

LENT FORTY DAYS OF PREPARATION FOR *Easter*

March 1 will be the first Sunday of Lent.

What is Lent all about?

The word "Lent" comes from the Old English, "lencten," which refers to the way the days "lengthen" in the springtime. It is no coincidence that Lent begins in winter and ends in spring as Easter bursts forth in living color. All creation bears witness to the power of resurrection, every single year. But before there can be a resurrection, we have to come to terms with death.

Lent is a time of recognizing our own mortality and sinful human nature. It is a time for prayer and repentance, and offering up to God the faults and failures that so easily hold us hostage to sin. Many Christians "give things up" for Lent – normally the temptations that come along with our natural human weakness: foods, drinks and bad habits that we know do not bring us closer to God.

Other Christians "take things on" for Lent – making a point to pray more regularly, read scripture more thoughtfully, serve more freely, give more generously, share more openly – in other words, the very spiritual exercises we've been practicing during "The Walk."

We would encourage you to continue exercising this Lenten season, and to make these five spiritual practices your Lenten discipline as you prepare yourself for Easter.

Why do we need to prepare for Easter? Because if we aren't prepared, we might miss it. If we haven't emptied ourselves of our own stuff, we will be too full to hunger for the Lord's Supper. If we haven't made space in our lives to walk with him, we may be too busy to answer when he knocks on our heart's door.

If we haven't thought about what it means to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow him – we may miss the point of his sacrifice altogether, and show up Easter morning wondering what all the fuss is about.

Don't miss the best gift you'll ever be given. Start off the Lenten journey with your Wesley family, and let's walk to the cross together.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Holy Week SERVICE SCHEDULE:

HOLY WEDNESDAY APRIL 8
6:30-7:30 pm service in the Sanctuary
with Holy Communion

HOLY THURSDAY APRIL 9
6:30-7:30 pm in the CHAPEL
Informal Prayer and Communion

GOOD FRIDAY APRIL 10
12-1 pm Community Service
in the Sanctuary
6:30-7:30 pm Youth Led Service
in the Sanctuary

Easter Sunday **APRIL 12**
9 AM Traditional Service
11:15 AM Contemporary Service

CALENDAR

MARCH.....

- 1 Faithful & Inclusive
2-3 pm in the Lounge
- 2 Ladies Outreach & Lunch
11:30 am lunch at Tony's
- 4 Spoiler Alert Movie #1
6-8:30 pm in the Lounge
- 8 Faithful & Inclusive
2-3 pm in the Lounge
- 9 GEMS Meeting
7:00 pm Jr High Lounge
- 10 Taco Tuesday Trivia Event for
Rummale Sale Coordinators
6-8 pm in Wesley Hall
- 11 Spoiler Alert Movie #2
6-8:30 pm in the Lounge
- 12 Hope Circle Fellowship
6:00 pm in the Lounge
- 15 Faithful & Inclusive
2-3 pm in the Lounge
- 16 Ladies Outreach & Lunch
11:30 am Midwest Food Bank
- 16 Power of Prayer
4:30-6:30 pm at Wesley West
- 18 Spoiler Alert Movie #3
6-8:30 pm in the Lounge
- 21 Wesley Distribution Event
9:30-11:30 am at Wesley West
- 22 Faithful & Inclusive
2-3 pm in the Lounge
- 23 GEMS Mom's Night Out
- 24 Loads of Love Laundromat Ministry
4:30-8 pm at the Wash House
- 25 Spoiler Alert Movie #4
6-8:30 pm in the Lounge
- 29 Faithful & Inclusive
2-3 pm in the Lounge

APRIL.....

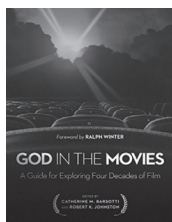
- 1 Spoiler Alert Movie #5
6-8:30 pm in the Lounge
- 4 WBB Breakfast with the Bunny
9-11:30 am in Wesley Hall
- 5 Faithful & Inclusive
2-3 pm in the Lounge
- 8 **HOLY WEDNESDAY**
6:30-7:30 pm Service
- 9 **HOLY THURSDAY**
6:30-7:30 Service in the Chapel
- 10 **GOOD FRIDAY**
12-1pm Community Service Wesley
6:30-7:30 pm Youth Led Service
- 12 **EASTER SUNDAY**
9:00 am Traditional Service
11:15 am Contemporary Service
EASTER JAM in Wesley Hall
- 18 Wesley Distribution Event
9:30-11:30 am at Wesley West
- 20 Power of Prayer
4:30-6:30 pm at Wesley West
- 28 Loads of Love Laundromat Ministry
4:30-8 pm at the Wash House



