

August 2023



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.*

Office: 235-3070

Pastor Chuck Emery

Notes from the Pastor

It was Picasso who said, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." What I believe Picasso is referring to is a loss of imagination. Imagination is the force that trespasses on the impossible. For children, imagining is an easy task, but as we age, that force often lies undeveloped. Yes, undeveloped . . . not replaced or demolished, but merely undeveloped.

Developing an imagination is a necessity, and it is crucial to our faith. I would actually say, our faith needs imagination as much as our imagination needs our faith. They are to cohabitate and support each other in this Christian life.

Our culture—sometimes even the culture of churches—can be inimical to the work of the imagination. We are prone to emphasize knowledge, action, and argument. It happens through contemplation, prayer, wonder, ritual, imagination, play, shared meals, artful storytelling—activities that require slowing down and involve ways of knowing that our everyday world is apt to treat as expendable. It takes courage to spend time on such arts and with such disciplines.

It can be difficult to trust that God is working through them.

Imagination is one of the most glorious aspects of being human. As far as we know, ants and armadillos don't have it. The imagination allows us to think of what is not, to build new mental universes, to apprehend barely conceivable truths, to think ourselves into other people's places and circumstances. The imagination -doesn't ask our permission as it traverses perceptions and meanings.

That imaginative activities are at the heart of faith is a challenge to all of us, wherever we might be on the theological spectrum. It's a reminder that ultimately faith is the work of the spirit, and it's through the spirit that transformation happens.

Imagination is "the action of forming ideas or concepts not present to the senses." Imagination is simply the ability to visualize that which is not visual, to see the unseeable. Many in the business world would call this "casting a vision." Creative people call it "art." Art is always something imaginative, because it envisions and executes that which is hard to believe. Perhaps imagination is scary for some because it transcends intellect and what we can see and

(Continued on page 2)



Monday, August 14
Trustees
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, August 15
Church Council
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 16
Worship Committee
1:30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 30
Prayer in Peace Garden
6:30 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)

hold. Logic may change our mind, but it's the interplay between imagination and faith that changes our life.

Imagination visualizes what faith knows to be true. If imagination is a kite, factual faith is the string connecting it to its handler. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Faith is the reality of what we hope for, the proof of what we don't see" (CEB). So, it's faith that calls us to imagine, but to imagine with biblically correct assurance. Without a theological connection, the kite could be tossed by every gust of wind.

For generations, people have lamented the decline of biblical literacy—the fact that many people don't know basic stories like Jonah and the fish or Daniel in the lion's den. The decline of biblical literacy is frequently associated with moral and social decline and the rise of indifference to religion. The problem may not be that people lack information or arguments about religion but that we don't deeply inhabit the religious stories we do know. We aren't open to letting stories of faith and the movements of the spiritual life work on us, to allow our imaginations to play with the biblical stories. That's a problem even for those of us who do have some knowledge of the Bible, who study it and preach from it.

When our imagination is biblically developed, we start to see people and things the way God sees them. Christians are called to imagine what could be and what will be, while also living in the present. For example, as Kingdom citizens, it's a calling to see others as people to be loved because God loves them, not as enemies. As a second example, consider our bodies. They are no longer merely physical. They are to be imagined as the temple of the Holy Spirit. And how are we to envision the church? We are not a group of misfits; we are to imagine the church as a family. This is the way of Jesus. This is how God sees us and desires us to envision one another.

In many cases, the development of imagination is the first step toward faith. Imagining what the Holy Spirit can do in our community, in our work space, in our classroom, and in our church prepares us to perceive with our senses what faith tells us is true.



