

News Of Wesley

September 2018

Living Faithfully: Human Sexuality and the United Methodist Church

Wednesdays in September - 7:00 PM

Questions of human sexuality and identity have been at the center of many United Methodist conversations recently. Issues of welcome and hospitality, biblical authority and interpretation, covenant and compassion have found their way to the forefront of dialogue and debate, and caused many to wonder how the Church will find its way forward through the conflict.

In February of 2019, a Special Called Session of General Conference (the worldwide decision-making body of the United Methodist Church) will gather in St. Louis to put a framework around the church's response to these issues at such a time as this. Eight-hundred-sixty-four United Methodist clergy and lay delegates will work together to adopt a model of "being church" together which honors a variety of diverse perspectives and experiences as well as deeply-held beliefs.

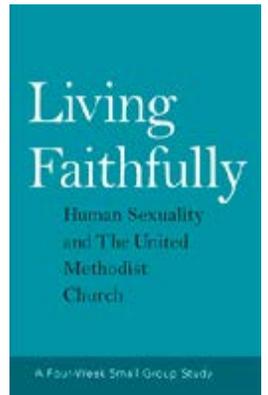
In August, Pastors Sara and Justin led three informational sessions on the process of decision-making and the issues before the denomination. Thanks to all who participated, the sessions were well-attended, and all members exhibited mutual respect, courtesy and compassion toward one another. We reaffirmed our commitment to live together according to the Law of Love (1 Corinthians 13) and to seek unity in the Body of Christ, even when members of the Body disagree.

During September, Justin and Sara will offer a four-week study of the book *Living Faithfully: Human Sexuality and the United Methodist Church* (Abingdon Press, 2017). This study is intentionally balanced and non-biased, and designed to help participants hear "both sides" of the issues at the heart of our struggle.

"This book is meant to help you understand and grapple with what the United Methodist church teaches about homosexuality, same-gender marriage, and ordination of LGBTQ persons. It's meant to help you have honest, well-informed, and grace-filled conversations with others about these teachings and the various calls for change within the denomination. And it's meant to help you discern, in prayer and conversation, how you can respond faithfully in love of God and love of neighbor." (Introduction, p. 5)

Study books are available for \$10 at the church. The group will begin meeting on Wednesday, September 5 at 7:00 PM, as part of our Wednesdays@Wesley tradition.

For more information, or if you'd like to participate but cannot attend on Wednesday evenings, let Justin or Sara know. Our doors are always open!



NOW
NEWS OF WESLEY



Sunday Services - 9:00 & 11:15 AM • Christian Education - 10:15 AM
502 East Front Street • Bloomington, Illinois 61701 • 309-827-8046 • wesley-umc.com

“Church Teaches Pastor About Prevenient Grace”

When I lead a New Member class, I try to find helpful ways to explain John Wesley’s concept of Grace: the unmerited, undeserved, unconditional love of God. The whole idea of grace is counter-cultural: getting something for nothing, being rewarded for what we have not earned. Wesley describes three experiences of amazing grace: *Prevenient*, *Justifying* and *Sanctifying* – none of which are words we 21st century Christians use in everyday language. The one that doesn’t even sound like a word, “Prevenient,” is perhaps the hardest one to explain. But I’ve got the perfect illustration now – and I got it from you!

Prevenient Grace, according to John Wesley, is the love of God extended to us that “comes before” (*pre* = before; *venire* = from the Latin *to come*) we even acknowledge the gift. It’s the grace that we are offered before we have come to accept it, before we have been taught it – maybe even before we know who God is! Prevenient Grace suggests that God loves all people, even those who don’t know God, runs to the door and holds it open for everyone to discover God’s love and accept it for themselves. We haven’t earned it, we haven’t deserved it; there’s no reason for God to offer us this kind of love, other than simply because God is God, and God is good, and nothing we can do on our part can change that.

I feel like the past 6-8 weeks of my life here in Bloomington-Normal have been a powerful illustration of Prevenient Grace. Before we even moved here we had received notes of welcome and a visit from three members who came to pick up items we wanted to donate to the Rummage Sale. Before my first day in the office, staff had replaced the carpet, painted the walls, ordered me a name tag and set up my computer. Before my first Sunday there were plans for a welcome reception, and the kind words and warm hugs were ready and waiting. Since that first Sunday there have been encouraging notes, welcome baskets of gift cards, invitations to “get-acquainted” gatherings in people’s homes, and lots and LOTS of smiles, hugs, and affirmations like “We’re glad you’re here!”