A Note From from Pastor Justin

God in the Movies March 1st is the first Sunday in Lent this year. The season of Lent is a time of preparation and reflection before Easter. It emphasizes personal transformation, and often encourages believers to "give up" a vice or bad habit, or "take on" a new spiritual practice, so as to discover God in a new way. So, in the spirit of "taking on" something new, Pastor Sara and I would like to invite you to the movies. But, there's a catch - we want you to bring a friend or two with you.

There are so many great reasons to go to movies. They're entertaining. They're relaxing. And that buttery popcorn (come on)! But frankly, the best part about going to the movies is going with friends. Actually, many of life's best moments happen when we spend time with others. That's why on Sunday mornings this Lent, Pastor Sara and I will share a sermon series that we're calling, *Spoiler Alerts*. It is our hope that through the six movies we're featuring in the series, we'll catch a glimpse of what it means to welcome and include others, as well as to invite others into Christian fellowship. Also, don't miss Wednesday evenings during Lent, when we'll gather together at 6pm in the Lounge to watch each film in its entirety, followed by a brief discussion about the spiritual content in each. If you're unable to join us on Wednesday evenings, but still want to view the films, you're invited to host a viewing party at your house. Welcome some friends over, share a meal together, and use the free study guide (available for pick up at the Welcome Desk) to discuss the central message of each film.



Of course, it wouldn't be Lent if I didn't have a book to recommend to you. So, in the spirit of our movie theme, I invite you to pick up a copy of *God in the Movies: A Guide for Exploring Four Decades of Film*. This book is a collection of writings on forty popular, secular movies that span the years since 1980. The book's contributors are various members of the Reel Spirituality Institute at Fuller Theological Seminary. Now, this year's Lenten "devotional" isn't one in the traditional sense of the word. I chose it as an alternative to a more traditional resource, because I felt it provided an opportunity for us to explore our faith by watching familiar titles. However, I know that not all of the films in this book are suitable for all audiences. So, I encourage you to look up movie ratings and plot synopses before viewing any movie, especially if you'll be accompanied by younger viewers. I know that none of the movies in this book are perfect, nor are the people who created them. But I also know that some of the best stories of God's redemption begin with fairly broken characters. Sometimes we see glimpses of God where we least expect. Books are available for \$10 at the Welcome Desk.

Pastor Sara and I hope you'll join us for Sunday worship and movie nights on Wednesdays this Lent. We hope you'll bring a friend or two, too!

See you at the movies,
Pastor Justin

SURGE

This fall, Surge has committed themselves to the prayer of Ubuntu: "I am who I am and you are who you are because of who we are together". As we are getting to know our new group identity, we are also thanking God for who He has made us to be and remembering that as Christians, we are a family and we're in this together. - Kelsey Ross, Director of Youth Ministries



Special Thanks: SURGE would like to thank those who attended our Pancake Breakfast in February. Your support will help send our senior high students to Myrtle Beach for a mission trip this summer. Thanks also for attending services on YOUTH SUNDAY! We hope you enjoyed the service!

SUMMER CAMP 2020: ALL current students are invited to participate in conference camping this summer! ALL Junior and Senior High students are invited to attend from June 21-26 at Little Grassy. Look for more details about fundraising for this event so we can make it possible for everyone to enjoy this experience! Come join the fun!

Wesley DISTRIBUTION MINISTRY

Written by Karen Daudelin

If you look, glimpses of LOVE are everywhere at our WDM events!

HEAVY LOAD: A garbage bag to carry away full of paper products and food.

PAPER PRODUCTS: Diapers, diaper wipes, facial tissue, paper towels, feminine hygiene items, etc. that are given by Wesley members for others who have little.

WITH JOY: Handing out paper products alongside a smiling small child.

IN SERVICE: Being surprised by the JOY that serving brings!

SMALL CHILD: A little one holding onto a mother's or father's hand who enjoys a sucker and wants to help carry a heavy load.

