

February 2024

# The Wesleyan Connection

Office: 235-3070

Pastor Chuck Emery

*Christ's disciples who strive to know, love and serve God more faithfully through Christ-centered worship, education, fellowship and true compassion that show God's love for all people in the name of Jesus Christ.*

## Notes from the Pastor

When was the last time you picked up your Bible? Was it this morning or quite a while ago? In many churches, screens now display scriptures, and the practice of bringing a Bible to worship seems to be fading. Yet reading the Bible is one of the essential spiritual practices of disciples.

There are more than a hundred translations of English Bibles. Which version of the Bible do you have? (Usually, the first page of the Bible tells you which version it is.) I respect whichever version of the Bible you have; my question is, "Do you understand your Bible translation?"

As a young person, The Gospel of John was my least favorite due to its perceived complexity. However, a class on the Gospel of John at seminary transformed my perspective. Concepts like the seven signs, the Johannine community's role in passing on Jesus' stories, and the idea

that the beloved disciple in the gospel could be any of us sparked newfound appreciation.

Join me in a Lenten challenge to read a chapter of John a day, starting the day after Ash Wednesday (February 14, 2024) and concluding just before Palm Sunday (March 24). You will finish reading about the life of Jesus from the Gospel of John just before Holy Week; hence, Easter Sunday may be more meaningful for you. Please consider committing yourself to this daily reading. Even if you miss a day or two, don't worry; you can catch up.

There is a private Facebook Group that you may request to join on Wesley's Facebook page. It is private so we may feel free to have an open discussion. Please post your reflections on the Facebook Group page so that others in the group may enter into a conversation with you about it.

(Continued on page 2)

### Our Vision statement:

*Learn God's word, Teach God's word and Share God's love*

### Our Mission Statement:

*Wesley United Methodist Church is a community of Christ's disciples who strive to know, love and serve God more faithfully through Christ-centered worship, education, fellowship and true compassion that show God's love for all people in the name of Jesus Christ.*

### Dates to Remember

Wednesday, February 7  
**Education** 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 12  
**Trustees** 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 14  
**Missions** 1:30 p.m.  
**Ash Wednesday Service** 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 20  
**Council** 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 21  
**Worship** 1:30 p.m.

Online Services still available to view on Facebook and YouTube. See page 3 for instructions on how to subscribe to the Wesley YouTube channel.

(Continued from page 1)

You may use your own Bible or use the Common English Bible translation that you can find posted each day along with questions and commentary to guide your reading. If you would like to borrow a Bible please contact the office.

Join us in this transformative Lenten experience. Whether you're a seasoned daily Bible reader or just starting Bible reading, let's take this journey together.



# February

## BIRTHDAYS

|    |                |    |                   |
|----|----------------|----|-------------------|
| 2  | Hannah Roe     | 17 | Linda Pribek      |
| 7  | Doris Thomas   |    | Mike Croninger    |
| 8  | Cheryl Mueller | 29 | Deborah Zimmerman |
| 10 | Pat Witzke     |    |                   |

## ANNIVERSARIES

|    |                            |
|----|----------------------------|
| 10 | Mark and Jennifer Fournier |
| 22 | Mike and Betty Croninger   |



**Wednesday  
February 14  
6:30 p.m. Service**

Received January 7, 2024

Susan Davies  
Lawrence Edminster  
Dale Lagar  
Mary McKeown  
Lynnda Stewart



## DRIVERS and RIDERS Needed

Ash Wednesday will be February 14, 2024. Wesley's service will be at 6:30 PM. To ensure everyone interested in attending will be there we would like to have people that would like a ride (RIDERS) to church, sign up by calling the church office @ 920-235-3070 or using the clipboard on the table in the narthex. People willing to drive (DRIVERS) others to church please sign up in the same manner as RIDERS.

If this type of support is needed and would be used, we may set it up for future events.

