

# Wesley Witness

Hey Wesley,

It is February, which means it's Black History month!

You all know I am big on us learning our church history. A mentor once told me. "If we do not know our history, then we will repeat it, even if in slightly different ways." So, I thought I would take a minute to share some of the Methodist Church's history of racism so that we might not walk in ignorance, but forward with Christ instead.

From the very beginning the Methodist Church was against slavery. John Wesley, while in England, joined with William Wilberforce to protest slavery in the American Colonies. At the Christmas Conference of 1784 when the Methodist Episcopal Church was founded, it was written into our by-laws that you could not be a Methodist and participate in enslaving others. Unfortunately, this proud heritage was short-lived. As Methodism moved from a church made of working-class folks to include plantation owners without repentance, we were corrupted.

By the early 1800s racism and slavery had gotten so bad that even a Methodist bishop (James Osgood Andrews) enslaved two women! After decades of mediocrity, Methodist abolitionists had had enough. At General Conference of 1844, Andrews was given the choice to free the women or surrender the office of bishop - enslaving people prevented him from bearing witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Later that year, the Methodist Episcopal Church South split off from the Methodist Episcopal Church, a major church schism after only 60 years. Our roots in abolition were too radical for some to live with.

Unfortunately, 95 years later at the General Conference of 1939, the churches rejoined, but not through repentance. The Methodist Episcopal Church South declared they would only rejoin under the condition that churches be segregated. Even more unfortunate, the long-standing original Methodist Episcopal Church caved to their condition. Thus, the Central Jurisdiction was created. In most of the history of our beloved church, jurisdictions and annual conferences have been divided by location. After all, those who are living close together should be serving together. However, the Central Jurisdiction was not split by location but by

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# Breaking News



**PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY**—Come join Pastor Ben *in person* in the conference room or via ZOOM from noon to 1:00 PM on Tuesdays. All are welcome and we would love to have you join us as we study *Revelation*. Contact the church office if you need a link for ZOOM.



## *Wesley United Methodist Church*

*Mission Statement*

*Celebrating God!*

*Growing in Faith!*

*Changing the World!*

*Pastor Benjamin Spangler*

826 NW 23rd Avenue  
Gainesville, FL  
32609

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We are on Facebook!!!

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Terri Manche  
secretary@wumc.cfoxmail.com

Witness Articles E-mail:  
Sharren Gibbs  
sharrenleegibbs2020@gmail.com  
Deadline for articles: 15th of each month

Website:  
[www.WesleyUMCon23.org](http://www.WesleyUMCon23.org)

## *Weekly Sunday Activities*

Worship @ 10:45AM  
(Sanctuary)



*Barbara Baldwin*

*Carolyn Clarke*

*Nancy Hardee*

*Rachelle Hines*

*Bonniesue Humphlett*

*Beth Loehr-Moody*

*Billy Moring*

*Joe Reichert*

*Beth Senn*

*Linda Smith*

*Linda Baldwin*

*Helen Goddard*

*Mary Harris*

*Betty Holder*

*Barb Loehr*

*Paula Mathis*

*Clydia Reichert*

*Margie Sapp*

*Dale Smith*

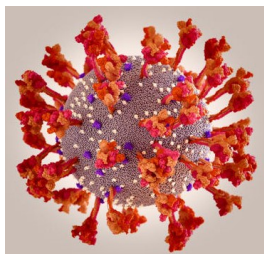
*Clarence Witt*



*Prayer Requests*

## **WELCOME, KRISTIAN JAMES!**

Kristian James, our new pianist, is 22-years-old and from Spring Hill, Florida. He recently graduated from the University of Florida with two bachelor's degrees in music performance and public relations. He has been playing piano for 12 years, and has played for other churches before. In his free time, he enjoys meeting up with his friends, riding his bike, and watching TV or playing video games. He is excited to get to know everybody here!



I went to the Alachua County COVID dashboard, but darned if I can decipher much. It DOES, however, look like we have started to turn the corner and go down in the number of cases. But this is not a time to let our guard down! We had previously decided that if our county moved to a high transmission rate, we would move back to wearing masks in all settings including small groups such as meetings and Bible study.

So until COVID cases settle back down further, we will follow the science and wear masks so we can continue to love our neighbors well. If you know any medical staff out there, find a way to show them some love and keep them in your prayers as hospitals across the country are once again overwhelmed.