BIRTHDAYS

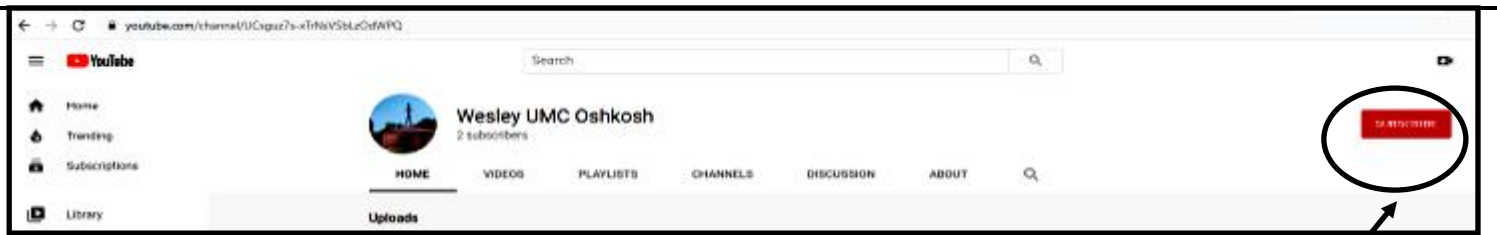
8/2	Bob Heisler	8/15	Dawn Krueger
	Dan Mueller	8/18	Marlin Eckstein
8/4	Malory Fournier	8/20	Curt Heisler
8/8	Betty Croninger		Jean Drayton
8/9	Sue Thomas	8/22	Barbara Uecker
	Katelyn Schreiber	8/24	Jack Thomas
8/11	Shirley Hiland	8/26	Jordan Bates
8/13	Linda Colantonio	8/30	Robert Stein

ANNIVERSARIES

8/7	Sue Thomas & Gary Johnston
8/12	Tim & Dawn Krueger
8/24	Mike & Gloria Smith
8/29	Jerry & Kathy Krueger

Newsletter Sponsorship

The sponsor for the August newsletter is anonymous. Please consider being a sponsor for the September—December 2023 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 2023.



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.

Rummage Sale Update for 2023

WOW! What a year with the sale. A week and a half before the sale, I made the comment that donations were considerably down. That was a mistake! Donations came in every day, even the last day and made our sale one of our best. The great bakers we have among us came through with many delicious treats for us to sell. This made for a record year in the bakery department. The pecan treats were even mentioned in a thank you we received from a group we donated to after the sale. They had visited our bakery department on day 1 and couldn't resist buying some. Best they ever had, were their words.

Jenny and I would like to thank everyone who donated, helped sort, priced, baked, worked the sale and especially helped clean up. Kyle did a great job leading the clean-up process, so Jenny and I could attend a family commitment. We donated to seven different groups this year. This makes our mission even greater than we had hoped.

- Oshkosh Mom's Community Closet
- Day by Day Warming Shelter
- Habitat Restore
- Guatemala Service Project
- Tiny Homes of Oshkosh
- Little Free Library's in Oshkosh
- Goodwill



Oshkosh Mom's Closet is a sub group of Heroes of Oshkosh.

They help new mothers with baby items, clothes, shoes, kid's toys, small appliances, etc.

Guatemala Service Project is a project to help Guatemalan families in the Chichicastenago area with education, health, and fresh clean water. The donations of clothing, purses, backpacks, bedding, towels, belts, ties, and more are used to assist in families.

Pedal Out Hunger Ride/Walk

Saturday, August 12, 2023

[Help Feed Those in Need](#)

The Pedal Out Hunger Ride is annual community ride/walk designed to raise much needed funds for The Salvation Army of Oshkosh's food pantry and hot meal programs. Every dollar raised from this event goes directly towards providing meals and support to those in need. This family-friendly event offers recreational riders multiple bike route options. This year a 2.25-mile walking route along the Oshkosh riverfronts has also been added, giving non-bikers an opportunity to join in the fun.

The Salvation Army makes thousands of hot meals annually for those in need. Nearly one in ten Oshkosh households also utilize The Salvation Army food pantry each year for food assistance. All proceeds from our annual Ride/Walk therefore go to fund food and equipment purchases for pantry and kitchen operations. Your participation in the Pedal Out Hunger Ride/Walk helps feed those in need to support The Salvation Army of Oshkosh's feeding programs.

