

CALM and BRIGHT
2018 Advent & Christmas Season

The season of Advent is upon us! Advent marks the beginning of the Christian liturgical year. The Christian calendar usually walks us through the life of Christ from his promised coming to his consummate reign as Christ the King. Advent begins the liturgical year by preparing us for Christmas. The season of Advent is upon us!

During Advent and Christmas, the worship team and I will lead us in a worship series entitled: Calm and Bright. The series is based on a worship design by Marcia McFee and is adapted for our particular congregation here at Wesley. The Calm and Bright series commemorates the 200th anniversary of the song, Silent Night.

As the story goes, as told by Dr. Howard Culberston of Southern Nazarene University: In 1818, a traveling band of actors was performing in towns throughout the Austrian Alps. On December 23 they arrived at Oberndorf, a village near Salzburg where they were to re-enact the story of Christ's birth in the small Church of St. Nicholas.

Unfortunately, the St. Nicholas' church organ wasn't working and would not be repaired before Christmas. Because the church organ was out of commission, the actors presented their Christmas drama in a private home. That Christmas presentation of the events in the first chapters of Matthew and Luke put assistant pastor Josef Mohr in a meditative mood. Instead of walking straight to his house that night, Mohr took a longer way home. The longer path took him up over a hill overlooking the village.

From that hilltop, Mohr looked down on the peaceful snow-covered village. Reveling in majestic silence of the wintry night, Mohr gazed down at the beautiful scene below. His thoughts about the Christmas play he had just seen made him remember a poem he had written a couple of years before. That poem was about the night when angels announced the birth of the long-awaited Messiah to shepherds on a hillside.

Mohr decided those words might make a good carol for his congregation the following evening at their Christmas eve service. The one problem was that he didn't have any music to which that poem could be sung. So, the next day Mohr went to see the church organist, Franz Xaver Gruber. Gruber only had a few hours to come up with a melody which could be sung with a guitar. However, by that evening, Gruber had managed to compose a musical setting for the poem. It no longer mattered to Mohr and Gruber that their church organ was inoperable. They now had a Christmas carol that could be sung without that organ.

Continued on page 3...

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 large white poinsettia's on the altar are given in loving memory of Ralph Ellis.

WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

- ✠ Susan Ramsey in ICU at UMass Hospital.
- ✠ Allen Holliman, Debi Reynolds' uncle, recovering from a double-lung transplant.



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

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

Thank you, Debi



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

ANNUAL REPORTS are due in the office by Friday, December 14th. You can email them to me at office@wesleyworc.org as a Word document or drop off a printed report. If you submitted an article for the Church Conference book, please let me know if I can use this one or submit to me a revised report with any changes you need to make.

Thank you, Debi Reynolds

Calm and Bright continued...

On Christmas Eve, the little Oberndorf congregation heard Gruber and Mohr sing their new composition to the accompaniment of Gruber's guitar.

Weeks later, well-known organ builder Karl Mauracher arrived in Oberndorf to fix the organ in St. Nicholas church. When Mauracher finished, he stepped back to let Gruber test the instrument. When Gruber sat down, his fingers began playing the simple melody he had written for Mohr's Christmas poem. Deeply impressed, Mauracher took copies of the music and words of "Silent Night" back to his own Alpine village, Kapfing. There, two well-known families of singers — the Rainers and the Strassers — heard it. Captivated by "Silent Night," both groups put the new song into their Christmas season repertoire.

The Strasser sisters spread the carol across northern Europe. In 1834, they performed "Silent Night" for King Frederick William IV of Prussia, and he then ordered his cathedral choir to sing it every Christmas eve.

Twenty years after "Silent Night" was written, the Rainers brought the song to the United States, singing it (in German) at the Alexander Hamilton Monument located outside New York City's Trinity Church.

In 1863, nearly fifty years after being first sung in German, "Silent Night" was translated into English. Today the words of "Silent Night" are sung in more than 300 different languages around the world.

