



January 25, 2025

Reflections on the past week

*I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty, and you gave me drink,
I was homeless and you gave me a room,
I was shivering and you gave me clothes,
I was sick and you stopped to visit,
I was in prison, and you came to me.
(Matthew 25:35-36, The Message)*



Bishop's Office

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In 1738, after a long practice of preaching *TO* people from a high steeple Anglican Church, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, took a radical step to preach *WITH* people who had gathered in a field near Bristol, England. On that day, John Wesley wrote these words in his journal:

“At four in the afternoon, I submitted to become more vile and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation ...”

For Wesley, to become more vile meant that he had to move beyond his comfort zone and enter the world of the poor, the oppressed, the imprisoned, and, in fact, anyone who was in need. The struggle to take the words of faith we embrace and literally use them as the foundation for courageous acts of faithfulness, forged what we know today as our United Methodist theology. It is what we believe, and it is what we do.

Today I write in the midst of massive change and transition. In less than a week, the United States has become a place where the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized, the immigrant, the LGBTQAI+ community, and so many others are experiencing great fear and anxiety as a result of executive orders and campaign promises being lived out by the new administration.

Those clear tensions and anxieties present significant challenges to a church that is tempted toward complacency and the avoidance of conflict. However, in what is yet another seminal moment for the church, we are being presented with an opportunity to become more "vile" by getting out of our comfort zone to enter the heartaches and fears of others. This is the moment, the opportunity, to take the gospel *TO* the people.

Today, I call upon all United Methodists in New England and New York to embrace a posture of radical welcome and hospitality. I call upon all churches to provide a safe space of welcome to immigrants and the marginalized who are afraid, intimidated, and threatened. I call upon all leaders, both lay and clergy, to take bold steps to lead our people into the gospel and into the very communities where our churches reside. As Romans 15:7 says so clearly, "Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." This is our time and our moment to become more "vile."

To those of you who have already taken bold steps to minister to the urgent needs of the immigrant and the marginalized, I applaud your efforts and want you to know that we stand with you and alongside you as you do all you can to live into your baptismal vow to "resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves." We will do whatever is needed to support and encourage your ongoing work. Thank you for being "vile."

To those of you who are afraid of words like resistance, advocacy, intervention, and conflict, I urge you to examine how Christianity is defined not secularly, but biblically. As I Peter 3:13-15 states, "Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord."

I want you to know that we stand ready to support you as you struggle, as John Wesley himself did, to move from the safe and predictable to the fearful and uncertain world that has emerged around us. I pray that you can become more "vile."

To those of you who are immigrants, refugees, and ones who are seeking safety and peace, I want you to know that we stand with you and alongside you. Our prayers are with you, and we pray that our actions may remind you of how deeply you are loved and valued.

And to all of us, may we be reminded that together we are the body of Christ, siblings created by the same God, called to see one another as colleagues, friends, and neighbors and reminded always that when one of us suffers, we all suffer together (I Corinthians 12:26).

This is a day when the struggle for human rights has reached a new level of importance. It is a day when we must find ways to minister to those around us for if we do not, there is no guarantee that anyone will. This is the time for the church to live out its faith in acts of compassion, grace, justice, joy and love.

In the midst of all that we have experienced in the last few days, there is still much that we do not know. While we are being briefed by state government officials, they acknowledge there's much they do not know. It's important to remember that specific strategies used today may rapidly change tomorrow as policies and actions emerge. We pledge to all of you that we will keep you informed about actions and directions that are recommended to us.

Most of all today, let us reaffirm who we are and what we are called to be as the church: a place of welcome, belonging, safety, and peace. Let us support one another as a people who, by faith, are called to take bold steps to live out our faith, not just talk about it.

*Then those 'sheep' are going to say, 'Master, what are you talking about?
When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and gave you a drink?
And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?'
Then the King will say, 'I'm telling the solemn truth:
Whenever you did one of those things to someone overlooked or ignored,
that was me – you did it to me.'
(Matthew 25: 37-40, The Message)*

Sounds like we need to become more "vile."

May it be so. Amen.



Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton
Resident Bishop



Special Prayers for these Wesley Family, Friends, and Others...

Jane Borthwick, Troy (David Potts brother, wife of Cathy), David Patrick (Evette Walters husband), Kathleen Herbert (Evette Walters mom), Giendora Lewis (Evette Walters aunt), Carolyn Bellil, Debbie Plant, Sandra O'Driscoll, Melissa Houlihan (friend of Bill Robbins), Alice Douglas, Barbara McLaren, Cathy (sister-in-law of David Potts), Rich Reynolds, Grace Woode, Beverly Grimshaw, Rosamond Hammond, Linda Keister, Pinamang Boateng, Joseph Boateng, Stephen Boyns, Anne Burrows, Dot Ellis, Barbara Fletcher, Jim & Judy Hoffman, Don Johnson, Charles Kiefer, Dorothy Norcross, David Samanen, Janet Terzian, Donald Tremblay, Barbara and the Vietze Family; Peter Woodcock, Laura Zoldak, Susan (friend of David Potts), Margie (Linda Keister's sister), Page (Allison Hansen's sister), Libby T. (friend of Phyllis Yngve), Neil Ashton (past member), Paula and Calvin Kelly (sister and brother-in-law of Linda Dylewicz), Those who struggle with depression, anxiety, and alcoholism.

