

**GIVING THANKS**

*"Give thanks in every situation because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."*

~ 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Scottish minister Alexander Whyte was known for his uplifting prayers in the pulpit. He always found something for which to be grateful. One Sunday morning the weather was so gloomy that one church member thought to himself, "Certainly the preacher won't think of anything for which to thank the Lord on a wretched day like this." Much to his surprise, however, Alexander Whyte began by praying, "We thank Thee, O God, that it is not always like this."

Another story is told of two men who were walking through a field one day when they spotted an enraged bull. Instantly they darted toward the nearest fence. The storming bull followed in hot pursuit, and it was soon apparent they wouldn't make it. Terrified, the one shouted to the other, "Put up a prayer, John. We're in for it!" John answered, "I can't. I've never made a public prayer in my life." "But you must!" implored his companion. "The bull is catching up to us." "All right," panted John, "I'll say the only prayer I know, the one my father used to repeat at the table: 'O Lord, for what we are about to receive, make us truly thankful.'"

In the United States we have set aside a day in the year to give thanks. Though the holiday as emerged as an opportunity to give thanks for the harvest season, it has to become day when we give thanks for all of God's blessings. While it is wonderful to have a special day when we are intentional about giving thanks, I think the scriptures would want us to remember that, everyday is an occasion for giving thanks. But, this can be difficult, especially when some of our days are really bad.

In the story above, the Scottish minister was able to find a glimmer of something positive for which to give thanks on a gloomy day. He remembered that, no matter how bad a day may get, there are other days when things are good and for them we can give thanks.

The other story is a humorous way of inviting us to think about the possibility of giving thanks in everything. I have especially been amazed when I have met with individuals in situations of human suffering who, in the midst of their pain, are able to find the grace to look for light in their darkness. They find moments to appreciate conversations with friends, the care of loved ones, and the support of their community. These beautiful moments are often present in the midst of terrible moments of suffering. So perhaps it is possible to give thanks in every situation if, perhaps, we look for the right things.

Wishing you a blessed and happy Thanksgiving!

*Pastor Shandi*

## LIGHTINGS AND ALTAR FLOWERS

**The Tower** lighting for November is given in loving memory of William & Mina Warman by Arline Benoit.

**The Rose window** lighting for November is given in loving memory of Clifford S. Duxbury, Jr. by Beth, Nancy, Craig, Tina Duxbury and Brian Pitts.

**The altar flowers** on Sunday, November 25<sup>th</sup> are given in memory of Nancy Wulff on her 74<sup>th</sup> birthday by Nancy Cook.

## WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

- ✠ All those in California who have lost loved ones or their homes to the wild fires.
- ✠ Someone who is returning to the community. May God shelter and guide her during this transition and always.
- ✠ Jennifer Tharp who has an upcoming operation, and who misses church and wishes she could be here.
- ✠ Paul Keister for continued healing and strength.
- ✠ Susan Ramsey for continued healing and strength.
- ✠ Someone's aunt, Bertha, who is recovering from a second stroke.
- ✠ Michael Edmunds and family who are grieving the death of Michael's father.
- ✠ Enoch Ukpong and family who are grieving the death of Enoch's sister.
- ✠ Wesley Church and our ministry with our neighbors, especially the homeless community.

**ADVENT & CHRISTMAS HERALD...** On Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup> we will be publishing a Herald with Advent and Christmas program information only. We will not be adding any articles other than what is related to the season. *Thank you!*



**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 9<sup>th</sup>.** Please be sure to send your order into the office to Debi as soon as possible. Payment **MUST** accompany your order. Thank you!

## FROM THE WORSHIP PLANNING TEAM

### **Worship Leaders Retreat: Saturday, December 1, 8:00am—1:00pm**

Are you interested in or currently serving in worship through any of the following roles:

- *Acolyte,*
- *Audio/Visual Tech,*
- *Communion Steward,*
- *Drama Team,*
- *Liturgist,*
- *Reader,*
- *Sanctuary Decorating team member,*
- *Usher*

If you are, then the worship leaders retreat is for you.

The worship team will be holding this retreat to share more about our work and how we intend to integrate the involvement of other worship leaders. We will address questions about planning, preparation, and the implementation of the different worship leadership roles. We will share our vision for creating holistic and vital worship experiences and your role as worship leaders can contribute to this goal. We will also share plans for training opportunities to serve in these roles.

The retreat will include a light breakfast and lunch. We will begin at 8:00 am with a continental breakfast, worship at 8:30 am, and engaging in presentations, workshops, and conversation from 9:00am-12:00. We will conclude with worship at 12:00 and lunch at 12:30.

