

Why Wesley?

For the last few months, we have been asking our congregation to start sharing their stories with each other about why they choose Wesley! Sharing with each other (in many ways) is such an important part of our faith journey. We share our gifts, resources, money, and time with each other... but what if we also shared our story? What if we could inspire or encourage those around us simply by sharing our story with others who might be walking the same path (but you just don't know it yet)? You might even find a little reassurance in knowing you are not walking alone, or even develop a new friendship because of this (previously) unspoken connection!

Shy? No worries! We invite you to put your testimony in writing (you may submit anonymously if you prefer) or muster up some courage and share your story in service on a Sunday (we would love to have you)! We have already received several stories from many of you, and we can't wait for more! It is our intention to share these stories with others, to hopefully inspire and unite them in their faith journey. We are all in this together! We hope Pastor Sara's story above will inspire you to share your own with us.

"Why Wesley" from Pastor Sara Isbell

As I've been encouraging others to send in their testimonies about why Wesley UMC has become their beloved church home, I thought maybe I should set a good example and send one in, myself! My word is "Abundant"! Wesley is a place of abundant gifts and blessings; if you've never worshiped anywhere else, you may not realize just how uniquely this church overflows with blessing and potential!



- *I see it in worship – in the amazing music we have here, and the way that every Sunday is Special Music Sunday!*
- *I see it in mission – the way the "Just One" bin is often quite literally overflowing, and the diapers, wipes and paper towels at Wesley West are stacked so high, they keep falling off the tables.*
- *I see it in discipleship – the way there are more Bible study and small group opportunities going on than anybody has time to attend.*
- *I see it in our financial stewardship – the way, despite economic uncertainty in our society, we always have enough to pay the bills, compensate our staff, and still have enough left over for new ministries.*
- *I see it in our volunteerism – how Wesley members freely share their time and talent with others.*
- *I see it in Christian compassion – the way people care for each other, in good times and bad.*

Recently, I've seen abundance in some pretty dramatic and powerful ways:

- *When Molly (our receptionist) went on maternity leave, a dozen volunteers stepped up to help in the office this summer.*
- *When Keith passed unexpectedly, a dozen caregivers stepped up to help with visitation.*
- *When both Stacy and Frank "graduated" from our youth program at the same time, a dozen parents and youth leaders stepped up to keep SURGE running and to care for our youth as they begin a new year.*
- *You can probably think of even more examples!*

Remember how Jesus blessed five loaves and two fish, and somehow managed to feed 5000? That's abundance! That's what I experience here at Wesley UMC! My testimony is probably different from yours, because the "reason" I came to Wesley is that I was appointed. But my reasons for LOVING it – and loving you! – are ABUNDANT! Thanks for being my church home, Wesley UMC!

Here are a few questions to help get you started:

If you could describe Wesley in one word, what would it be?

What brought you to Wesley?

What has kept you here?

If you left previously, what brought you back?

TO SUBMIT YOUR STORY: (you may remain anonymous)

Contact Kendra Bull via email at kbull@wesley-umc.com

or mail your story to: Why Wesley? c/o Kendra Bull

502 East Front Street, Bloomington IL 61701

You may also drop your story by the office or in the offering plate on Sunday mornings. We can't wait to hear from you!

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER.....