VISITORS IN NEED: Students at ISU, WIU & Heartland College who have come from Bangladesh, the Middle East, Chicago, Bloomington-Normal, Central America, Mexico, and our neighborhood benefit from our event.

OUR NEIGHBORS: Those in our community who live in downtown Bloomington in apartments, in homes and in extended family situations, that do not have easy access to supplies and food.

I am amazed each month as we attract more and more volunteers who are not from Wesley and choose to serve because they "love it"! We welcome each and every volunteer, big or small. We strive to send everyone away with something they need, like the expectant mother who came hoping to get some diapers before her child is born. We had them for her! We took on a huge challenge when we started WDM and people said it would be impossible. But with God, all things are possible! We have now served over 1500 families! We provide a vital service to our community, one that many depend on each month, and with your continued support we hope to continue to serve for a very long time! Thank you! To volunteer, contact Karen Daudelin, kpdaudelin@frontier.com or 309.838.5723.

NEEDS FOR MARCH:

Baby Wipes • Diapers (Sizes 3-6)
Pull-Ups • Tampons • Tissues
Adult Depends

NEXT EVENT:

Saturday, MARCH 21,
9:30-11:30 am at Wesley West.



Welcome to Wesley! On Sunday, February 16, we welcomed several new members to our Wesley family! If you see the smiling faces below in the hallways or in your pew, be sure to introduce yourself and say HELLO!



Walt & Maggie
Burton



Tony and Kellie
Gualazzi



Michael
Hamon



Kelsey
Ross



Carolyn
Weiss

March Focus:

ALL AGES will be learning about FOLLOWING JESUS and FORGIVENESS! For more details, contact Kathi Pritts, Director of Christian Education, at 309.817.8046 or email kpitts@wesley-umc.com

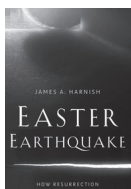


MARCH Adult Education at Wesley



Sundays from 10:15-11:00 am
"BOOK OF REVELATION"

In the Conference Room with Barb Phend



Sundays from 10:15-11:00 am
"EASTER EARTHQUAKE" by James Harnish

In the Lounge with Kathi Pritts and Judy Bute



Wednesdays from 6:00-7:00 pm
"UNASHAMED" by Christine Caine

In the Garden Room with Pam Simonovich

LENTEN SPOILER ALERTS: Join us on **WEDNESDAYS** a mid week movie and discussion with Pastor Justin in the Lounge (see pg. 7 for details).

FAITHFUL AND INCLUSIVE: See the article to the right → for more details!

Snow Removal Ministry



Help keep our sidewalks and parking lots safe this winter by joining our Snow Removal Team! This hard working group of volunteers ensures the safety of our Wesley staff and members. If you can help and would like more details, contact Dave Koth at 309.663.6770 or email davekoth@comcast.net to sign up.

Snow Days Reminder



In the event of inclement weather, Wesley follows the guidelines of School District 87 for closings, cancellations and delays. For the most recent updates, please visit our facebook page @wesleyumcbloomington or check the WJBC CANCELLATIONS page online at www.wjbc.com/wjbc-cancellations/.



Rummage Sale Reminder

Call for Donations! Start Saving!

As you begin your spring cleaning in the coming months, please remember our Rummage Sale on May 2, 2020! We will be collecting toys, clothes, housewares, furniture, jewelry, and tools! Keep your eye out for upcoming drop-off details and dates! THANK YOU!

Save the Date
FOR THE WESLEY
RUMMAGE
→ SALE ←
INTERSTATE CENTER
SATURDAY
MAY 2, 2020

POWER of Prayer

We invite you to take a moment to join us in prayer on **Monday, March 16, from 4:30-6 pm at Wesley West** (across from the church). ALL are welcome to receive prayer, pray with others, or pray in silence. Stay as little or as long as you like! Please call the office for more details at 309.827.8046. Come join us!



The Bells of Wesley, our adult & college handbell choir, has openings for new members! Ringing experience is not required as we will help you learn all you need to know. The ability to read music is helpful but we can teach you that as well. Rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings from 7 - 8:30 pm and we ring in worship once a month. Experienced substitutes are also needed.

Feel free to visit us and see why we have so much fun worshiping God with our hands and our hearts.

For more information contact director Gail Welk. 309-825-4402 or welkg2355@comcast.net.

