 16 or older and would like to volunteer.

At the round table discussions, people requested more opportunities for mission:

*The 33rd annual Walk for the Homeless will be on Sunday, May 20th. It will leave from Elm Park at 2 pm. Registration starts at 1 pm. We will gather news of Wesley folks who will be attending. More info at walkforthehomeless.org.

Thank You, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

THANK YOU to all those who made the UMW Palm Sunday Bake/Craft Sale a success. *Thank you* to Linda D'Acri for coordinating the bake table; to Nancy and Dot Ellis on the craft table. Staffers Susan William, Cordelia Ferdinand, Beth D'Acri and others.

Thank you to all the talented BAKERS/CRAFTERS, and of course TO ALL WHO MADE PURCHASES. The proceeds support UMW mission projects, including Camperships.

Barbara Ingrassia, Co-President

MESSAGES FROM THE CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR

Year to Date Budget Results through March 2018

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Total Income	\$ 154,629	\$ 151,414	\$ 3,215 more than budget
Total Expense	\$ 192,094	\$ 189,685	\$ 2,408 more than budget
Net Loss	\$ -37,466	\$ -38,271	\$ 806 below budget

Pledges thru March

Actual	\$ 70,891	
Budget	\$ 78,469	
Difference	\$ -7,578	below budget

Easter Donations through 4/17/18

Actual	\$ 7,680	
Budget	\$ 7,000	
Difference	\$ 680	more than budget

Thank you for your continued generosity!

Peace,

Lorna

Save the Dates...

COMMUNITIES OF SONG CONCERT

MAY 6 AT 3:00–6:00 PM

Come enjoy the second annual Communities of Song concert at Wesley. This is a Massachusetts Cultural Council ArtWeek event, so we expect many visitors. Let's give them a warm Wesley welcome that might bring them back on a Sunday! Joining Wesley's own choirs will be Barre's Band of Voices Community Chorus, and Shir Joy Jewish Chorus. Each group will sing music from its own distinct cultures and traditions and then join together with the other choirs for a grand finale which includes audience participation! Last year's concert was wonderful – don't miss this year! A free will offering will be taken for Massachusetts Pastoral Counseling Centers.

Preceding the performance, join us at 3:00 p.m. for a discussion about the experience of choral singing, inspiration for this performance and more with concert organizer, director and composer Nan AK Gibbons. The discussion is 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the concert is 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served afterward. Come support music at Wesley!

Calling all students entering second grade through those who have completed sixth grade!

“Superheroes—Then and Now” is the theme for Wesley's Vacation Bible School to be held here at the church from **July 23—26, 2018**. Keep a lookout for more details and registration form in the weeks ahead and plan to join us for food, fun, and fellowship with your favorite ***Superheroes!!!***



Thank You, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

70 Children and Adults attended Easter Egg Hunt... About 15 Korean children were there, as well as toddlers and moms from Florence House, and a few IHN families. A new feature was using the Wesley van to transport IHN families. Thank you, Lisa Fagerstrom and Mercy Peacock, for serving as drivers. Special thanks to other women from outside our circle who provided and taught Easter crafts-- Florence Oppong, Martha Vigeant, Tori and Sophia Gibbs, with Ann Openshaw as leader. Thank you to all Sarah Circle members who volunteered on the day of the event (and also filled 100's of plastic Easter Eggs or donated food)-- Allison Hansen, Donna Hirtle, and Judith Barton. Jean Grant and Sandy McManus donated similar items. We very much appreciated having Wesley youth there to help hide the eggs, while Pastor Shandi showed an Easter video.

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

The Importance of Self-Reflection

Part of good stewardship is to be in service to others. During this time of Easter, we are reminded that Jesus gave his life so that we may experience life in its fullest; and to show our love, we need to give back and serve others so that they too can experience life to their fullest. However, there comes a time and place for service, when we need to take care of ourselves before we can take care of others. In Wendy Miller's book *Come With Me*, she writes that one of the 3 foundations for the particular monastic rules of living in service is to "...practice regular Sabbath as a means of renewal so that we can lovingly serve God and neighbor." She then proceeds to tell us about how to do this, with the suggestion to find that quiet place and time to do some self-reflection.