- 4 ANCHORED (a ministry for twenty and thirty somethings)
7:00 pm at Wesley West
- 6 Family Night: TRUST Escape Room and Game Night
6:30 pm in Wesley Hall
- 8 New Member Session #1
2:30-4:00 pm in the Lounge
- 9 Growing Each Mom Spiritually (GEMS) 7 pm Conference Rm
- 12 HOPE Circle Guest Speaker
6:30 pm in the Lounge
- 14 Habitat For Humanity Build
8:00 am at 1107 N. Morris Ave in Bloomington
- 15 New Member Session #2
2:30-4:00 pm in the Lounge
- 16 Ladies Outreach & Lunch (LOL)
11:30 am Wesley West
- 16 Lifetouch Photo Sessions
2:00-9:00 pm in the Lounge
- 16 Power of Prayer Team
4:30-6:00 pm in the Garden Rm
- 17 New Member Session #3
6:30-7:30 pm in the Lounge
- 19 Wesley's Bright Beginnings
Preschool Carnival 5:00 pm
- 19 SURGE (grades 6 thru 12)
serving Safe Harbor 5:15 pm
- 21 Wesley Distribution Ministry
9:30-11:30 am Wesley West
- 22 New Members Received
9:00 & 11:15 am worship
- 22 HUNGER WALK in Memory of Keith Ferguson at Tipton Park
North Shelter from 2-4:30 pm
- 23 Growing Each Mom Spiritually (GEMS) 7 pm Conference Rm
- 24 LOADS OF LOVE MINISTRY
4:30-8:00 pm The Wash House
- 24 UMW Mexican Fiesta Dinner
6:00 pm in Wesley Hall
- 25 SURGE (grades 6 thru 12) serves
Midwest Food Bank 5:15 pm
- 28 Missions Bake Sale Bloomington
Farmer's Market 7:30am-Noon
- 29 District Superintendent Rev. Jim Barnett Visit (during worship)

OCTOBER.....

- 4-6 SURGE (grades 6 thru 12)
NOW Fall Retreat
- 12 Habitat For Humanity Build
8:00 am at 1107 N. Morris Ave in Bloomington
- 17 SURGE (grades 6 thru 12)
serving Safe Harbor 5:15 pm
- 19 Wesley Distribution Ministry
9:30-11:30 am Wesley West
- 20 Annual Charge Conference
3-5 pm in the Sanctuary
- 22 LOADS OF LOVE MINISTRY
4:30-8:00 pm The Wash House
- 25 Cowboy Trunk or Treat
6-7:30 pm Wesley West

LOOKING Ahead

Here's the Plan: Over the next year, Wesley will be developing, celebrating and moving forward in faith, especially in these areas:

- **Strengthening Relationships** – listening to one another's hearts and perspectives, learning to share our own, and valuing each person as a beloved child of God
- **Sharing Stories** – telling our faith story and inviting others into it
- **Supporting the Church** – looking toward the future, ensuring that the ministries that have shaped and supported us will continue blessing lives for years to come
- **Spreading the Word** – actively inviting new friends to be part of our family
It's all part of our mission: making and nurturing disciples for Jesus Christ.

Won't you join us?



Lifetouch® Member Directory

If you were not able to have your photograph taken at our July event, don't worry! You can still sign up for our final session which will be held at Wesley on Monday, September 16. Please contact Kendra Bull at kbull@wesley-umc.com or call 309.827.8046 (ext. 26) for details.

YOUR ORDER IS READY! If you are waiting for your FREE 8x10, please come to the office to pick up your print. If you purchased additional prints and have not received your order (which will be delivered to your home) please call 1.800.505.9486 for help. Thank you!

CONTACT INFO: Our directory will contain both photos AND contact information including address, phone numbers and emails and we want to get it right! If anything has changed or you would like to keep your information private, please call the church office at 309.827.8046 to let us know.

NEW MEMBER Sessions

We will be offering a series of Get-Acquainted/Welcome to Wesley/New Member opportunities over the next few weeks. Please join us for any or all of the following gatherings (according to your need or interest):

GET ACQUAINTED COFFEE WITH THE PASTORS:

Sunday, September 8, from 2:30-4:00 pm (in the Church Lounge)

For everyone interested in learning more about Wesley Church and membership.

UNITED METHODIST 101:

Sunday, September 15, from 2:30-4:00 pm (in the Church Lounge)

All are welcome, but specifically geared for those considering making a profession of faith or transferring membership from another denomination.

ARE YOU READY?

Tuesday, September 17, from 6:30-7:30 pm (in the Church Lounge)

This session is for anyone who is ready to be received into membership and will focus on membership vows and getting involved.

MAKING THE COMMITMENT:

Sunday, September 22, during 9:00 am and 11:15 am services (in the Sanctuary)

If you aren't able to make this date, please let us know so we can accommodate you!