Come join the fun!

Prayers of Comfort

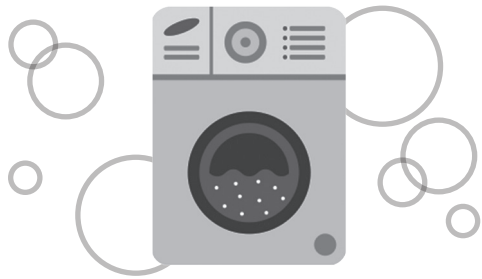
Prayers of comfort for the family and friends of the following who have recently passed away:

Martha Carlton - February 19, 2020
Richard Jumper - February 21, 2020

TACO TUESDAY Trivia



We invite ALL RUMMAGE SALE AREA COORDINATORS to join us for tacos and trivia on Tuesday, March 10, from 6-8 pm in Wesley Hall!



LOADS OF *Love*

Join us to share a smile (and a few quarters) on **Tuesday, March 24, from 4:30 to 8:00 pm at the Wash House** (609 N. Clinton Street, Bloomington).

Leave your donation in the tubes outside the Sanctuary, or mark your gift "Loads of Love" and drop it in the offering plate or by the office.

To volunteer, contact Gary Thompson at garyt23@frontier.com. Thanks to all those who have volunteered. **ALL are welcome! Help us share the load!**



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The United Methodist Church

GEMS Growing Each Mom Spiritually.....

GEMS will meet March 9th at 7:00 pm in the Junior High Lounge to continue our study of "The Walk" by Adam Hamilton. Childcare is available for \$3/child. We will also have Moms Night Out on March 23rd. More details to come! Contact Liz Tomera with questions at ltomera@wesley-umc.com or call 847.224.1194.

HOPE CIRCLE.....

Hope Circle will meet on Thursday, March 12th. This month our circle will begin in the Church Lounge at 6:00 pm with refreshments, devotion, prayers and fellowship. Then we will enjoy a program hosted by the Beta Iota Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma on the Malawi Well Project, whose purpose is to provide clean water to the people of Malawi. Please contact Mary Ann Knudson to join our group at maryann.knudson@frontier.com. ALL women are welcome!

LOL Ladies Outreach and Lunch.....

Monday, March 2, we'll enjoy lunch at Tony's with Linda Smith hostessing. Monday, March 16 we'll serve at Midwest Food Bank with Mary Ann Knudson hostessing. Please RSVP to Nancy Erickson at nancye416@gmail.com! All are welcome to join us!

Faithful AND Inclusive The Bible, Sexuality, and the United Methodist Church Sundays during Lent: 2:00-3:00pm

What does the Bible say about homosexuality? How do we understand the ancient words of Scripture, in our modern time? What does it mean to be faithful to scripture and fully inclusive of all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, at the same time? Join us on Sunday afternoons during Lent (March 1 – April 5) for a discussion of these questions and many more.

ABOUT THE STUDY:

"Faithful and Inclusive allows you to gain an understanding of how United Methodists can be both obedient to God's Word and fully welcoming to LGBTQ persons in the church. This six-session resource for Sunday schools and small groups has been designed for participants to develop their own perspectives on the Bible's passages related to homosexuality.

"Reverend Rob Fuquay, pastor of one of the largest United Methodist congregations in the country, creates a safe space to navigate through this thorny issue, relying on the biblical-interpretation approach of Methodism's founder, John Wesley. Each video session also features the faith journeys of members of the LGBTQ community and their families."

The six 50-minute video sessions cover these subjects:

- 1: How United Methodists Interpret Scripture
(March 1)
- 2: Old Testament Passages
(March 8)
- 3: The Influence of Culture on How We Read the Bible
(March 15)
- 4: New Testament Passages
(March 22)
- 5: The Jesus Ethic: What Did Christ Say?
(March 29)
- 6: Where Does the United Methodist Church Go From Here?
(April 5)

For more information, contact Pastor Sara (sisbell@wesley-umc.com) or Pastor Justin (jiverson@wesley-umc.com) anytime.

Registration is not necessary, but childcare is available only by advance request by calling 309.827.8046.