For more information, please contact Debbie Zimmerman @ 920-385-8356

## Education



There's a possibility of a multi-church Vacation Bible School this summer. Two members of the education committee will be attending an informational meeting on January 22 at Trinity Episcopal Church. Watch your newsletters for more info.

Doris Thomas is leading the children's choir practices every other week after Sunday School in the sanctuary. Date of their next performance has not been set yet.

Our Adult Education classes meeting on Thursday: The morning class at 10:30 a.m. will be having a commentary on the Bible text for the next Sunday each week. When Pastor Chuck returns from Florida in March, they will be doing a book study on "How Not To Read The Bible". The Thursday afternoon class at 2:30 p.m. is currently studying the book of Matthew.

The Sunday morning adult class continues to meet after worship service on Sunday mornings.

Watch for Pastor's announcement of a Lenten Study Group he will be presenting on Facebook starting Thursday, February 15. This will be a private group study and you will need to ask to be in it. It will be reading a chapter of John a day. Pastor will be providing all the information you'll need to access this study.

The Education Committee is planning their next meeting for Wednesday, February 7, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by, Donna LaPoint—Education Committee Chair

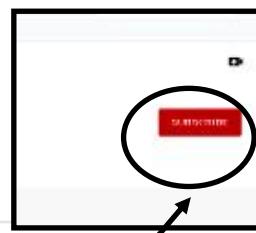
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**Women of Wesley**—The United Women in Faith Unit is hosting a Soul Care Saturday on February 17th, 2024 at A.B.U.M.C. from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This is the second year we are hosting an event like this. It is geared for nurturing our body, mind, and spirit. Breakfast will be served, and a light lunch will be served. In between we will have a chance to get to know each other better, and to enjoy our sisterhood. You don't have to be a member to participate. Everyone is welcome! Please contact the church office at 920-231-2800, or Sandy Butcher at 920-426-3114 if you plan to attend. Please join us!

1. Open YouTube.com
2. Click the Search button
3. Key Wesley UMC Oshkosh



wesley umc oshkosh



4. Press Enter
5. Click the SUBSCRIBE button when you first view this YouTube site.

## A Brief History

Our mission – Day by Day Shelter collaboratively provides temporary shelter, individualized services, and opportunities for self-sufficiency to empower the most vulnerable adults in our community.

Day By Day Shelter, Inc. was founded by a coalition of community members concerned about the lack of safe, temporary shelter for people experiencing homelessness in the Oshkosh area. With broad community support from local government, police, fire, faith communities and foundations, Day By Day Shelter, Inc. first opened its doors on October 15, 2011.

From the beginning, our mission has been to support the most vulnerable individuals in our community. We strive to treat our guests with dignity and respect, while empowering them toward self-sufficiency and stability.

As of May 2023, Day by Day has more than quadrupled our operations from 25 beds, open 6 months of the year to 50 beds, open 365 days a year. With a new purpose-built shelter, we have also expanded our services and capabilities to meet the growing needs of our organization and our community.

Day By Day Shelter, Inc. is governed by an executive board of directors, and run by a caring and professional staff.

## **Every dollar makes a difference**

As a local organization, Day By Day Shelter raises **95% of its annual operating budget** right here in Winnebago County. We count on the generosity of local businesses, foundations, faith communities and individuals to help ensure safe shelter for anyone who needs it. Your support provides a warm bed, nutritious food and supportive services to help local homeless on the path to self-sufficiency. Here's a small sampling of what your gift can do...

- **\$50** provides safe shelter for one guest for one night
- **\$125** covers the cost of supplies needed to operate the shelter for one week
- **\$1000** covers shelter utilities (water, gas, electric) for one month during the season

## **In-Kind Donations**

Although cash is the most useful donation, Day By Day Shelter also relies on the donation of goods and services to deliver its mission. Below is a Wish List for a list of items we need most right now.