If you are considering becoming a member, please take advantage of one or more of these opportunities, to get to know us better, and to learn more about what "United Methodist membership" is all about.

Please RSVP by calling the church office at 309.827.8046 or email Jody Robbins at jrobbins@wesley-umc.com. Please let us know if you need childcare by September 3rd.



KELSEY ROSS
Director of
Youth Ministries

A Warm *Welcome to Wesley!*

SPRC is thrilled to announce that we have filled the position opening for our Director of Youth Ministries. We welcome Kelsey Ross to the Wesley staff, and invite you to learn a bit more about her below. Be sure to congratulate her and introduce yourself when you see her smiling face in the hallway. *Welcome Kelsey!*

"My name is Kelsey Ross and I have been serving the IGRC in youth ministry for the last 9 years. I come from the southern tip of Illinois in Alton, across the river from St. Louis where I have most recently served as a special education teacher for a low-income private christian school in the city. I have a long history of working with churches to foster growth, develop relationships and encourage spiritual growth with teenagers since I graduated college in 2014. I have just sent 6 of my former students to start a new journey in colleges across the state and I am so excited to embark on this new journey with Wesley UMC!"

Kelsey Ross, Director of Youth Ministries

ANCHORED

A WESLEY MINISTRY FOR TWENTY AND THIRTY SOMETHINGS

ANCHORED is a Wesley ministry for 'twenty and thirty somethings', a group formed for service, fun and fellowship. Don't be shy - join us as we plan for the coming year at our first meeting of the fall season on Wednesday, September 4, at 7:00 pm at Wesley West. It is our mission to find ways to connect with each other, our church family, and the community around us. Bring a friend! ALL are welcome at Wesley!



WESLEY DISTRIBUTION MINISTRY *Ministry Making a Difference*

Written by Karen Daudelin

We have been quite busy this summer distributing our paper products AND helping our friends at the Tinervin Foundation distribute food boxes to our families. The food boxes have been an important addition to our monthly distribution. However, it has taken extra hands to assist our guests with all they now have to carry. We are so grateful for the extra volunteers who have turned out to lend a helping hand. We are now averaging 42 volunteers each month! In fact, since we started this program in January 2018, we have had over 200 individuals who have volunteered! It's amazing what Wesley continues to do to reach those in our community who have so little. Many volunteers come each month, some bring visiting friends and family from out-of-town, some bring kids and grandkids, ALL are welcome and have found JOY in serving! Have you volunteered at one of our events yet?

One of our newest volunteers shared as she rushed past me to help another guest, "I love this!" Several of our patrons have also shared that our Wesley crew is "the friendliest people we've met." So bring a smile and join us the 3rd Saturday of each month at Wesley West! *Why?*

- We serve over 200 families in just 2 hours each month (*we are busy!*)
 - Those 200 families represent over 1,000 family members!
 - Paper goods including diapers and feminine hygiene products are not available through the SNAP program.
- If the facts above don't convince you how important this ministry is, consider this fact: Over the first year of a baby's life they can use as much as 2,500 diapers and wipes (WOW)! What an important resource we are to families in need! Wesley is, indeed, a generous church! In August, we had diapers and wipes donated by participants in our Vacation

Bible School, we received a \$250 grant to purchase diaper wipes through the Thrivent Program, and our congregation continues to fill the WDM box with paper products each month. *Thank you for your donations, service, and prayers!*



NEEDS FOR SEPTEMBER:

- Baby Wipes
- Diapers (Size 1-6)

Please deliver items to the Bin across from the Garden Room. Our next event is on Saturday, September 21, from 9:30-11:30 am at Wesley West. To volunteer, please contact Karen Daudelin at 309.838.5723.

August Focus:

Preschool: Our Preschoolers will be learning about how to live and how to be a Christian.

Elementary: Elementary kids will be concentrating on TRUST with great stories from Genesis.

For more information please call 309.827.8046 or email Kathi Pritts at kpitts@wesley-umc.com.