WESLEY'S Bright BEGINNINGS



Breakfast WITH THE BUNNY! SATURDAY, APRIL 4 FROM 9-11:30 AM IN WESLEY HALL

ALL ARE WELCOME to enjoy breakfast with the bunny, face painting and spring crafts at a FUN-filled event sponsored by Wesley's Bright Beginnings Preschool for only \$5 per entry! Space is limited, RSVP by March 19 to Julie Loy at 309.827.8046 or email wesleysbrightbeginnings@gmail.com.

Special Thanks

The Newhall family would like to thank their Wesley friends for their support and prayers during the recent passing of Barbara.

Now Hiring!

Wesley is seeking qualified candidates to fill part time opportunities in the following areas:

Chancel Choir Director
Organist
Facilities Manager

For details about these positions and to apply, visit www.wesley-umc.com, contact Myma Simpson at 309.827.8046 or email msimpson@wesley-umc.com.

Congratulations

to Matthew Lizakowski
for recently completing
his Eagle Scout requirements.



He becomes our 7th scout to achieve the rank of Eagle since our recharter with Wesley church in 2008! BRAVO!

Special Thanks to those who attended our annual spaghetti dinner as well as those who celebrated Scout Sunday with us! Thank you for your support!

March

JUST ONE COLLECTION

We are seeking NEW TWIN SIZE SHEET SETS for our March Just One Collection. They will be donated to local children who do not have a bed to sleep in and distributed through The Build-A-Bed project as part of the West Bloomington Revitalization Project. Please note, they cannot accept used items. Thank you!

MUNCHIES FOR THE MILITARY:

Our April Just One will be to support our Wesley "Munchies for the Military" project. We are seeking non-perishable snacks and monetary donations for postage to mail care packages to those serving overseas! If you know someone who might like a care package, please send their name and address to Molly McCue at mmccue@wesley-umc.com.

Creating a Legacy of Generosity

by Pastor Sara Isbell

You really have created a legacy of generosity here at Wesley Church, and we thank you. Your financial faith commitments and your prayer commitments for 2020 have been extraordinarily generous and encouraging, and set the pace for our missions and ministry in the coming year.

As you may have read in the January newsletter, this congregation committed to pray for Wesley's growth, inclusion of all people, and special welcome to young people in the coming year. I'm pretty excited about that. And you committed your financial support, to the tune of \$1,020,399 (One million, twenty thousand, three hundred ninety-nine). That's absolutely amazing. Thank you, Wesley Church. Thank you for your faith, hope and love, and your willingness to invest in Wesley's witness to our children, our community, and our world.

Now, we believe in full transparency, and so I also need to tell you that even the extraordinary generosity of \$1M fell about \$200,000 short of what we had planned for and what our leaders had asked for. For many weeks the Finance Committee worked to reduce that deficit: trimming back budget requests where we could, and seeking out options for potential flexibility—for example, because of your generosity we ended 2019 with a \$12,000 surplus. That's money we can carry into this year. We received an undesignated estate gift, a legacy of generosity someone left for us—and we've included some of that fund in this year's balance.

After making as many adjustments as we feel we can, we still show some deficit in our budget planning—about \$80,000, or 6% of the budget. But to be honest, a 94%-funded budget is no small blessing, and your Finance Committee and Administrative Council have both voted unanimously to step out in faith and approve that balance, to encourage faithful stewardship, to pray for God's continued abundance, and to bring you an updated report in June, to let you know how it's going.

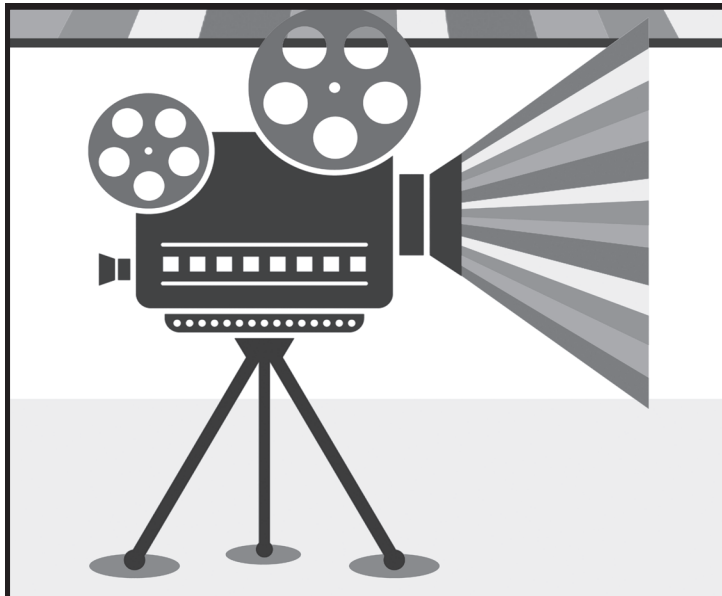
If you have not yet had a chance to make your commitment, we hope you will do so; the Legacy of Generosity brochures are available at the Welcome Center and entrances to the church. If you have made a commitment, we sincerely thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We wouldn't be where we are today without you. Thanks so much, Wesley Church, for all you do to show and share the love of God in so many ways. Together we are a wonderful witness to amazing grace!