[Multiple Bike Route Options](#)

We will be offering bike routes of approximately 6, 10, 20 mile scenic, 20 mile Wiouwash Trail, 30 mile scenic and 30 mile Wiouwash Trail routes this year. These routes offer scenic courses for recreational bikers of all ages and abilities. The event begins and ends at The Salvation Army of Oshkosh with a lunch to immediately follow your return. There are also lots of prizes for the kids making the Pedal Out Hunger Ride a great family entertainment event.



<https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/oshkosh/pedal-out-hunger/>

From Your Trustees:

- The Prayer Garden was weeded and cleaned up in anticipation of an outdoor worship service. Thank you specifically to the following volunteers for their work in the garden: Donna and Mike LaPoint, Sue Yell, Gloria Smith, Jenny, Austin, Kyle, and Linda Fournier. There's still work to be done there.
- In the front of the church, near the sanctuary end where three trees once stood, weed killer was applied and then dirt and grass seed to level off the area.
- Thanks to Mike Croninger's son-in-law Corey, the cameras in the church will be recording.
- The entrance doorway of the garage has been repaired so it will stay locked better.
- We are awaiting estimates on Door C for possible replacement due to the locking mechanism not working properly.
- We are waiting on an estimate to remove the branches and trees overhanging the parking lot on the east side of the church.

Thank you to everyone who helps keep the church looking so wonderful!

Submitted by Mike LaPoint, Trustee Chair

Boys & Girls Club

The Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh is the mission focus for the month of August. For over 50 years the Club has been part of the Oshkosh community landscape. Their mission is: “To improve the lives of children and families.” Their vision “is to be a generation-changing leading provider of programs emphasizing youth development services and family outreach support to meet the needs of young people 6-18 and their families, especially those who need us most.”

The Club, located on East Parkway Avenue, offers a dynamic learning environment that includes quality, age-appropriate programs, mentoring by caring adult professionals and outstanding facilities, all for an annual fee of only \$25 per child. By providing safe facilities, caring adults and engaging activities, they help each young person realize their full potential. Currently, the Club serves over 3,000 youth in membership and outreach.

The Boys and Girls Club of Oshkosh focuses on five core areas of programming and development that have been nationally proven to address today’s most pressing youth issues and assist in teaching young people the skills they need to succeed in life. These areas are: 1. Character & Leadership 2. Education and Career Development 3. Health & Life Skills 4. Sports, Fitness& Recreation 5. The Arts.

In order to provide the children with the services needed (such as after-school care, mental health services, transportation, basic needs services, mentoring, etc.), the Club relies on donations from outside sources. They are currently in need of cleaning products (dish soap, sponges, laundry soap, antiseptic wipes, hand soap, etc.), hand/body lotion and clothing for girls and boys (size 5/6 swimsuits, size 7/8 swimsuits, size 10/12 swimsuits, size 14/16 swimsuits, athletic shorts of all sizes, and tee shirts of all sizes).

Cash is also a good option. If you would like to help the Club make a difference in Oshkosh, please put any donated items on the table in the narthex, and be sure to designate any cash donations for the Boys and Girls Club of Oshkosh.

From Your Education Committee:

Hope everyone is having a wonderful summer! Rally Day for the kickoff of Sunday School in the fall will be Sunday, September 10. Watch the upcoming newsletters for details about exciting events being planned for the fall. Enjoy your summer!

Submitted by Donna LaPoint, Education Chair

Holy Baptism

One of two sacraments celebrated by The United Methodist Church

Both Sacraments, Holy Communion and Baptism, are sign-acts, which include words, actions, and symbols to make God's love visible and effective. Baptism is a vehicle to show God's presence and participation.

A paper prepared by the UMC called *By Water and the Spirit: A United Methodist Understanding of Baptism*, says that "Because God has created and is creating all that is, physical objects of creation can become the bearers of divine presence, power, and meaning, and thus become sacramental means of God's grace. In the sacraments we pray for the Holy Spirit to be poured out upon these objects and those that receive them." *By Water and the Spirit* says "God's presence in the sacraments is real, but it must be accepted by human faith if it is to transform human lives." Sacraments are not magic, they are powerful channels through which God has chosen to make grace available to each of us". The Baptismal Covenant says "we are initiated into Christ's holy church ... incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit." The Introduction to the Baptismal Covenant says, "All this is God's gift, offered to us without price."