SEPTEMBER Adult Education at Wesley



Sundays from 10:15-11:00 am
"FACING OUR GIANTS" by Max Lucado
In the Lounge



Sundays from 10:15-11:00 am
"BOOK OF REVELATION"
In the Conference Room with Barb Phend

Disciple FAST-TRACK: —The New Testament—

Do you ever wish you knew the Bible a little bit better? Wonder whether there's anything in these ancient stories that actually applies to you? Disciple Fast-Track is a fantastic opportunity to get to know the stories of the Bible better, and to discover what this amazing collection of writings has to say about following Jesus as a disciple. This fall we are studying the New Testament together, and it's going to be great! The study will be 13 weeks, from Matthew through Revelation, and ending with an exploration of spiritual gifts.

Participants should expect to set aside 60-90 minutes a day for study and prayer, and block out Wednesday evenings at Wesley for a 90-minute class period. You'll get to know the context, the culture and the meaning of the gospels and letters for their original readers. And we'll help each other sort through what the scriptures tell us about becoming disciples of Jesus Christ.

You will need a study book (\$10) and a study bible.

Childcare is provided. For more information, contact Pastor Sara (sisbell@wesley-umc.com) or Kathi Pritts (kpitts@wesley-umc.com).



Healing Rides has had a wonderfully busy summer and will continue daily rides thru September 30. If you would like to pedal, donate, or know someone who might benefit from a ride, please contact Barbara Brown at healingrides@gmail.com or call 309.531.8768. Visit www.healingrides.com for more details.



ELEVEN members of Wesley attended Intergeneration Handbell Camp in Parkville MO this past July because of your generous support! We rang many hours each day during rehearsals and performances, in addition to celebrating together with devotions, a Christmas in July party, talent show and our closing concert. A great time was had by all! Thank you for your support of our fundraisers including our Mother's Day Bake Sale, a house clean up project and our yummy Breakfast with the Bells. Ringin' Praises! - Gail Welk

Power of Prayer

We invite you to take a moment to join us in prayer on Monday, September 16, from 4:30-6:00 pm in the Garden Room at Wesley. ALL are welcome to receive prayer, pray with others, or pray in silence. Stay as little or as long as you like! Please contact Pastor Justin Iverson at jiverson@wesley-umc.com for details.



LOADS OF *Love*

Join us for our next laundromat ministry event on Tuesday, September 24, from 4:30 to 8:00 pm at the Wash House. Each month, several volunteers serve with a smile as we share detergent and quarters to help our grateful neighbors complete this daily task. We have an ongoing need for donations so leave a few quarters in the tubes outside the Sanctuary, or mark your gift "Loads of Love" and drop it by the office or in the offering plate. To volunteer, please email Gary Thompson at garyt23@frontier.com.



September JUST ONE COLLECTION



Think Seats and Feet! This month we are seeking children's underwear, socks and sweatpants. New and gently used items (any kid sizes to fit ages 1 thru 12). We plan to distribute these items to needy families through social workers serving at our local schools. **THANK YOU** for your generous giving!



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The United Methodist Church

GEMS Growing Each Mom Spiritually.....

GEMS will meet in the Conference Room at 7 pm Monday, September 9, to work on snowmen for the UMW fundraiser. We will also meet Monday, September 23, in the Junior High Lounge to discuss our book, "The Forgiving Jar". Childcare is available for \$3 per child. For details contact lead Liz Tomera at ltomera@wesley-umc.com

HOPE CIRCLE.....

We are hosting a special speaker at our first meeting on Thursday, Sept 12, at 6:30 pm in the Lounge. Detective Brad Park from the Normal Police Department will share how to prevent being a victim of telephone fraud, computer fraud and other types of fraud. All women are invited. You will also be able to learn more about the United Methodist Women and the variety of ways you can participate. The UMW are a powerful outreach for women and children in the world and here at Wesley. For details, contact Robin Rinker 309.825.8469.

LOL Ladies Outreach and Lunch.....

The LOL ladies will not meet on the first Monday because of Labor Day. On September 16, our group is planning to assemble food boxes for the Wesley Paper Distribution. All ladies are invited to participate in our social activities and service projects. For more information, email Elaine at estokes65@gmail.com.