Self-reflection allows us to grow and and change. It allows us to learn, not only about ourselves but about others. Jennifer Porter writes in a Harvard Business Review article, "Reflection gives the brain an opportunity to pause amidst the chaos, untangle and sort through observations and experiences, consider multiple possible interpretations, and create meaning." By spending the time to self-reflect, it allows us to understand our next actions and lesson, and not to make the same mistakes as before. Some of us are afraid of doing self-reflection because we may not like what we see but it must be done honestly so that we can move forward.

Paul wrote to the Romans on taking the time for self-reflection in the epistle Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." Without taking the time to reflect, we can't really grow and thus not able to serve. We have to take care of ourselves first. From there we can then plan for the next season of our lives, we can better see how to move forward, and, we can choose to live intentionally.

THE TRUSTEES THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW –

In an effort to increase transparency and update the congregation on its projects, initiatives, and the endowment, the trustees will start to put a mini report in the herald, a couple of times a year – this is the first such report.

We are blessed, and have been entrusted with, an amazing building with some 65 rooms. Its sanctuary with its Gothic arches and incredible stained glass is an inspiring worship space, which often, still takes my breath away. That being said, the building is almost 100 years old, and its upkeep and maintenance is a never-ending challenge. This work is often done behind the scenes and in places not frequently seen by congregants. For example, our building superintendent, Tim Murphy, has done or overseen the upgrading of the plumbing of nearly every bathroom and sink in the building. It is great to have Tim back and feeling better after a serious fall he took while on the job before Christmas. Tim “has his finger on the pulse” of the building, and in many cases has been able to spot little problems before they become major ones. He has organized and cleaned up many spaces in the church, and has been able to look with “fresh eyes” on many of the challenges we face.

The trustees are working on several problems currently which will require significant expenditures to fix and we wanted to bring them to your attention. These issues are of particular concern because they directly affect our worship space. It was on one of Tim’s building walk-throughs that he noticed steam coming out of a crack in a wall in the north balcony staircase. The steam leak in the pipe inside that wall not only damaged and weakened the wall, but also damaged the heater for the chapel directly below it. The damaged area of the wall has been removed, an abatement company has also removed asbestos around the steam pipe, and the steam leak has been fixed. The wall will now be re-plastered and some time this summer the chapel heater will be replaced. Total cost of this project is expected to be around \$11,000. (Which is almost half of the trustee’s maintenance budget of \$25,000. for all of 2018).

A second issue is that the roof is leaking, damaging the front pews on the north side of the sanctuary. (You may have seen them cordoned-off and the water collection buckets on them.) This leak is around the spire on the highest peak of the sanctuary roof. We are fortunate to have a roofing contractor who has the expertise to fix slate roofs, but this repair will require significant staging on the State Street side of the building. There are two other leaks presently on the north side of the building, which will be addressed at the same time - the estimate for these repairs is approximately \$24,500.

Lastly, the cement (it is actually a composite material) used to frame the doors and windows of the church (the painted areas) is deteriorating in several areas. Of most concern now, is the lower State Street entrance, because the falling cement could be a safety issue. We currently have an estimate of \$19,000. to repair/replace the framing material in that area, but we will be getting other estimates. This repair also involves staging, which is a significant part of the cost.

So the trustees have had discussion about how to fund these projects. We are exploring options, which include loans, and grants that might be available from the conference, borrowing from our own endowment, and/or possibly a capital campaign. We would also like to make an appeal for anyone in the congregation who might want to make a contribution to any of these projects to do so.