The Bible tells us that God made human beings in the image of God, and that all of creation is good. Sin caused a "distortion of the image of God in us." In baptism, we reject the power of sin and begin our journey as disciples of Jesus Christ.

At baptism the pastor asks if one renounces wickedness, rejects evil, and repents of sin; accepts the freedom and power of God to reject evil, injustice, and oppression; and confesses Jesus as Savior, trusts in his grace, and promises to serve him as Lord. Note that the question is directed to the adult for himself. If the person being baptized is an infant or someone that is not able to answer for themselves, the adults present are not answering on behalf of that person. They are telling what they believe and are willing to bring the other person up within that environment.

Through the waters of baptism, we are cleansed of our sin and born into a new way of living. Whether an infant or adult, this is just the beginning. We continue this practice by baptizing the children of those who reaffirm their baptismal vows, receiving them into God's mighty acts of salvation. *By Water and the Spirit* explains, "Just as infants are members of their human families, but are unable to participate in all aspects of family life, so baptized infants are members of the Church — the family of faith — but are not yet capable of sharing everything involved in membership." Following the act of baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the pastor then offers a blessing with the laying on of hands, which may include oil. The pastor says, "The Holy Spirit work within you, that being born through water and the Spirit, you may be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ."

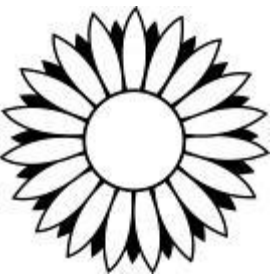
Because baptism is an act of God, initiating us into the universal church, the sacrament is to be received by an individual only once. Some baptized persons may like to commemorate and celebrate profound faith experiences in a special way and a ritual of reaffirmation is available.

One of the gifts the Holy Spirit gives is the church, local and universal, into which the Sacrament of Holy Baptism initiates us. When baptism is performed, the congregation is also taking vows. The congregation says they will surround the baptized with a community of love and forgiveness, and pray that they may be a disciple of Jesus Christ who walks in the way that leads to life. For this reason, baptisms are to take place in the presence of the community of faith.





August 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 10 a.m. TOPS	2 5:30 p.m. MA	3 10:30 a.m. <i>Disciple</i> Series-Christian Beliefs 5:30 p.m. MA	4	5
6 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45-a.m.- noon <i>Walking in Grace 2023</i>	7 5:30 p.m. MA	8 10 a.m. TOPS	9 5:30 p.m. MA	10 10:30 a.m. <i>Disciple</i> Series-Christian Beliefs 5:30 p.m. MA	11	12
13 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45-a.m.- noon <i>Walking in Grace 2023</i>	14 5:30 p.m. MA 6:30 p.m. Trustees	15 10 a.m. TOPS 6:30 Council	16 1:30 p.m. Worship Com. 5:30 p.m. MA	17 10:30 a.m. <i>Disciple</i> Series-Christian Beliefs 5:30 p.m. MA	18	19
20 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45-a.m.- noon <i>Walking in Grace 2023</i>	21 5:30 p.m. MA	22 10 a.m. TOPS	23 5:30 p.m. MA	24 10:30 a.m. <i>Disciple</i> Series-Christian Beliefs 5:30 p.m. MA	25	26
27 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45-a.m.- noon <i>Walking in Grace 2023</i>	28 5:30 p.m. MA	29 10 a.m. TOPS	30 5:30 p.m. MA 6:30 p.m. Prayer in Peace Garden	31 10:30 a.m. <i>Disciple</i> Series-Christian Beliefs 5:30 p.m. MA		MA= Martial Arts TOPS = Take Off Pounds Sensibly

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Change Service Requested



*The Wesleyan Connection is
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