An authentic Mexican dinner will be served in Wesley Hall at 6:00 in the evening on Tuesday, September 24. The all homemade meal will be prepared by our UMW and Hispanic women from Western Avenue Community Center. Our Wesley kitchen will be buzzing for two days preparing tamales, chicken flautas, refried beans, rice, cactus salad, chips, pico de gallo, and tres leches cake! The food will not be spicy; however, the means to spice yours up will be available.

Plan to attend! Wesley Hall will be turned into a *sala de fiesta colorida* (a colorful party room)! Tickets will be available on Sundays between services in the Garden Room beginning September 9, and are only \$10! Net proceeds will be donated to Western Avenue for the use of supporting their programs for the elderly. A short program will follow with speakers from Western Avenue. **ALL are welcome! Únete a nosotros! Será divertido! Join us! It will be fun!**

Visit from our District Superintendent

September 29

Rev. Jim Barnett, Vermilion River District Superintendent (DS), will be joining us in worship on Sunday, September 29. He serves as a liaison between the local church and the Bishop's cabinet. DS's represent the character and the needs of a local congregation and the Conference Office. We are fortunate to have Rev. Barnett as our liaison. Jim is a faithful Christian, a loving leader, and a good friend - we know you'll like him! Please join us between services to welcome him, you'll be glad you did!

Holy Land

TRIP OPPORTUNITY

If you are interested in visiting the Holy Land, but weren't able to go with the group that went in March, please let us know! We already have some interest in our next trip, and we'd like to know to who else might like to join us!

Contact Pastor Justin for more details at 309.827.8046 or jiverson@wesley-umc.com



Money Matters

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Have you delayed such tasks as will preparation and estate planning? Do you wonder how to leave a legacy gift while still providing for your descendants, or wrestled with the legal terminology included in estate planning? Your attorney can help you create the documents needed for an effective legacy plan, including wills, a durable power of attorney, and an advance healthcare directive.

Last month I mentioned that Wesley UMC has been fortunate to receive several large estate gifts in the last few years. Such gifts have allowed

General fund receipts as of 7/31/19	\$809,381
General fund expenses as of 7/31/19	\$762,732
Surplus	\$46,649

us to purchase Wesley West and make several expensive improvements to church property without asking the congregation for additional capital. By planning now, you can assist future generations in the same way that past generations have helped us. While you will incur some expense in documenting your legacy planning, failure to plan can be very costly.
- Myrna Simpson

Wesley's Bright Beginnings

CARNIVAL

Join us for a CARNIVAL to kick-off the school year on Thursday, September 19 from 5-7 pm at Wesley! Bring the whole family to enjoy a FREE evening of crafts, games, face painting and a bounce house! Pre-orders for Avanti's sack dinner will be taken. Come join the fun!

If you know someone looking for a play based preschool for their little one, please contact Julie Loy, Director, for more details at 309.827.8046 or email wesleysbrightbeginnings@gmail.com.

www.wesleysbrightbeginnings.com



On the 2nd Saturday of each month, Wesley UMC partners with Habitat for Humanity to provide volunteers to pitch in and help out! ALL skill levels are welcome and leads will be present to provide guidance and instructions for each day's tasks. Don't miss this opportunity to share your talents or learn something new! The next build will begin on Saturday, September 14, from 8am-Noon at 1107 N. Morris Ave, Bloomington. Sign up online at www.wesleyumc.habitatmclean.volunteerhub.com or contact Addie Moy for details at addie.moy@gmail.com.

Bring closed toed shoes and a smile!



Prayers of Comfort

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Wesley member Douglas Hovenden who passed away on July 9, 2019.



Hunger Walk in Memory of Reverend Keith Ferguson



We invite Wesley members and friends to celebrate the life of the late Reverend Keith Ferguson and to honor his generous spirit and passion for caring for others with a FUN and FREE family-friendly event that everyone can enjoy!