In God's Grace,

*Pastor Ben and Sharren*



Worship Service—10:45AM

## WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

Wesley Wednesday suppers—5:30PM

*Most meetings are Wednesdays at 6:00 unless otherwise noted*

**WESLEY UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH**

826 Northwest 23rd Avenue  
Gainesville, Florida 32609  
352-372-2845

**Pastor Benjamin Spangler**

February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Noon Pastor's Class	2 6:00PM Missions Meeting	3 11:30AM Card Club 6:00PM Sisters in Faith	4	
6 	7 7:00PM Nightingales	8 Noon Pastor's Class	9 8:00AM Garden Workday 5:30PM WWS 6:00PM Care Team	10 11:30AM Card Club	11 11:30AM YAHs Valentine Luncheon @ Weseman's home RSVP by 2/5	
13	14 	15 10:00AM Morning Stars Noon Pastor's Class	16 6:00PM Worship Committee	17 11:30AM Card Club	18	
20	21 Office closed 	22 Noon Pastor's Class	23 8:00 Garden Workday 6:00PM Nominations Committee	24 11:30AM Card Club	25	
27	28					

love

hope

faith

*(Continued from page 1)*

race. White churches in the south were “concerned” they might be appointed a black pastor, and white pastors were “concerned” they might be appointed to A black church, so we wrote the segregation in our communities into the laws of our church. To add insult to injury, churches of the Central Jurisdiction that were composed of black Methodists were required to pay all of the same apportionments, with hardly any support in return.

This Jurisdiction of Racism would not be dissolved until the merger of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren in 1968, when the United Methodist Church as we know it was formed. Unfortunately, dissolving the Jurisdiction of Racism was only an afterthought. We can still see the effects of the Jurisdiction of Racism today, as most Methodist churches were built and founded before 1968. This lack of diversity is evident in our gatherings on Sunday mornings, as well as the buildings we worship in.

During the time of the Central Jurisdiction there was little money left or sent back to Black Methodist churches and so the new congregations that were formed did not get close to the same financial support to build their houses of worship. This can be seen today as you travel around the country and visit both white and black United Methodist churches, and bear witness to the differences in our sanctuaries. With so many of our congregation born in this era, it is no wonder Sunday morning is still referred to as the most segregated hour in America.

We the UMC now, who grew up in and have inherited this legacy, also have the responsibility to continue to create change. In view of the need of repentance for our past and the current state of our world, the Florida Conference of the Methodist Church has made anti-racism (or directly working against racism) one of our conference priorities that I am proud to support.

May we all live into the Peace of Christ, that it may be on earth as it is in heaven.

*Pastor Ben*

*Wesley UMC delivered to Metcalfe Elementary School 14 “Character Counts” bags—this includes the fancy bags, a cake mix, icing, a cake pan, and a toy in each bag. They are given out quarterly to the child in each class who demonstrates the best citizenship and learning progress during the rating period.*

*We also delivered 25 pounds of food items to the Bread of the Mighty Food Bank in advance of it being our Mission of the Month for February. Keep the goodies coming!*

*Cindy Holmes*





# MISSION OF THE MONTH

**Bread of the Mighty Food Bank**, celebrating 35 years of serving the community, is a private non-profit organization. They collect, sort, store and distribute donated food and basic essentials to 170+ non-profit agency partners such as food pantries, churches, homeless shelters, and other organizations who then distribute food in their communities to directly feed the hungry.

They have a five-county service area - Alachua, Dixie, Gilchrist, Lafayette, and Levy. They're a Partner Distribution Organization under Feeding America and part of the 12 food-bank networks of Feeding Florida.

Their 25,000 square foot warehouse has 2,600 square feet of cooler and freezer capacity. Thanks to their generous donors, they now have a fleet of ten trucks and vans and five drivers. They're on the road five days a week picking up donated food from generous retailers and wholesalers that in turn gets distributed back to the community.

In an effort to keep perishable and fresh items from sitting in their warehouse, their "Food on the Move" program was established, ensuring fresh and perishable items don't sit in the warehouse and quickly get into the hands of those in need.

For every \$1 donated, Bread of the Mighty Food Bank can provide up to 8 meals.

Please donate shelf-stable items. They LOVE to combine your donations to make a complete meal for a family. Pop Tops are wonderful for our families with young children and those families that do not have can openers.