|   |   |                        |
|---|---|------------------------|
| Paper Towel   | Bus Tokens  | Reusable Water Bottles |
| Backpacks   | Mattress Protectors<br>(36"x80")  | Shampoo                |
| Conditioner   | Body Wash   | Coffee                 |
| Sugar   | Snack Foods   | Applesauce Cups        |
| Fruit Cups  | Juice Boxes   | Sugary Cereal          |
| Hand and Toe Warmers  | Hats, Gloves, and Scarves   | Laundry Detergent      |
| Cleaners – Window, Floor, and All Surface                         | Due to very limited storage space, we are not able to accept clothing items other than warm socks and gloves/mittens. |                        |
| Bus token, vouchers, and passes are a crucial need for our guests | Insulated hats & gloves are our most highly used item during our operating season.                                    |                        |

## **Volunteering**

There are AM and PM volunteer opportunities available. Wesley will also be serving another spaghetti meal in the immediate future. We will need donations of food items including salads, desserts, spaghetti sauce, meat, spaghetti etc. Watch bulletins for more information. Contact Linda Fournier if you have any questions about the content of this article.

## MONTHLY MISSION FOCUS

### Day by Day Warming Shelter

## Newsletter Sponsorship

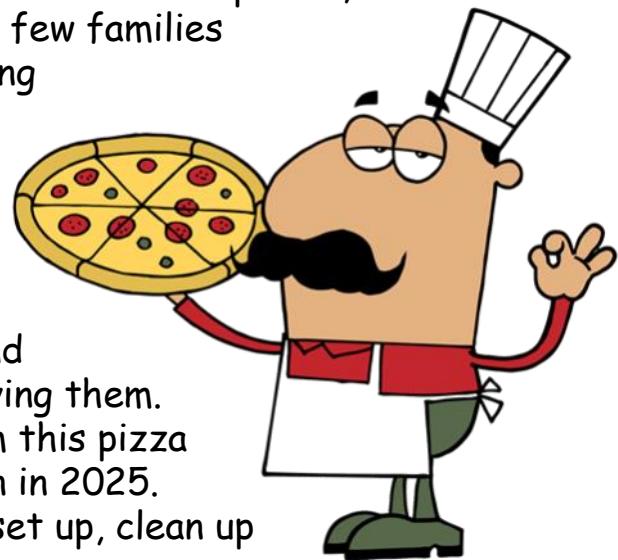
There is no sponsor for the February 2024 newsletter. Please consider being a sponsor for the March-December 2024 newsletters. Your contribution helps defray part of the cost of the publication and is an extra gift of support to our expenses. Please contact the church office (235-3070) to 'reserve' your chosen month for 2024.

## PIZZA 2024

Pizza 2024 was a huge success. 80 people helped to make 1360 pizzas, starting production at 7:30 and ending at 11:30. A few families had a destination family reunion at the pizza making event to help in the effort. Production quality control specialist **Kyle Fournier** directed the effort and kept operations running smoothly and efficiently.

At noon, Oshkosh Community Food Pantry picked up 310 of those pizzas donated by 40 members and friends. The Food Pantry was so grateful in receiving them. A significant budget helping profit was made from this pizza fundraiser and we look forward to doing this again in 2025. Thank all of you that helped in sales, production, set up, clean up and fellowship.

Randy Lovell



## February

### From the Study Book "Disciple's Path - a guide for United Methodists"

In answer to the question about why I am a UM, I say, "I am a United Methodist because I follow Christ because: of the:

#### 2. Wesleyan balance of heart and head.

- If your heart is right, your head will follow.
- Heart means every thought, word and deed.
- Getting the truth "what is that?" thinking that right doctrine is critical to right relationship with God.
- Relationships are what is important.



## UMC Wesley CORNER

### Disaffiliation in the UMC

As part of the history of the United Methodist Church (UMC) the latest big issue has been disaffiliation. United Methodists (UM) in the United States make up about half of all UM worldwide, with U.S. congregations representing closer to two-thirds of all congregations in the denomination worldwide.