Activities include:

- bike ride (15 mi.)
- walk (3 mi.),
- face painting by Miss Kathi, games, sports and splash park fun!
- FREE treats from Carl's Ice Cream
- Donnie B's Popcorn
- Healing Rides will be there to give those who need it a lift so everyone can participate!

We are in need of volunteers to keep this event running smoothly, if you can help, please contact Steve Brown at shadowbrown1956@gmail.com or call 309.826.6803. Keep your eye out for more details about this fun event!

Sunday, September 22
from 2-4:30 pm
Tipton Park North Shelter
(in Bloomington off College Ave)

ALL proceeds support
CROP WALK FOR HUNGER

Missions Bake Sale

to support the Hunger Walk in
Memory of Reverend Keith Ferguson

Saturday, September 28
from 7:30 am - Noon
Bloomington Farmers' Market

Calling all volunteer bakers to donate baked goods for the sale! Please bring your goods to the main floor kitchen at the church by NOON on Sept 27th.

Please include a list of ingredients with your items (especially nuts)!

POSITION Opening



Wesley UMC is seeking a Pastor of Visitation for immediate hire. Visit our website at www.wesley-umc.com for more details and a full job description. Contact Pastor Sara Isbell at sisbell@wesley-umc.com if you or someone you know might be interested. Come and join the warm and welcoming staff at Wesley!

Investing IN A Bright Future IN ZIMBABWE.....

Photo Credit: Sandi Hinrichs

This past May, Wesley members Sandi Hinrichs and Keith Smith traveled to the Fairfield Children's Home in Mutare, Zimbabwe, to offer much needed aid. Because of generous donations from our Wesley congregation, and funds raised by other mission volunteers, they presented \$2350 to the administrator, Ceceillia Thobani. These funds provided 54 new school uniforms, school supplies, a year's supply of laundry soap, mealy meal (corn meal product), powdered milk, rice, flour, frozen fish, and maize. An additional \$3750 was deposited in the Fairfield Children's Home bank account to be used in the future at their discretion. The team was also able to stay at Africa University and meet with several grateful students who have benefited from the scholarships our congregation has supported. While there, the mission team was also able to lend a hand in the construction of a house, the first of twenty, that will soon be home to one of the many farm workers and their families who live at the university and provide much of the food served to students and faculty.

Sandi's reflections: *"I saw and experienced God's presence throughout our mission journey in Zimbabwe. He was there at Africa University, in the many students who shared their desire to return to their home countries and give back after receiving their degrees, in the farm workers who worshipped together before going to work, in the missionaries, Larry and Jane Kies, who poured love and care into the students they interacted with, and in the students and employees on campus who were warm and pleasant in all their interactions with us. I experienced God's presence in the young children at the Fairfield Children's Home who were hungry for attention, in the older children who watched over the little ones, in the house mothers who treated those in their care as if they were their own children, and in the administrator who worked tirelessly to provide care and safety for all who stayed at the facility. I saw God in the parishioners at the local church who welcomed our team to their worship service and explained what was being sung and said in the Shona language, in our tour guide/driver who joined in our prayers and devotions, in each of the mission volunteers as they supported each other and reached out to others around them, and in the incredible beauty of the wildlife and landscapes around us. Since the experience in Zimbabwe, I continue to see and feel God's presence here at home and am inspired to encourage others to look for Him in the people and world around them and to participate in future mission projects."*



Keith's reflections: *"For me personally, this was an opportunity to serve in a part of the world I have always wanted to visit. I feel truly blessed to be able to see the beautiful country of Zimbabwe, to meet so many wonderful people, and to participate in a project that changes lives is a gift from God. I felt my faith grow everyday in Africa in so many ways, and I will forever be grateful for the members of our team. As someone on the team said, God brings the right people together at the right time. And I am so thankful God chose me."*

We applaud our beloved Wesley members, Sandi and Keith, and our entire congregation for their generous support of this mission, as we spread God's love throughout the world.