Two other quick things to mention: There had been a concern about the water quality on the third floor. The water was tested in the third floor kitchenette and it passed all 10 tests, including lead, bacteria, copper and iron. The city constantly monitors and treats the city water supply and they perform annual inspections on our kitchen, including a water test, for permitting purposes (our current permit is on wall near staff refrigerator). Our city water may taste slightly different from your water at home, but it is absolutely safe to drink!

Also, the trustees will be meeting with our new Bank of America endowment managers on April 30th, to get acquainted, and to discuss the balances of our portfolio, strategize, review the bank's reporting IRS requirements, and learn about any federal/state laws applicable to our portfolio.

The trustees welcome your input on any matters concerning the building and the endowment, and encourage anyone interested in serving as a trustee to speak with Pastor Shandi.

*Peace and blessings,
The Wesley Trustees*

DID YOU KNOW?

Each week our Sunday morning worship includes a time of “offering signs of peace and reconciliation.” Our current practice of passing of the peace derives from the liturgical “kiss of peace” which has biblical origins. Matthew 5:23-24 instructs worshipers to be reconciled with each other before offering gifts at the altar. The kiss of peace is mentioned in many early liturgies. In these early liturgies the kiss of peace served as symbol of the peace and unity of the church and usually occurred before the bread and wine for communion were brought forward at the offering. The New Testament contains many references to a liturgical kiss, which in turn likely derives from Jewish table custom. In modern liturgies the position of the Peace in the order of worship is variable, but no matter where it occurs within the service, it serves as a participation in spiritual encounter with other believers.

The Gospel reading from John on the second Sunday of Easter told the story of Jesus’ appearing after the resurrection to his disciples as they hid behind locked doors. His greeting to them was “Peace be with you.” (John 20:19). In our sharing of the peace during worship, we are not merely exchanging personal greetings and expressing good wishes to each other, we are sharing Christ’s peace with one another. Wayne Wold in his book *Tune My Heart to Sing* expresses it this way:

“It is the peace of Christ that we give, and he has given us the opportunity and responsibility to be channels of this peace to each other. Christ’s peace is deep in meaning, rich in scope, and full of the power that only a dying and rising Saviour can give. It is a release from real forces and a rescue from ourselves. Christ’s words do not merely wish us peace—they grant it. That is the peace we mean to share in worship—in word, in the sacraments, in the fellowship, in the holy surroundings, and in the music whether it be jubilant or meditative. May the peace of Christ dwell in us richly this Easter season as we are called to be channels and recipients of the peace Christ has won for us.”

Submitted by Debbie O’Driscoll

2018 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., May 14	Wed., May 23
Mon., June 4	Wed., June 13

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.



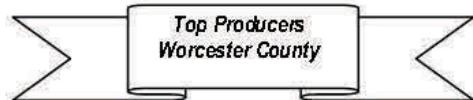
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**WESLEY HERALD
APRIL 18, 2018**

WESLEY STAFF & LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Pastor Rev. Shandirai Mawokomatanda
- Director of Christian Formation & Discipleship Lisa Fagerstrom
- Director of Children’s Music Nan Gibbons
- Interim Director of Music Ministry Marjorie Ness
- Music Assistant & Layleader Deborah O’Driscoll
- Building Superintendent Tim Murphy
- Business Administrator Lorna Mattus-Merrill
- Church Secretary Debi Ritacco
- Custodians April Dylewicz
Tom Friend
Gerard Piscitelli
- Security Steve Boyns
- Head Usher David Dagle
- Church Council Tom Ingrassia
- Board of Trustees Yaw Enyim
Co-Chairs Gary Robinson
- Carty Cupboard Food Pantry Nancy Spencer
- Communion Steward Linda D’Acri
- Finance & Stewardship Co-Chairs Michael Edmunds
William Wong
- Ghanaian Association Paul Hayfron
- Hospitality Co-Chairs Vivian Assie
Judy Hoffman
- Medical Ministry Ron Ramsay
- Mission Coordinator Betsy Pennino
- Staff-Parish Relations Gifty Bentum-Asante
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