Please RSVP to Pastor Shandi by email at [pastorshandim@wesleyworc.org](mailto:pastorshandim@wesleyworc.org), call the church office, or you may leave a note in Pastor Shandi's mailbox in the office.

We look forward to seeing you on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Worship Planning Team

Pastor Shandi, Debbie O'Driscoll, Marjorie Ness, and Nan Gibbons

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK...

### OUR CONNECTIONAL MINISTRY

Did you know that there are 7 United Methodist Churches in Worcester? There are! Epworth, Covenant-Saint Andrews, Jesus Life Center Brazilin Ministry, Simple Church Worcester, Quinsigamond, Worcester Korean, and Wesley. Each congregation has a unique history and particular identity. However, we are all part of the same United Methodist Church, and as such, we are deeply connected.

United Methodists often speak of the denomination as “the connection.” This concept has been central to Methodism from its beginning. The United Methodist structure and organization began as a means of accomplishing the mission of spreading the Good News. Methodism’s founder, John Wesley, recognized the need for an organized system of communication and accountability and developed what he called the “connexion,” a network of classes, societies, and annual conferences.

Today, our denomination continues to be organized in a “connectional” system, which “enables us to carry out our mission in unity and strength” (Book of Discipline, ¶ 701). Every local church is linked to an interconnected network of organizations that join together in mission and ministry, allowing us to accomplish far more than any one local church or person could alone.

In light of this vision, the Worcester Area United Methodist (WAUM) Clergy will be seeking ways to intentionally live out this connection. So, starting on **January 13, 2019**, five (5) of the clergy in WAUM will be engaged in a rotating pulpit supply. During the season after Epiphany, the pastors from Epworth, Jesus Life Center, Simple Church, Quinsigamond and Wesley will rotate between the named five churches and lead worship services based on the theme: *Connected! “Our Connectional Mission Through Prayer, Presence, Gifts, Service and Witness.”* Throughout this worship series, we will be casting a vision of what it means to be a people called Methodists in Worcester, and imagine what a connectional ministry between our churches will look like.

To kick-off this rotating pulpit supply, we will hold a **WAUM/Red Cross Blood Drive here at Wesley, from 9-5 on Saturday, January 12**. We invite you to come and be a part of the movement to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Together we will do great wonders and signs!

*In faith and trust, Pastor Shandi*

## MESSAGES FROM THE CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR

### Year to Date Budget Results through October 2018 and Forecast for Year End

	<u>October YTD Actual</u>	<u>October YTD Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Total Income	\$ 553,913	\$ 548,435	\$ 5,478 positive
Total Expense	\$ 552,229	\$ 536,786	\$ 15,443 positive
Net Surplus	\$ 1,684	\$ 11,649	\$ -9,965 negative
<b><u>Pledges</u></b>	\$ 257,969	\$ 281,157	\$-23,188 negative

<u>Year End Forecast</u>	<u>Forecasted Actual</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Total Income	\$ 681,034	\$ 655,630	\$ 25,404 positive
Total Expense	\$ 664,336	\$ 651,681	\$ -12,655 negative
Net Income/(Loss)	\$ <b>16,697</b>	\$ 3,949	\$ 12,748 positive

**Forecast is based on October actuals and is dependent on making budget with pledges, Thanksgiving and Christmas offerings. The forecast shows a profit at year end with these assumptions.**

Regards,

Lorna Mattus-Merrill  
Church Business Administrator



**HERALD NOTICE...** The next Herald will be mailed on Wednesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>. Articles are due in the office by Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. Please mark your calendar and plan your article(s) accordingly.

Also, keep in mind that the December 19<sup>th</sup> Herald will be the last one for 2018. The first Herald of 2019 will be on January 9<sup>th</sup> so please plan your articles accordingly.

*Thank you, Debi*

## **HELP PREVENT HOMELESSNESS ONE GIFT CARD AT A TIME**

You can be part of the solution to Worcester's increasing challenge of affordable housing. Just volunteer one Sunday a month after church to sell gift cards for area grocery stores, CVS, Dunkin' Donuts and Panera. A percentage of each sale goes into a fund to help families on the brink of homelessness. When they remain in their home, their children stay in their community school and they don't become part of the state's less-than-ideal shelter system.

Want to learn more? Talk to Allison Hansen after church at the Hope for Housing gift card table or via email at [AChis4788@aol.com](mailto:AChis4788@aol.com). Seeking volunteers for after both the 8:30 and 10:30 services. Pair up with a friend and be part of the solution!

*Thank you, Allison Hansen*

## **HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE**

***Who doesn't like to sing Christmas carols?*** On Friday December 14<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm we will have the opportunity to sing Christmas carols together. We will have pianist Ed Lalberte at the keyboard. We plan to set up in East Hall where we will also be sharing Christmas cookies and hot chocolate. A variety of cookies will also be available for sale to aid our Hospitality budget. Come enjoy a Christmas Family night!