Wesley United Methodist Church

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After Hours Emergency Contacts:

Reverend Sara L. Isbell 217.299.4870

Reverend Justin Iverson 701.809.1203

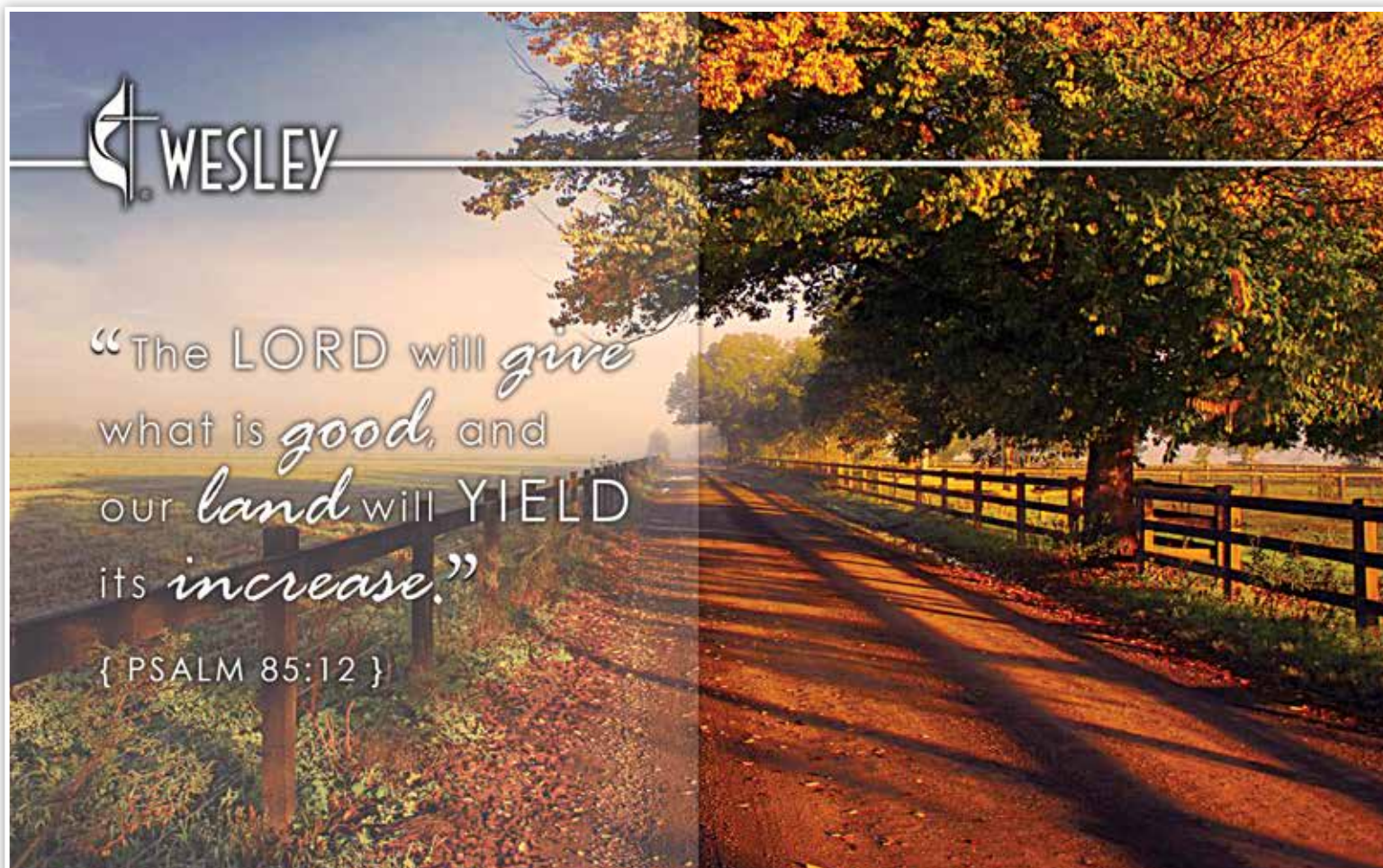
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"The LORD will *give*
what is *good*, and
our *land* will YIELD
its *increase*."

{ PSALM 85:12 }