Here are the most-needed food items:

Canned vegetables	Canned meats	Oatmeal and cereal
Canned beans	Canned soup and stews	Peanut butter
Canned/bottled juices	Canned fruit	Granola/breakfast bars

For more information, call (352) 336-0839. Monetary donations can be made online at [www.breadofthemighty.org](http://www.breadofthemighty.org)

Wesley UMW met after church Sunday, January 23 to elect officers for 2022. The installation of the officers will be this Sunday, January 30<sup>th</sup> during our Worship Service. Officers for this year are: President - Sherry Adams; Treasurer - Cindy Holmes; and Secretary - Sharren Gibbs.

Circle Leaders are: Morning Stars - Irma Hales; Nightingales - Joyce Welsh; and Sisters in Faith - Donna Weseman.

On Sunday January 30<sup>th</sup>, UMW will give out Special Mission Recognitions and Gift to Mission Cards in honor of individuals who have gone above and beyond in their hard work and faithful service during the year, an annual tradition at Wesley. A gift to Missions is made in the name of each of the honorees.



*United Methodist Women*



## YOUNG-AT-HEART SENIOR FELLOWSHIP

Hey, Sweetie, let's meet at the Valentine's luncheon at Donna and Gary Weseman's house for a great lunch on Friday, February 11th, at 11:30 AM. No need to bring anything—just your sweet self. Oh, and your appetite!

Please give Donna a ring-a-ding on the old telephone by Sunday, February 6th, to let her know you're coming. We don't want to run out of food!



### FROM THE KITCHEN COMMITTEE



Dear Wesley Family,

Although we have continued for many years to hold our monthly Wednesday night fellowship dinners, our numbers have decreased to such a point that it's not feasible to continue much longer. We have held them on Wednesdays so we could "piggyback" off of the meal prepared for the monthly DAR meeting, and this has worked well in the past.

Unfortunately, we have lost several members of the Kitchen Volunteers due to health problems, and the number of people attending the WW supper has decreased because of COVID and the fact that we are an aging congregation and many of us no longer drive at night. We need at least 25-30 attendees for this congregational fellowship activity to continue. In addition, if you do RSVP that you will be there and fail to show, you will still be responsible for paying the \$7 for your dinner. Donna has already purchased groceries based on your responses.

You can come early and get a take-home box, or let us know to put one in the fridge for you to pick up the next morning (9AM-1PM). If you go with the second option, please pay Terri for your meal.

Sadly, maybe we as a congregation may feel that it's time for monthly dinners to be discontinued. If so, please let us know! Please pray for guidance on this subject.

With all this being said, we will plan to hold a Wednesday fellowship dinner on February 9th at 5:30 PM. As usual, please call or e-mail the office to let us know if you are coming. We sure hope so!

The **BOOK OF REVELATION** is the final book of the New Testament and consequently is also the final book of the Christian Bible. Its title is derived from the first word of the "common" Greek text *apokalypsis*, meaning "unveiling" or "revelation." The Book of Revelation is the only apocalyptic book in the New Testament. It occupies a central place in Christian eschatology or the "end/goal of things."

The author names himself as "John" in the text, but his precise identity remains a point of academic debate. Modern theological scholars characterize the Book of Revelation's author as "John of Patmos." Most traditional sources date the book to the reign of the Roman emperor Domitian (AD 81–96), which evidence tends to confirm.

The book is primarily concerned with the apocalyptic genre of scripture which also includes the whole books of Daniel 7-12, Ezekiel 38-39, parts of Isaiah 24-27, as well as parts of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.

The obscure and extravagant imagery of Revelation has led to a wide variety of Christian interpretations including but not limited to historicist interpretations of Revelation as containing symbols mapped onto a broad view of history to predict the future; while preterist interpretations treat Revelation as mostly referring to the events of the Apostolic Age (1st century), or, at the latest, the fall of the Roman Empire. Futurists or dispensationalists, meanwhile, believe that Revelation describes future events that we might escape away from the created order. Idealist or symbolic interpretations consider that Revelation does not refer to actual people or events at all but is an allegory of the spiritual path and the ongoing struggle between good and evil. Lastly, the contemporary historical view looks to the context Revelation was written in, which names both current pain with a future hope in Christ's ultimate goals, while asking how it also applies to our lives in our context.

***Join Pastor Ben at noon on Tuesdays for a study of the Book of Revelation***

## **NEW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. David Allen has been in ministry for 25 years. He was ordained in 2010 as an Elder in Full Connection with the Florida Conference and has served at the local church level, launching Hope of Glory UM in St. Petersburg and serving as associate pastor at Trinity UMC in Gainesville. In 2013, he returned to his alma mater to serve as the first Dean of Chapel/Executive Chaplain at B-CU. Dr. Allen is married to Courtney and they share three children.