Singing this hymn has become the best-loved worship moment of many Christians—even those who only come to church once a year. Something mystical occurs as we light our candles and sing the hope of "all is calm, all is bright" – peace and light for the world.

Our Advent and Christmas worship series celebrates the carol's message and highlights its call for our lives that can guide us all year long. Each of the four Sundays in Advent will highlight one of the four verses to the song, and will be based on the traditional themes of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Our series will culminate with the service on the Sunday after Christmas, a day which we celebrate the Light of Christ.

We invite you to come and worship with us this season. Invite friends, neighbors, and family members. We believe that the Calm and Bright Series will be a meaningful way for you to prepare your hearts and spirits for the birth of Jesus into your hearts.

Peace to you, Pastor Shandi

COME SHARE THE FUN OF MAKING CHRISTMAS TREATS!

After coffee hour on **Sunday, December 9th** 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!

UMW ALL-CIRCLE CHRISTMAS PARTY AND LUNCHEON

Saturday, December 8 ~ Noon to 2 pm in 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!!!

WHO DOESN'T LIKE TO SING CHRISTMAS CAROLS?

On **Friday, December 14th 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!

COMMUNITY DINNER, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29, 4:00-6:00 PM

The D'Acri Family has once again offered to cook supper. Please join us for dinner and fellowship with people within our community. We will be serving Ziti with homemade sauce & meatballs, salad, bread & butter, coffee and dessert.

MISSION TREES AT WESLEY

Once again in 2018 the mission tree tradition continues at Wesley Church. You are invited to participate in decorating these trees while helping others during the Christmas season.

THE "MITTEN" TREE in Brewer Hall - Please help decorate this tree with new warm hats, gloves, scarves and/or mittens. The *lovingly* created hats, mittens, and scarves are also appreciated. These practical ornaments bring happiness to those who enjoy seeing their variety and color and the needy Carty Cupboard clients who will receive and enjoy their warmth.

THE "MEMBER" TREE in East Hall - It is our hope that all families in Wesley Church will have a symbol - some ornament of their choice - among the decorations on this tree. If your family is not represented, please bring one and add it to our interesting and varied collection. (There are hangers under the tree.) All ornaments are carefully packed and stored so that they may be displayed annually.

THE SLENDER "RED BIRD" TREE in Brewer Hall on the stage - Please don't toss out those labels from Campbell and Betty Crocker products. Instead, bring them in and place them in the basket near the slender "Red Bird" Tree. They will be sent to the Red Bird Mission in West Virginia where they will be collected and exchanged for needed items.



CALM & BRIGHT
AN ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT: DECEMBER 2, 2018 — HOPE

Scriptural Focus: Jeremiah 33:14-16; Luke 21:25-36

Message: “Let us sing” - The Gospel text describes an earth in distress and nations in confusion. In the midst of a world in chaos, the coming of the Son of Man is promised. With these text, we are invited to remember that hope is looking for light in the midst of darkness.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT: DECEMBER 9, 2018 — PEACE

Scriptural Focus: Isaiah 2:1-4; Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Message: “Sleep in heavenly peace” - The texts from Isaiah lays the prophetic vision of peace. The scripture passages offer the iconic message of turning the weapons of war into the tools of gardening, of growing and nurturing. With these passages, we are invited to use our ingenuity, our creativity, our energy for good and for building up.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT: DECEMBER 16, 2018 — JOY

Scriptural Focus: Psalm 86:9-11; Luke 2:8-20

Message: “Glories stream” - In Luke when the angel appeared to the shepherds to announce the birth of Jesus, the shepherds quaked at the sight of the angel. But the angel says: “Do not be afraid, for I bring good news of great joy.” With this text we are invited to welcome the presence of God that transforms our fear to joy.

SILENT NIGHT SERVICE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20 AT 7:00 PM

You are invited to join us for the Silent Night service. In the midst of this Advent season, you are invited to pause and experience the calming and comforting presence of God.

