

Wesley Witness



I probably say this a lot, but this is one of my favorite seasons in the church calendar. I think it is because of how my relationship to Lent has grown through the years.

When I was a child, Lent was simply a time to give something up. Mainly because I was *told* I was supposed to. This usually had to do with chocolate, some other candy, soda, or if I was really, really disciplined - screen time.

As I got a little older a mentor suggested that I try taking something on instead. After all, I had been treating lent more like a New Year's resolution than a spiritual discipline. So I tried to read my Bible once a day, but it was rather hit or miss - quite an improvement but still room for growth.

Then high school came around when a friend of mine and I read a book on fasting, and began to fast once a week as spiritual discipline. We would fast from sunup to sundown. At that point in my life fasting was all about stripping away the distraction to reveal what was on the inside. The things I really needed to work on (that is what we had read in the book on fasting at least.) I think it had some merit. I also think I was probably just HANGRY (hungry + angry) because I wasn't eating enough. Hahaha!

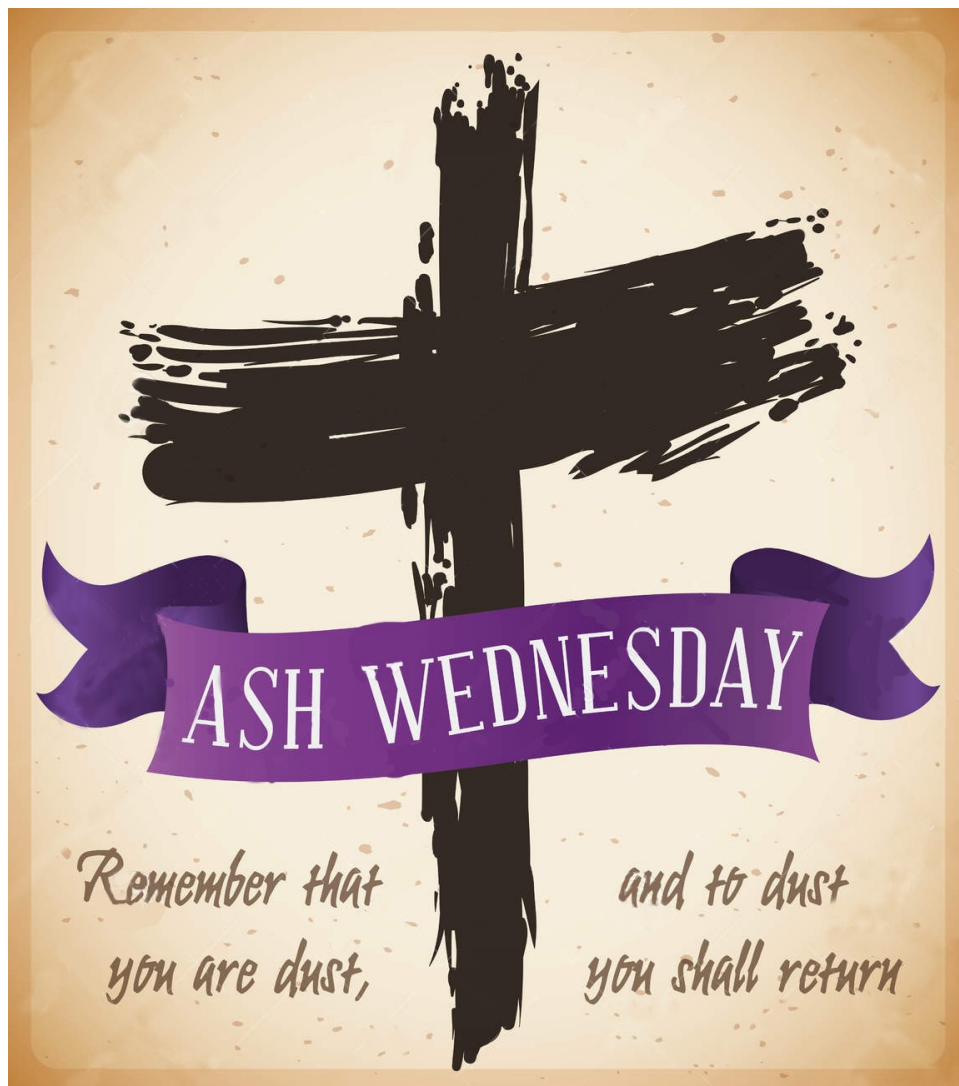
Then, when I got to my undergraduate years, I had a great campus minister who pushed us to really reflect on some of the scripture we read around Lent. To reflect on the idea of *"from dust we come, and to dust we will return."* That we are mortal and God is not. That we are mortal and so are others. Being a college kid who thought himself invincible, I **needed** this. Even though I continued with many of my old disciplines, this became my new point of reflection. When I was hungry while fasting, instead of reflecting on what I was upset or angry about, I would reflect on what it meant to be human. What it meant to be mortal. Often, we talk about what are you doing with your one life. However, this also pushed me to ask, how are you helping or hurting other people's one life? If others only get one life, are you being an agent of God's healing? Or are you moving people closer and closer to dust and ashes?