***Come share the fun of making Christmas treats!*** After coffee hour on Sunday December 9 there will be a group from the Hospitality Committee gathering together to prepare Christmas cookies and Ghanaian Christmas treats. We invite other adults and children to join us for baking. We will be sharing some of the cookies at our Friday 12/14 sing along and have some available for sale. Let's have fun and share our baking traditions!

## **MISSION MATTERS**

### **"YOUNG AT HEART" SENIOR CLUB**

Now that cold weather days are approaching, Wesley friends might want to attend a weekly Wednesday gathering from noon to 1:30 pm. It's at the Salvation Army Citadel, 640 Main St., Worcester. Lunch is served at noon, followed by a program which might be singing, inspirational or educational. A monthly trip to a local attraction is also offered. Open to anyone at least 45 years old.

## A NOTE OF THANKS...

As Thanksgiving approaches I would like to take this time to let everyone know just how thankful I am for all those who make Carty Cupboard Food Pantry possible...

There is **Dot Ellis** who helps with our Wednesday and Friday distributions. **Jerry Warren, and Bill Wong** who bring the cardboard to be recycled. **Jerry** retired from this volunteer position this year, after putting in many hours of service over the years. **Donna Hirtle** and **Cordelia Ferdinand** are there on Wednesday mornings to set up for distribution. **Bill Robbins**, does the set up for Friday morning distributions. **Solomon Aryee** picks up donated bread from the Big Y in Holden every Sunday. **Lou and Linda D'Acri, Beth Maider** and her son **Josh, Ray Eichel** and **his Crew** all pick up food from the Worcester County Food Bank and Price Chopper. **The D'Acri Family** also makes and serves lunch for our clients who come to Wednesday's distribution, which the clients really enjoy!

**Susan Williams, Isabell Basinsky, Ann Fortier, Joanne Cesary-Guerard, Janet DeNapoli, Barbara Crocker, Mark Muncey, Marion Warren, Janet Nelson, Carol and Michael Wipper, Dick and Betty Nevers, Peggy O'Neil-Favrot, Gladys Adu-Poka, Abby Adams, Emily Smith, and The gang from the United Congregational Church** all help with food distribution at different times. **Isabell Basinsky** also retired this year after many years of service to those in need. **Nancy Cook** has generously packed bags for distribution throughout the year. Then there is my *wonderful husband Harry* who breaks down the piles of cardboard we generate, brings in food, sorts food, stock shelves, and helps me in general with whatever else needs to get done.

Our hearts were heavy this year as we lost two devoted friends and volunteers; **Judy Stern** and **Wes Peterson**. They are missed.

**All of these folks have done their part to feed those in need. This past October we served 537 families, the most families we have ever served in Carty Cupboard's history, 49 of them came to us for the 1<sup>st</sup> time, that is just in one month!**

**To the Volunteers... every one of you IS making a difference in the lives of those in need!**

*Each and every person is an amazing and important part of the Mission. They give of themselves to those who do not have enough to eat. Carty Cupboard Food Pantry needs every one of them to make it work. I am Very Grateful and Our Clients are Very Blessed!*

**Thank You All So Much! Happy Thanksgiving!**

*Fondly, Nancy J. E. Spencer*

## A NOTE OF THANKS...

I would like to take a moment to thank **Donna Hirtle, Chris Flagg** and their team for stepping up to take over the Thanksgiving distribution. ***Thank You!!***

*Nancy Spencer*



## UMW ALL-CIRCLE CHRISTMAS PARTY AND LUNCHEON

Saturday, December 8 ~ Noon to 2 pm

Brewer Hall

The Moms and Children from Florence House will be our special guests.

In this season when we focus our hearts and minds on an infant born in a manger, we'll continue our emphasis on Maternal and Child Health.

We welcome staff from Worcester's **Pernet Family Health Service** to explain their programs in Early Intervention, Maternal & Child Nursing, Parent Aide, and more.

All women are welcome!!

*We are Faith, Hope, and Love in Action*



### The Mitten Tree

At the end of November the **Mitten Tree** will again appear in Brewer Hall. Please help decorate it for those in need. Upon request this year we are especially looking for **hats**, and **waterproof mittens** and **gloves**. The **lovingly** created **hats, mittens**, and **scarves** are also appreciated. Thank You!

## REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

For Advent this year at Wesley UMC, you are again invited to create a Reverse Advent Calendar gift box to give to our neighbors at Friendly House (two of their family shelters). Instead of receiving a candy or trinket in a traditional Advent Calendar, you will give a small needed item to your gift box.