Following the service there will be a time of fellowship and refreshments. We invite you to bring a small dish of appetizers or desserts to share. Please come and share with us in the beloved service. Please let Debi Reynolds, Debbie O’Driscoll or Pastor Shandi know if you are able to help. *Thank you.*

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT: DECEMBER 23, 2018 — LOVE

Scriptural Focus: John 1:1-5, 14, 16-17

Message: “Redeeming Grace” - The Gospel of John begins with four mentions of that word, grace, and then doesn’t mention it again the entire rest of the book. From there, the rest of the gospel shows what grace looks like, tastes like, smells like, sounds like, and feels like. What the gospel shows us is that the “sacrifice of love” compels us to do what is sometimes difficult... get out of our comfort zones and risk extending the fullness of grace and love to all we encounter.

CHRISTMAS EVE EARLY SERVICE, DECEMBER 24 AT 4:30 PM

You are invited to join us for our Christmas Eve Early Service beginning at 4:30 pm. During this service the children will bless us with a **Christmas Pageant**.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE, DECEMBER 24 AT 11:00 PM

You are invited to join us for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols beginning at 11:00 pm. Communion will be served during this service.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS: DECEMBER 30, 2018 — LIGHT

Scriptural Focus: Revelation 21:1-6

Message: “Christ the Savior Is born” - As we celebrate Christmas and approach the new year, the scripture from Revelation simply invites us to watch for a new heaven and a new earth. With this text, we are invited to welcome new possibility of growth and transformation in the journey ahead.

GHANAIAI WATCH NIGHT SERVICE, DECEMBER 31 AT 11:00 PM

You are invited to join us for this Watch Night worship service to ring in the new year. The service includes the singing of Ghanaian prayers, a message by Pastor Shandi, and the prayers. The service begins at 11:00 pm and will conclude by 12:15 am.

December 2018 Calendar

Special Upcoming Events/Dates to make note of:

Saturday, December 1st	Worship Leaders' Retreat & Training Workshop, 8 am—1 pm
Sunday, December 2nd	<i>First Sunday of Advent</i>
Sunday, December 9th	<i>Second Sunday of Advent</i> Deadline for Poinsettia Orders All Church Meeting, 12 pm, Brewer Hall Baking Christmas Treats, 12:30 pm
Wednesday, December 12th	Herald article deadline
Friday, December 14th	Gathering for Christmas Carols & Treats, 7-9 pm Annual Reports due to Debi Reynolds
Sunday, December 16th	<i>Third Sunday of Advent</i> All Church Meeting, 12 pm, Brewer Hall
Wednesday, December 19th	Last Herald of the year (mailed)
Sunday, December 23rd	<i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>
Monday, December 24th	Christmas Eve Family Service, 4:30 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 11:00 pm
Tuesday, December 25th	Christmas, <i>Office Closed</i>
Sunday, December 30th	Worship, 8:30 am and 10:30 am
Monday, December 31st	Watch Night Service, 11:00 PM Led by the Ghanaian Association
Tuesday, January 1, 2019	New Year's Day, <i>Office Closed</i>

Poinsettias for Christmas Sunday

Help decorate Wesley's Sanctuary for Christmas and then your home or a loved one's home, a shut-in or someone's hospital room for Christmas.

Order your poinsettia(s) by completing the order form below and the dedication(s) on the back, then return it with \$9.00 for each plant by dropping it off in the Welcome Office on Sunday or mail it back. Please be sure to enclose the payment with the order form (checks can be made out to "Wesley United Methodist Church").

ALL ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 9TH.

I AM ORDERING _____ PLANT(S).

I will be taking _____ plant(s) home after the December 23rd service.

I will be taking _____ plant(s) home after the Christmas Eve service.

I will leave _____ plant(s) to be given to shut-in(s).

*****Please be sure to complete the dedication on the back of this page.*****

Note: Any plant(s) not indicated for pick up will be delivered to shut-in(s).