Tower & Rose Window Lightings

The Rose Window and the Tower lighting for February are available for dedication. If you'd like to light either the Rose Window or the Tower in honor or in memory of a loved one, please contact Debi in the office. The cost of the lighting is \$40.

Announcements

AN ALL-CHURCH MEETING

will be held on Sunday, February 16, 2025, following worship.

Vacation... Pastor Moo is on vacation from January 31 – February 13. Joseph Wilson will be covering for Pastor Moo. If you have an emergency, please call the church office (508-799-4191), or contact Joseph Wilson at 508-963-9555.

Confirmation Class will begin on Sunday, March 2nd at 11:40 am in John Wesley. All Parents and Mentors are expected to attend with the student(s) please.

UWF Steering Committee Meeting... On Saturday, February 8th at 8:45 am the United Women in Faith will have a Steering Committee Mtg in the John Wesley room. All officers and any interested women at Wesley are invited to attend during this planning session. you there! *Sandy McManus*

From Carty Cupboard Food Pantry... During the month of February, we need strawberry or grape jelly, and oatmeal in the variety packages please. Thank you to everyone who continues to purchase food for Carty Cupboard, we appreciate your kindness. *Nancy*

Gift Cards Can Prevent Homelessness!

Do you buy groceries? Stop by CVS? Grab a coffee at Dunkin, Starbucks or a meal at Panera? If you do, pay with a gift card instead of cash or credit. Buy your card at Wesley and your purchase will help a family threatened with homelessness actually remain in their home.

Allison Hansen will be selling cards in Brewer Hall after church on the following dates and will accept orders by email at ACHis4788@aol.com. Please give her advance notice if you want to place a larger order.

February 23 ❤️ March 16 - stock up now for Easter baskets!

March 2025 Herald: *There are extra copies of the Herald in the Narthex by the Welcome Office.*

The March Herald will be part of the March 2nd bulletin. The deadline for articles is Monday, February 24th at 11 am. Thank you for your cooperation. *Debi*

GOD MOMENT

If you could share a story of seeing God's work in your life, please tell me or email it to me. The story can be anonymous or signed, and all are invited to participate. Betsy (betspenn35@hotmail.com)

God Moment by Michael Terzian, a regular participant in Wesley's community suppers--

My wife Janet was shopping for a New Testament which she could easily carry with her. All of the copies she saw in bookstores were not right. Either the print was too small, or the book was too big to carry.

One day in her doctor's office, we saw a shelf with free publications on it. One was a New Testament wrapped in plastic. It had easy-to-read print. Janet had the Bible she was looking for and it was free! I told Janet that it must be a gift from God to her.

DID YOU KNOW?

As human beings, we use movements of our bodies as a means of expression. It is thus no surprise that movements of all kinds have been a part of worship from ancient times. Some of these movements are more formal than others, but all of them have symbolic meaning in the context of worship.

One special form of movement is dancing, and almost every Sunday we have the opportunity to experience this form of movement in worship as some of us dance to the music of our praise songs. Dancing itself—a rhythmic and patterned succession of movements usually performed to music—as a form of human expression and worship is something that is known from ancient times and has persisted across time, culture and various religious traditions.

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Bible speaks of dancing in both the secular and religious life. The Old Testament tells of Miriam’s dance of thanksgiving after the deliverance of the Israelites at the Red Sea and of David’s dance before the Ark of the Covenant. The book of Psalms, ancient Israel’s book of worship contains many references to dance and other forms of liturgical movement, including the injunctions to “praise his name with dancing” (Psalm 149:3a), and to “praise him with tambourine and dancing” (Psalm 150:4a). In Aramaic, the vernacular language of Jesus, the word used for “rejoice” and “dance” are the same, so that in a sense all our calls to rejoice in worship are calls to dance.


Early Christians used dance as part of celebration at worship and festivals. Joyful circle dancing is described as being part of early Christian liturgies in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. It is also known that monks and nuns in monasteries and convents where the rule of silence was observed expressed themselves through gesture and music, chanting as they moved through a symbolic “maze of life” in the monastery or sanctuary. They also danced circle dances before the altar.

In the Middle Ages dancing in churches occurred during the great festivals of the church. In the 16th and 17th centuries, as the Roman Church formalized all liturgy, liturgical movements became more formally defined, and were limited to the gestures and processions of the priests as the congregation became spectators to worship. While there are some references to a renewed interest in dance in the church during the Reformation which returned worship to the people, by the 18th century religious dances were very rare as part of the formal liturgy in both Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions, and they were virtually unknown in the Enlightenment period, with the exception of certain religious sects such as the Shakers.