Please place an item listed below in a box each day. Then bring your completed (and wrapped) gift box on Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup> or by Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup> which is the day of the Silent Night Service. In order to finish in time, this will begin on Thanksgiving Day, allowing 4 weeks to complete the boxes.

If you can't find an item, it's OK to double a food that's listed. Suggested Items for each day:

Nov. 22: Toothbrush & toothpaste	Dec. 6: Canned vegetable
Nov. 23: Cereal bars	Dec. 7: Nail clippers
Nov. 24: Gloves	Dec. 8: ChapStick or lip balm
Nov. 25: Beanbag or foam ball (for indoor play) or a deck of cards	Dec. 9: Bar or bottle of soap
Nov. 26: Wash cloth	Dec. 10: Pens or pencils
Nov. 27: Socks	Dec. 11: Tea bags
Nov. 28: Tissues	Dec. 12: Pad of paper/small notebook
Nov. 29: Hot cocoa packet(s)	Dec. 13: Canned tuna or chicken
Nov. 30: Instant oatmeal	Dec. 14: Dried fruit
Dec. 1: Meal in a can	Dec. 15: Hand lotion
Dec. 2: Canned fruit	Dec. 16: Christmas card
Dec. 3: Band-Aids	Dec. 17: Juice box or bottle
Dec. 4: Goldfish or cheese crackers	Dec. 18: Hand sanitizer or wipes
Dec. 5: Macaroni and cheese	Dec. 19: Miniature chocolate bars (no nuts)

**If you would rather purchase a toy or outfit for an individual child, please contact Betsy at [betspenn35@hotmail.com](mailto:betspenn35@hotmail.com) or 508-829-7131.**

*Thank you! Betsy Pennino*

## Did You Know?

This past Sunday our scripture reading from the prophet Isaiah included the messianic prophecy: “A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.” (Is 11:1). In a few weeks we will begin a new liturgical year as we enter the season of Advent. The texts of several Advent and Christmas hymns mention this ancestor of Jesus. For example: “O come thou root of Jesse’s tree...” (UMH 211, *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*, stanza 4) and “Of Jesse’s lineage coming...” (UMH 216, *Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming*, stanza 1).

The Bible contains many genealogies—at least two dozen in the Old Testament. The main function of these genealogies is to trace ancestry and thus establish the identity of individuals. In the New Testament the genealogy of Jesus is recorded in both Matthew and Luke, in order to establish Jesus’ identity as a descendant of David, and thus to eventually demonstrate that Jesus fulfills the messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. There are differences between these genealogies in content and format, but the name of Jesse, grandson of Ruth and Boaz and the father of King David, is found in both, at least in part to emphasize the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy.

In medieval art it became common to illustrate this prophecy and the ancestry of Jesus in a most literal way. This “Jesse tree” image has been the subject of Christian art in many forms from wall painting to illuminated manuscripts to architectural sculpture and perhaps most impressively in the stained glass windows of many of the great cathedrals in Europe, including a window in the basilica of St. Denis in Paris, the site of the oldest known stained glass. The traditional representation is to show Jesse in a reclining position with a tree growing out of his side. Other ancestors are depicted as figures at the ends of the branches, with the trunk rising vertically to Mary and then Jesus at the top of the tree. Which of the many ancestors are included in the tree varies, but usually both David and Solomon are included. (Joseph rarely is depicted.) In some representations the branches of the tree are labeled the names of the ancestors.

In our church throughout the Advent and Christmas season the sanctuary is adorned with a Chrismon tree which is decorated with various symbols of Christ. Some churches however have instead a modern adaptation of the Jesse tree. These contemporary Jesse trees generally are decorated with symbols that relate to the major salvation events recorded in both the Old and New Testaments leading up to the birth of Jesus.

*Submitted by, Deborah A. 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>
Wed., Dec 12	Wed., Dec. 19
Wed., Jan. 2 <b>2019</b>	Wed., Jan. 9

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.

**YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN!**

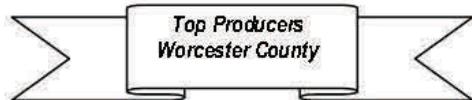


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**ADDRESS RETURN REQUESTED**

**WESLEY HERALD  
NOVEMBER 15, 2018**

**WESLEY STAFF & LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Pastor	Rev. Shandirai Mawokomatanda
Interim Organist	Marjorie Ness
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 Reynolds
Custodians	April Dylewicz Tom Friend Gerard Piscitelli
Security	Steve Boyns
Head Usher	David Dagle
Church Council	Tom Ingrassia
Board of Trustees Co-Chairs	Yaw Enyim 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	Giftly Bentum-Asante
Youth Directors	Anthony & Adrienne Phillips
United Methodist Women Co-Chairs	Barbara Ingrassia Allison Hansen

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