"Dr. Allen is a transformational leader who has served faithfully in local churches and on a university campus," said Bishop Carter. "He has been instrumental in a major Lilly Endowment grant that will strengthen the local church, and he has completed a doctorate in leadership. David has experience in the North Central District, and I am excited about the ministry he will give to the laity and clergy of that area."

*And a hearty Wesley Welcome to Dr. Allen!*





BLACK HISTORY MONTH • BLACK HISTORY MONTH • BLACK HISTORY MONTH •

## WHO ARE WE?

1. **Madam C.J. Walker** invented an innovative line of African American hair care products in 1905 that led to her distinction as one of America's first self-made millionaires. Her highly successful cosmetics company is still in business today.
2. **Thurgood Marshall** was an American lawyer and civil rights activist who served as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from October 1967 until October 1991. Marshall was the Court's first African-American justice.
3. **Harriet Tubman** was an American abolitionist and political activist. Born into slavery, Tubman escaped and subsequently made some 13 missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved people, including family and friends, using the network of antislavery activists and safe houses known as the Underground Railroad.
4. **Barack Hussein Obama II** is an American politician, lawyer, and author who served as the 44th president of the United States from 2009 to 2017. A member of the Democratic Party, Obama was the first African-American president of the United States.
5. **Sojourner Truth**, a Methodist, was an American abolitionist and women's rights activist. Truth was born into slavery in Swartekill, New York, but escaped with her infant daughter to freedom in 1826. After going to court to recover her son in 1828, she became the first black woman to win such a case against a white man.
6. **Booker Taliaferro Washington** was an American educator, author, orator, and adviser to several presidents of the United States. Between 1890 and 1915, Washington was the dominant leader in the African American community and of the contemporary black elite.
7. **Michelle LaVaughn Robinson Obama** is an American attorney and author who served as the first lady of the United States from 2009 to 2017. She was the first African-American woman to serve in this position.
8. **Frederick Douglass** was an African-American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and statesman. After escaping from slavery in Maryland, he became a national leader of the abolitionist movement in Massachusetts and New York.





## Committee Meetings

2/2	6:00PM	Missions Committee
2/9	6:00PM	Care Team
2/16	6:00PM	Worship Committee
2/23	6:00PM	Nominations Comm.



## February Birthdays

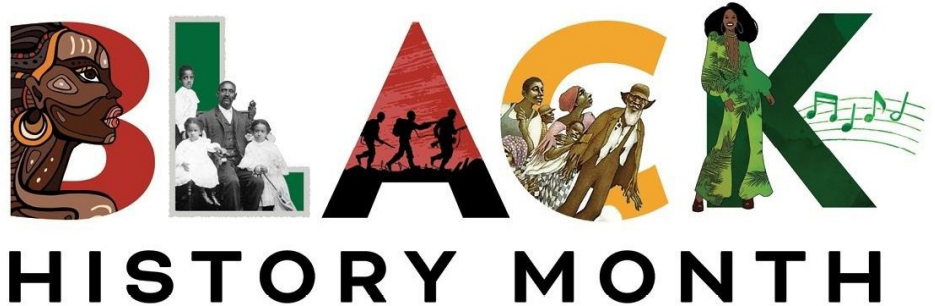
1 <sup>st</sup>	Jan Ripley
	Ashley Weseman
4 <sup>th</sup>	Clydia Reichert
20 <sup>th</sup>	Leslie Alday
24 <sup>th</sup>	Sandy Miller
25 <sup>th</sup>	Darryl Davis
	Pastor Ben Spangler
26 <sup>th</sup>	Rebecca Weseman
27 <sup>th</sup>	Donna Weseman
	Skip Manasco

## February Anniversaries

None



# Celebrate!



## FUN AND GAMES



Join the Canasta card club at Wesley United Methodist Church! Have fun and meet great people! Invite family and friends, the more the merrier!

When: Thursdays, 11:30 AM (except holidays)

Where: Wesley United Methodist Church  
826 Northwest 23rd Avenue  
Fellowship Hall

Call Cindy Holmes at 352-256-9485 for information.

We have wonderful members waiting to teach you Hand and Foot Canasta! **Please have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccination, as well as the booster!**

### Card Club Guidelines

- Bring a sack lunch and beverage if you wish.
- Please arrive on time if possible.
- Please help clean up after the games end.
- Please give us your email address and phone number in case of scheduling changes.