Please Note: This year we are accepting payment in the form of cash or check.

YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PAY FOR THIS ON-LINE.

Also, payment ***must*** be submitted with a completed form. Thank you.

Given by _____

In Memory of / In Honor or Celebration of *(please circle one)*

Given by _____

In Memory of / In Honor or Celebration of *(please circle one)*

Given by _____

In Memory of / In Honor or Celebration of *(please circle one)*

Given by _____

In Memory of / In Honor or Celebration of *(please circle one)*

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 which is in charge of 28 area shelters. Our gift boxes will be delivered to two family shelters, one on Elm St. very close to Wesley, and another in a neighborhood where many Wesley people live. There are so many groups in need of gifts, and the Mission Committee decided to give to more children and their families this year.

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 16th or by Thursday, December 20th which is the day of the Silent Night Service. In order to finish in time, we are starting the 4 weeks on Thanksgiving Day.

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 betsypenn35@hotmail.com or 508-829-7131. Your

Thank you! Betsy Pennino

DID YOU KNOW: SILENT NIGHT SERVICE

During the Advent/Christmas season there are several opportunities to experience worship beyond Sunday morning worship. One such service is our **Silent Night Service**, a mid-week evening service to be held this year on **Thursday, December 20, at 7PM** in the sanctuary. If you have never attended this service you may be wondering exactly what it is, since it is not something that you will find listed in a liturgical calendar.

In part this special service acknowledges that for some people the Christmas season is not necessarily a happy time. Any number of life situations such as the death of a loved one, illness, family discord, financial difficulties, loneliness, and depression, to name a few, can lead to a disconnect from the anticipation of joyful festivity that often permeates the days leading to Christmas, both in the church and in secular society. There has been a trend in recent years for churches to reach out to people whose souls are weary and burdened by offering a special worship service that is more quiet and somber. Sometimes such a service is called “Blue Christmas” (as in feeling blue). Often such services are held on or near the date of the winter solstice, the day of the year in which we experience the least amount of daylight. Thus some churches refer to such a service as a “Longest Night” service. Such timing not only acknowledges the struggle with darkness in our lives, but also offers the hope of the growing light as the days subsequently begin to lengthen and we prepare to once again welcome Jesus as the Light of the World on Christmas.

Here at Wesley we call this service “Silent Night” both because we sing several stanzas of the Christmas carol of that name as we light candles of remembrance and hope and also because we recognize the need for a quiet contemplative break from the noisy busyness that often leads up to Christmas. In the stillness of the beautiful sacred space that is our sanctuary we will sing songs, listen to contemplative music, hear scripture and poetry, read, pray, reflect in silence, and light candles. Our service is not just for those who are living through dark times in their lives but for anyone who is seeking time and space to simply breathe and be still in the midst of what can be for many an overwhelmingly hectic season of the year. Please join us for this service as well as for a time of fellowship and conversation following.

*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 2019	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!

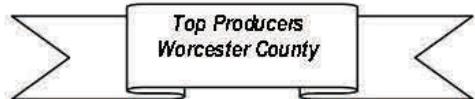


**United Methodist
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**

*For individuals, churches and
affiliated organizations.*

**Full Service Banking • Auto Loans
Home Loans • VISA Credit Cards
Mobile Banking • Church Lending
Check & Savings Accounts**

**New England: 207.591.6449
800.245.0433 | www.umfcu.org**



Gibbs
REALTY INC.

A Smart Move



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
Web page: www.wesleyworc.org

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS HERALD

WESLEY HERALD
NOVEMBER 28, 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	Yaw Enyim
Co-Chairs	Gary Robinson
Carty Cupboard Food Pantry	Nancy Spencer
Communion Steward	Linda D'Acri
Finance & Stewardship	Michael Edmunds
Co-Chairs	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
Youth Directors	Anthony & Adrienne Phillips
United Methodist Women	Barbara Ingrassia
Co-Chairs	Allison Hansen

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