And I haven’t even earned it yet!

I said to Andy the other day – “this is really remarkable. This church has shown us so much love and acceptance without even knowing us! These people started loving us before they even met us, before we’d even had a chance to earn their trust or affection.”

But isn’t that how God is? Loving us, affirming us, welcoming us, gifting us – before we’ve even had a chance to work for it? And knowing full-well that there will be times we let God down, fail to live up to God’s expectations, and forget to be our best selves.

Nonetheless, God’s love comes to us unearned and unmerited – not because we *could* ever deserve it, but because it is the nature of God to give it freely and without condition.

Amazing Grace. Don’t I serve a wonderful church? And don’t we serve a wonderful God?
Thanks, Wesley, for teaching this pastor a lesson she’ll never forget!

- Pastor Sara

Welcome Newborn

August 15 is the birthday for little Rylee Bell. Rylee is the first child for Shane and Grace McGann. Welcome little one!



Thanks Wesley

Thank you to everyone for your support with donations for the bake sales that raised funds for my Eagle Scout project. Thanks to you the sales were very successful and helped in achieving my goal.

Jadon Robinson



Wesley Financial Update

General fund receipts as of 7/31/18	\$ 767,730
General fund expenses as of 7/31/18	754,570
	<hr/>
Surplus	\$ 13,160

Fall is just around the corner, and with that comes a flurry of activity. As well as all the back-to-school activities to adapt to, there is the church calendar to incorporate into our schedules. This month's newsletter is full of dates you won't want to miss, from new Sunday School classes and Wednesday at Wesley activities to family nights, social events and opportunities to serve. Staff are busy preparing a budget for 2019 based on goals set in each ministry area. You can help by prayerfully considering in advance how you might respond to the request for a financial faith commitment. Watch for more information about Commitment Sunday on October 28 in the next couple issues of this newsletter.

- Myrna Simpson, Business Administrator

Men's Walk to Emmaus

The walk to Emmaus is an experience of Christian spiritual renewal and formation that begins with a three-day short course in Christianity. Emmaus lifts up a way for our grace-filled lives to be lived and shared with others. A Men's Walk will be held at Spalding Renewal Center in downtown Peoria September 13-16. Contact Reverend Keith Ferguson at kferguson@wesley-umc.com or 309-846-2056 for more information.

Join The Balcony Team

Run TV cameras, edit video, create slide presentations, work the sound board... help the Wesley communication team create an exciting experience on Sundays and beyond. Interested? Contact Steve Brown, the Media Team or Randy Lorimor, the Video Team to learn more about the jobs available, the basic requirements, and how to get started.

Steve - wesleypresentations@gmail.com
Randy - rslorimor@gmail.com



Anchored definitely made a difference in Texas in July when they stepped up to help fix what Hurricane Harvey destroyed. Their efforts touched many lives - including their own. (Missions service has a way of doing that...) Wesley's team of eight might have seemed small at first...but they put in 274 hours of combined work in the steamy Texas climate.

Anchored would like to **thank the Missions Committee and the Wesley family** for all the generous support which allowed this group to afford to serve in this way. Well done all! - Anchored meets at 7:00 PM at Wesley West during Wednesdays@Wesley.



Dates to Note

- **Wednesday, August 29**
Wednesdays@Wesley Begins - 5:00 PM
- **Thursday, August 30**
Wesley's Bright Beginnings Preschool Parent Orientation - 6:30 PM
- **Monday, September 3**
Labor Day - Wesley Offices Closed
- **Tuesday, September 4**
WBB Preschool One-Hour Day
- **Wednesday, September 5**
WBB Preschool first full day
- **Friday, September 7**
Family Movie Night 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- **Saturday, September 8**
Missions Bake Sale - Bloomington Farmer's Market - 7:00 AM - Noon
- **Wednesday, September 12**
Surge at Midwest Food Bank - 5:15 PM
- **September 13 - September 16**
Men's Walk to Emmaus, Peoria
- **Monday, September 17**
NOW October edition deadline

Surge Youth Pizza Ranch Fundraiser - 5:00 PM
- **Thursday, September 20**
WBB Preschool Carnival - 5:00 - 7:00 PM
- **Friday, September 21**
4th & 5th Grade Retreat - 4:00-9:00 PM
- **Saturday, September 22**
Wesley Distribution Ministry - 9:30 AM

Habitat for Humanity Build Day - 8:00 AM
- **Tuesday, September 25**
UMW Fellowship Dinner & Program-6:00 PM

UMW September Fellowship Dinner & Program

LOL Circle

We will not meet September 3 because of Labor Day.