Through dance, expressions of prayer and worship can be made manifest in ways that go beyond words. For those who dance, it is an opportunity to worship in totality—heart, soul, mind, and body; for those who observe, the visual perception of motion serves to enliven and enrich the offerings of worship.

Submitted by,

Deborah A. O’Driscoll



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WESLEY STAFF & LEADERSHIP TEAM

Pastor	Rev. Byungmoo Lee	Education Committee Co-Chairs	Joseph Fletcher
Organist	Ronna Davis	Youth Bible Study	Ivy Hammond
Chancel Choir Director	David Potts	Finance & Stewardship Co-Chairs	Joseph Fletcher
Ghanaian Choir Director	Desmond Cheetham	Financial Secretary	William Wong
Director of Children's Ministries	Rhianna Burke	Church Auditor	Peter Hansen
Church Business Administrator	Matt Crane	Ghanaian Association	Earl Flagg
Church Secretary	Debi Reynolds	Hospitality Chair	Cynthia Fletcher
Building Superintendent	Phil Johnson	Medical Ministry	Paul Hayfron
Custodians	April Dylewicz	Mission Coordinators	Linda D'Acri
Head Usher	Gerard Piscitelli	Staff-Parish Relations Co-Chairs	Ron Ramsay
Communion Steward	David Dagle	United Women in Faith Co-Chairs	Maria Gorsuch-Kennedy
Wesley Tech Team	Earl Flagg	Music Committee	Donna Hirtle
Sunday Security	Mark Muncey	Worship Committee Chair	Chris Flagg
Church Council Chair	Adam Flagg		Judy Hoffman
Co-Lay Leaders	Brent Drajesk		Barbara Ingrassia,
	Gifty Bentum-Asante		Sandra McManus, Cordelia Ferdinand
	Joseph Fletcher		Debbie O'Driscoll
Board of Trustees Chair	Gary Robinson		Debbie O'Driscoll
Carty Cupboard Food Pantry	Nancy Spencer		

Wesley United Methodist Church

February 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>26</p> <p>10:00am Hybrid Worship</p> <p>11:00am Fellowship Time</p> <p>12:30pm Vision Task Force (MEL)</p> <p>7:00pm Sunday AA (CH)</p>	<p>27</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>6:00pm Eye Clinic</p>	<p>28</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>29</p> <p>1:00pm Carty Cupboard</p> <p>7:00pm AA - BBSS (CH)</p>	<p>30</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>31</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>1</p> <p>9:30am Ghanaian Choir Rehearsal (ChR)</p>
<p>2</p> <p>8:00am Community Breakfast</p> <p>10:00am Hybrid Worship</p> <p>11:00am Fellowship Time</p> <p>7:00pm Sunday AA (CH)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p> <p>7:00pm Church Council - Zoom</p>	<p>4</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>5</p> <p>1:00pm Carty Cupboard</p> <p>7:00pm AA - BBSS (CH)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>7</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>8</p> <p>8:45am UWF Steering Committee (JW)</p> <p>9:30am Ghanaian Choir Rehearsal (ChR)</p> <p>7:00pm Contra-Dance (BH)</p>
<p>9</p> <p>10:00am Hybrid Worship</p> <p>11:00am Fellowship Time</p> <p>7:00pm Sunday AA (CH)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>6:00pm Eye Clinic</p>	<p>11</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>12</p> <p>1:00pm Carty Cupboard</p> <p>7:00pm AA - BBSS (CH)</p>	<p>13</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>14</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>15</p> <p>9:30am Ghanaian Choir Rehearsal (ChR)</p>
<p>16</p> <p>COMMUNION SUNDAY</p> <p>10:00am Hybrid Worship</p> <p>11:00am Fellowship Time</p> <p>11:30am ALL CHURCH MEETING (BH)</p> <p>7:00pm Sunday AA (CH)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>Presidents' Day</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p> <p>6:30pm SPRC</p>	<p>18</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>19</p> <p>10:30am Staff Meeting (JW)</p> <p>1:00pm Carty Cupboard</p> <p>7:00pm AA - BBSS (CH)</p>	<p>20</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p> <p>6:30pm Vision Task Force (MEL)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>22</p> <p>9:30am Ghanaian Choir Rehearsal (ChR)</p> <p>4:00pm Community Dinner (BH)</p>
<p>23</p> <p>10:00am Hybrid Worship</p> <p>11:00am Fellowship Time</p> <p>7:00pm Sunday AA (CH)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>5:30pm Worship Committee (Hybrid)</p> <p>6:00pm Eye Clinic</p>	<p>25</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>26</p> <p>1:00pm Carty Cupboard</p> <p>7:00pm AA - BBSS (CH)</p>	<p>27</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>28</p> <p>5:30pm Fruits of Labor Basketball</p>	<p>1</p> <p>9:30am Ghanaian Choir Rehearsal (ChR)</p>