Wesley members, friends and families – it's that time of year again! It's time for the Annual Wesley Rummage Sale, set for Saturday, May 2, from 8am-2pm at the Interstate Center. All proceeds from the Rummage Sale support the 2020 Choir Tour, Youth Mission Trips, and the United Methodist Women mission projects. The Wesley Rummage Sale is our biggest fundraiser of the year, and it takes many hands to make it a success! You can help by donating

SATURDAY, MAY 2 from 8am-2pm at The Interstate Center

unwanted items, volunteering your time at the sale, baking items to sell, picking up and delivering donations, pricing items or helping with clean-up after the sale. Another important way to help is by spreading the word to your family, friends and neighbors about how great our sale is and the wonderful work Wesley UMC does for our both our church and surrounding community. Keep your eye out for details about how YOU can help! For questions, contact our Rummage Sale Chair, Phyllis Pederson, at figgip@aol.com or call 309.827.8046. **THANK YOU for your time and talents to help make our event a HUGE success!**



SPOILER ALERTS **SERMON SERIES**

ALSO, JOIN US FOR A MIDWEEK MOVIE FROM 6-8:30 PM IN THE LOUNGE ON WEDNESDAYS IN MARCH - OR HOST A SHOWING AND DISCUSSION IN YOUR OWN HOME! YOU CAN FIND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AT THE WELCOME CENTER AND THE LIST OF MOVIES IN THE LOBBY!

To learn more about the movies on the left please contact Pastor Justin at jiverson@wesley-umc.com or visit our website www.wesley-umc.com for details. We hope you'll join us, and bring a friend! ALL ARE WELCOME AT WESLEY!

2020 LENTEN OFFERING *Give as you can!*

Make an impact in the lives of people around the world by giving to the Missions Lenten Offering. TO GIVE, use the special envelopes in your pew on Sunday mornings, or drop your gift by the Welcome Center or at the office. Your gift supports the following agencies:

AFRICA UNIVERSITY CENTRAL CONFERENCE PASTOR PENSION FUND: Provides long-term retirement security for faithful UMC servants in the conferences outside of the United States that need it.

EL PORVENIR - CLEAN WATER FOR NICARAGUA: Works side-by-side with rural families and schools in Nicaragua to construct wells, latrines, village washing facilities, school hand-washing stations as well as support reforestation projects.

MID-WEST MISSION DISTRIBUTION: Shows God's Love through the distribution of education, health and disaster relief supplies meeting basic human needs around the world and around the corner.

OUR CONFERENCE OUR KIDS (OCOK) ENDOWMENT: Will support and enhance the Spiritual Life programs of the five children and family ministries in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference.

UNITED METHODIST COMMITTEE ON RELIEF (UMCOR): Exists to assist United Methodists and churches to become involved globally in direct ministry to persons in need through programs of relief, rehabilitation, and service.

UM GANTA HOSPITAL – LIBERIA: Provides affordable hospital services to a public whose economic situation does not allow them to pay realistic costs for medical services.

UM KISSY CLINIC – SIERRA LEONE: Provides integrated community programs for maternal and child health to accelerate the reduction of maternal and child health morbidity and mortality.

Wesley United Methodist Church

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website: www.wesley-umc.com

After Hours Emergency Contacts:

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Reverend Justin Iverson 701.809.1203

If you would like to go paperless and prefer to receive this issue in your inbox, please email connect@wesley-umc.com.



WESLEY

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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“ALL go to *one place*;
ALL are from the *dust*, and
ALL turn to *dust again*.”

{ ECCLESIASTES 3:20 }



WESLEY