Monday, September 17, our Circle will have a tour of Home Sweet Home Mission. After lunch, we will volunteer at their warehouse.

It's not too late to join our fun and charity work! Email Elaine Stokes at estokes65@gmail.com.

Hope Circle

September 13 at 6:30 PM will be the first meeting after summer break.

Unafraid by Adam Hamilton will be the study book. If you need a book, contact Robin Rinker at rinker_robin@comcast.net.

Saturday, September 15 come and bring friends to help with the WDM distribution at Wesley West. We need 20 people.

GEMS

Monday, September 10th, GEMS will have Moms Night Out at Buffalo Wild Wings (by the Airport) at 7:00 PM.

Monday, September 24th, GEMS will meet at the home of Missy Dundov with leaders from the Salvation Army to learn about their programs. Childcare is \$3 per child.

Contact Liz Tomera for more information or questions at tomeras@comcast.net.



Life is a mystery. At times, it's unclear where to turn. Changes in our work or personal life can be unsettling, cause confusion or take a toll on self-worth. But, we have a choice. During times of trial come great opportunities for growth. Kim Kaufman explains how to navigate uncertainty and identify opportunities for personal advancement. It's always better to take the adventure...than stay on the sidelines. Kim will demonstrate how to find joy in the journey. Join Kim Kaufman and Wesley United Methodist Women for dinner and this inspirational program. All are welcome.

**Recalculating -
Finding new direction in times of change**

**Tuesday, September 25
6:00 PM - Dinner and Program
Speaker - Kim Kaufman
Wesley Hall - Dinner \$5**



Kim Kaufman

Tickets go on sale Sunday, September 9, September 16, and September 23

Kim's storytelling has been featured on CNN as well as CBS and FOX affiliates. Trained in media and corporate communications, she's received recognition for her work from the Illinois Broadcaster's Association, the YWCA, Association for Women in Communications, and the Public Relations Association. Her work has appeared in every area of broadcast media, including television, radio, magazines, newspapers, websites, and on the global TEDx Platform.

For more information about the UMW Dinner & Program contact Jenny Snyder at jens.basket@frontier.com. To learn more about Kim Kaufman go to www.kimpresents.com.



Kicking Off The Year

Wesley's Bright Beginnings preschool is gearing up for the 2018-2019 school year. Our director, board, and teachers are busy making plans for an exciting year of learning and play. Mark your calendars for September.

Thursday, August 30 - Parent Orientation - 6:30 PM

Tuesday, September 4 - One-Hour Visit Day - all classes

Wednesday, September 5 - First Full Day

Thursday, September 20 - Bright Beginnings School Carnival - 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

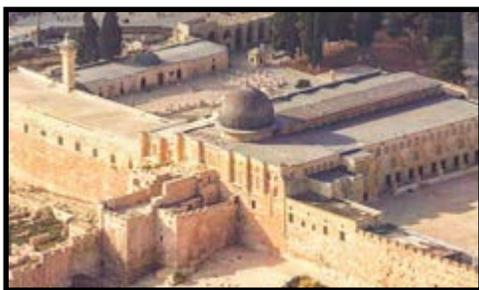
Who doesn't love a carnival? Games, dinner, popcorn, and snow cones!

Currently we have some openings in our toddler and three year-old classes. Contact Julie Loy at wesleysbrightbeginnings@gmail.com if you have a preschooler you would like to enroll or you know of someone interested. Spread the word!

This is a Test...

It's not too late to sign up for the McLean County Health Department's public health emergency exercise. It will be held at ISU Redbird Arena from 8:15 AM until 12 noon on Friday, September 14th. Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older and will be expected to participate in the exercise for the entire duration of the shift selected.

To learn more go to health.mcleancountyil.gov. You can also contact Wesley member, Tory Lynch-Dahmm at tlynch@chestnut.org.