The number of disaffiliating churches at the end of 2023 was 7662 which is over 25%. The Bishops ruled that Par.2553 does not apply to churches outside of the US meaning the churches in Africa, the Philippines and other places outside the US did not have the opportunity to make the choice. This may be discussed at the General Conference in 2024 with the possibility lessening because of the loss of all the representatives that disaffiliated now ineligible to vote. The process for disaffiliation for US churches ended in 2023. Some churches met resistance along the way and went to court.

One of the offshoots of disaffiliating is that apportionments decreased in most conferences. However, disaffiliating congregations were required to pay two full years of apportionments (current year plus one more) to offset the conference's loss of their funds for the first year of their absence. This gives annual conferences a bit of a financial cushion. The conference sets its own budget so can compensate where necessary. Reductions and realignments will keep conference budgets in line with the number and financial capacity of their congregations.

United Methodist are the largest denominational divide in the United States since the Civil War. While there have been several notable church schisms in the 20th century—including those that gave birth to the Presbyterian Church in America, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the North American Lutheran Church, and the Anglican Church in North America—none involve more than 600 or 700 separating congregations. The UMC split is more than 10 times as large.

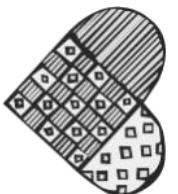
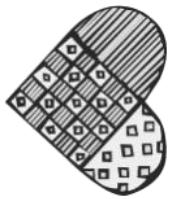
A new Methodist denomination was launched in May 2022 which now has over 4000 congregations and plans for its first annual meeting in 2024. According to Jay Terrell of the Wesleyan Covenant Association one of the specific changes will be the term-limit for Bishops which has been a significant part of the drama in the disaffiliation because of the lack of accountability of bishops.

A Wesley Theological Seminary study found that the UMC will be smaller, less southern and possibly more diverse. Both exiting and staying churches are united on 1) Jesus was born of a virgin, 2) Jesus died on a cross to reconcile humanity with God, 3) Jesus was resurrected from the dead in bodily form, and 4) today calls people to make disciples for the transformation of the world.

Disaffiliation has not been worked out internationally. The UMC has twice as many members abroad than in the US. At its General Conference in Spring of 2024, UMC is looking at a structure for organizing across continents to allow for regionalization and contextualization of the church hoping to lessen disaffiliation. Jerry P. Kulah a UM leader in Liberia and a leaders of the UMC Africa Initiative says “The effect of that plan would be to compartmentalize sin and make the African church complicit in allowing the US church to adopt unscriptural teachings and standards.” Churches abroad will be looking for an opportunity to disaffiliate as American churches have had the opportunity. Others reiterated their intent to not “forsake the fellowship” despite their theological disagreements around sexuality and marriage.

This material was partially taken from **Christianity Today, Wisconsin UMC website and other writing.**

# February 2024



| Sunday  | Monday                  | Tuesday               | Wednesday  | Thursday   | Friday    | Saturday  |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|--|-----------|-----------|
|   |                         |                       |  | <b>1</b>   | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| 9:30 a.m. Worship<br>10:45-a.m.—noon<br>Walking in Grace 2024 | 5:30 p.m.<br>MA<br>TOPS | 10 a.m.<br>MA<br>TOPS | 5:30 p.m. MA<br>6:30 p.m. Education  | 10:30 a.m. "A Disciple's Path -<br>2:30 p.m. Book of Matthew<br>5:30 p.m. MA<br>6:30p.m. MG/7 p.m. Chancel |           |           |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>                | <b>6</b>              | <b>7</b>   | <b>8</b>   | <b>9</b>  | <b>10</b> |
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| <b>11</b>   | <b>12</b>               | <b>13</b>             | <b>14</b>  | <b>15</b>  | <b>16</b> | <b>17</b> |
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| <b>18</b>   | <b>19</b>               | <b>20</b>             | <b>21</b>  | <b>22</b>  | <b>23</b> | <b>24</b> |
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| <b>25</b>   | <b>26</b>               | <b>27</b>             | <b>28</b>  | <b>29</b>  |           |           |
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**Change Service Requested**



*The Wesleyan Connection is  
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members and friends of Wesley  
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