2019 Holy Land Trip

ONLY FOUR MONTHS LEFT TO REGISTER!

I invite you to join me on an 11-Day "Journey through the Bible" program March 5-15, 2019 that will expand our knowledge of the Bible and this sacred land. This Holy Land journey will follow in the footsteps of Jesus, Paul, Samuel, and David - will change the way you read the Bible - and you will learn why scholars refer to the Holy Land as the "Fifth Gospel".

For more information go to www.wesley-umc.com or contact me at jiverson@wesley-umc.com to join the trip. Save the date and bring a friend!

- Pastor Justin

Wesley United Methodist Church

502 East Front Street
Bloomington, IL 61701

Phone: 309-827-8046 Fax: (309)828-9625
www.wesley-umc.com

After Hours Emergencies:

Reverend Sara L. Isbell (217) 299-4870
Reverend Justin Iverson (701) 809-1203

MAKE AN **IMPACT**

Jenna Saldana, the Director of US Operations for El Porvenir, stopped by Wesley UMC recently for a visit to thank us for our support. El Porvenir empowers rural Nicaraguans to achieve better health and well-being through integrated clean water projects and is one of the organizations we support through our Lenten offering. Jenna said that our last gift was enough for three families to have a lifetime of clean drinking water.

Wesley has supported El Porvenir for many years. The 2018 Lenten Offering raised a total of \$12,180 for ten organizations and of that El Porvenir received \$1750.

Thank you for your generous support.

Want to do more? Want to make an impact? Get involved. Contact Sandi Hinrichs of Wesley Missions at sandi.hinrichs@yahoo.com to get started.

WESLEY **IMPACT**
— UMC MISSIONS —

JUST ONE

Diapers of all sizes for both babies and adults will be collected during the month of September. These will be distributed in the monthly Wesley West Distribution.

Upcoming items to watch for on sale in the coming months are:

October - New and gently used coats sizes infant through teen
November - Thanksgiving Bags : canned goods and non-perishable foods
December - New school supplies, 24 count crayons, markers, pencils

Thank you for your continued generosity, Wesley Congregation!



Serving in September

Surge serves in September!

Surge is kicking off a new school year this August and then taking time in September to serve in various ways around the community.

God's Timing

God's timing is never the same as our own timing. That easily defines how this internship started for me. The Lord has clearly used this internship to verify my calling into ministry. He has shown me through the students, parents, mentors, and leaders, that He is affirming a call into ministry.

Specifically, this internship has taught me discernment, teaching skills, patience, servant leadership, and so much more. I was able to lead and experience the Summer BBQs that are put on for the youth. Also, I had the privilege of leading the senior high group's Sunday School class. We went through the book of James in the Bible on Wednesdays and a book called "Celebration of Disciplines" on Sunday mornings. The mission trip to Memphis impacted me the most. I truly saw through all my experience this summer what it looks like to lead as a servant. Also, how important it is to be a disciple to others no matter where we are at in life. I fully know that I need to embrace God's calling and be ready for what He has next.

I'm beyond thankful to Wesley United Methodist for this opportunity to be able to serve as their youth intern this summer. I'm truly going to miss being there everyday and interacting with the staff. I truly felt welcomed and loved by each staff member. Specifically, thank you to the Youth Director, Frank Newburn, for everything he has done for me. I love and appreciate this man so much! This youth group is in full surrender to Christ, and God is working faithfully in both Frank and Stacy. Thank you, Wesley UMC, for welcoming me in and making me feel at home this summer. - Jacob A. Cielecki



Mission Impact

JUNIOR HIGH MISSION TRIP 2018 -
serving at the Christian Discipleship Farm
in Wisconsin August 5-11.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I came on this trip to help the kids here but I mostly came to get closer to God."

"Because of this trip I want to become a better Christian."

"I'm glad I get to work with kids because working with kids gets me in my happy place."

"What an experience! Meeting new friends, old friends, loving, fun, and serving God."

"I am seeing God working in me by being more open to talk to people and making new friends."

Midwest Food Bank

On Wednesday September 12th all the students and adult leaders of Surge will be going off-site to serve at the Midwest Food Bank! We will meet at church at 5:15pm and return to church by 8pm. You must wear close-toed shoes to serve so please no sandals. If you have served at the Midwest Food Bank before then you do not need to fill out a release form, but you do if this is your first time there. If you cannot be at the church by 5:15pm you can meet us at the Midwest Food Bank. Dinner will be provided!

Paper Distribution

On Saturday September 15th Surge will take its turn serving at the Wesley Paper Distribution at Wesley West from 8:30am-noon. We are in need of 18 people to serve as we help distribute products, greet those who come, and keep a record of the products given out.

Pizza Ranch

On Monday September 17th the students and adult leaders of Surge will be serving at the Pizza Ranch in Bloomington from 5-8pm. We will be busing tables, refilling drinks, and talking about our mission trips next summer to Arizona and Arkansas. We need 6-8 students for each 1 hour shift, although students can sign up for more than 1 shift. If you can't serve that night, we invite you to bring your family and friends to Pizza Ranch as a percentage of that night's profits and all tips will go directly to support youth missions.

"When I'm not having a good day HE always makes it better!"



Christian Education Classes for All Ages throughout the week

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES - NEW SCHOOL YEAR

Begins Sunday, August 26

ADULTS - Sunday 10:15 AM - 11:00 AM

Journey Through the Bible - Book of Acts

Richard Johnson, leader
this Sunday - Conference Room

Everybody, Always

book by Bob Goff
Sunday - Kathi Pritts leads in the Lounge

First

book by Mike Slaughter
led by Pastor Justin & James Ingold
Lounge
begins September 30

STUDIES THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

- TUESDAY -

Women's Bible Study

2017 Disciplines and Other Topics

7:00 AM - Lounge

- Wednesdays@Wesley -

W@W will resume after summer break
on Wednesday, August 29.

- WEDNESDAY -

Men's Bible Study

12:00 PM - Garden Room

The Grand Sweep

365 Days From Genesis to Revelation

book by J. Ellsworth Kalas
5:45 PM - Lounge

All Church Study

Living Faithfully: Human Sexuality and the United Methodist Church

led by Pastors Sara and Justin
begins September 5
7:00 PM - Lounge

Check out Vacation Bible School
Pictures on the back cover!

The Legacy Journey

book by Dave Ramsey
led by James Ingold and Kelly Snyder
begins September 12
6:00 PM to 7:30 PM - location TBD

Wednesdays@Wesley Study

Half Truths book by Adam Hamilton
led by Stephanie Hoy
begins October 10
time TBD - Lounge

Children's Ministry

God Keeps His Promises

Our preschoolers have a colorful
God who always keeps his promises

Nehemiah's Dirty Jobs

In September our elementary kids
will learn about Biblical dirty jobs
from Nehemiah.

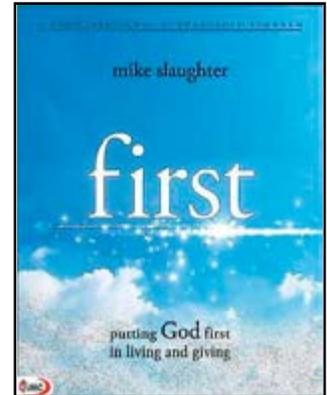
Contact Kathi Pritts
Director of Christian Education
for more information
kpritts@wesley-umc.com

New Sunday Study

- Starts September 30 -

Adult Study in the Lounge

led by James Ingold &
Pastor Justin



What happens when we truly put God first in all aspects of our lives? In a culture guided chiefly by shiny, life-promising distractions, “enough” seems elusive and keeps us indebted to that next source of satisfaction. What if the Giver of Life offered freedom from this downward spiral—would you take it? In *First: Putting God First in Living and Giving*, pastor and author Mike Slaughter conducts a four-week all-church stewardship program to help participants reassess priorities and create a culture and a lifestyle of faithful living and giving and make a meaningful contribution to the world. Join us.

Family Movie Night



Friday, September 7 is
a Wesley Family Movie
Night from 6:00 PM to
8:00 PM in Wesley Hall.
Big Hero 6 will be our
family-friendly movie.

Dinner will be available.

Come join us for an evening
of fun and fellowship.



WESLEY

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

502 East Front Street
Bloomington, Illinois 61701
309-827-8046
www.wesley-umc.com
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2018 FUN FOR ALL WITH THE LADS

Well over 100 kids attended Vacation Bible School with The Lads July 27-29. And what a time we had!