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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.



March 2, 2022

Wesley United Methodist Church

*Mission Statement
Celebrating God!
Growing in Faith!
Changing the World!*

Pastor Benjamin Spangler

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Gainesville, FL
32609
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We are on Facebook!!!

Pastor's E-mail:
Ben@GainesvilleWesley.org
352-234-6708

Secretary's E-mail:
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

Weekly Sunday Activities

Worship @ 10:45AM
(Sanctuary)



*Barbara Baldwin
Carolyn Clarke
Mary Harris
Betty Holder
Barb Loehr
Paula Mathis
Clydia Reichert
Margie Sapp
Dale Smith*

*Linda Baldwin
Helen Goddard
Rachelle Hines
Bonniesue Humphlett
Beth Loehr-Moody
Billy Moring
Joe Reichert
Beth Senn
Clarence Witt*



Prayer Requests



(Continued from Page 1)

Most recently, I have found reflection on mortality to be more fulfilling than ever. A reflection that extends through gratefulness of a life shared, into the impact our lives have on one another, to the grief we sit in together. From dust *to* dust" - I have come to appreciate that "*to*" and during Lent I often reflect on what I do with mine." I find Lent to be a time to shed a lot of the things that distract us from God so we can both be thankful and live well in the footsteps of Christ. Lent has been a journey for me. And, I guess all of faith is a journey for all of us.

Pastor Ben

Wesley UMC continues to be a significant contributor to Bread of the Mighty Food Bank—last week I hauled in 57 pounds of food that you all donated for their use. Thank you so much!

Cindy Holmes



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Worship Service—10:45AM

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

Wesley Wednesday suppers—5:30PM

Most meetings are Wednesdays at 6:00 unless otherwise noted

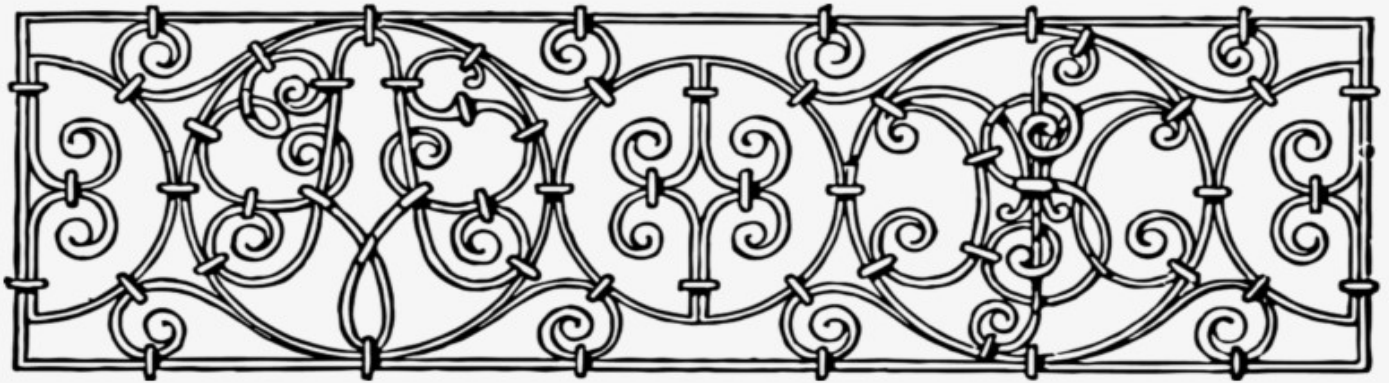
March 2022

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH


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

Pastor Benjamin Spangler

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|---|
|  6  | 7 7:00PM Nightingales | 8 Noon Pastor's Class | 2 8:30AM Garden Work Day 5:30PM Ash Wednesday Service | 3  11:30AM Card Club | 4 11:30AM YAHs NW Grille RSVP by 3/6 | 5 9:00 UMW Exec Co. 10:00 UMW general meeting SPRING AHEAD |
| 13  | 14 10:00AM Morning Stars Noon Pastor's Class | 15 8:30AM Garden Work Day 6:00PM SPRC | 16 8:30AM Garden Work Day 6:00PM SPRC | 17  11:30AM Card Club | 18 11:30AM YAHs NW Grille RSVP by 3/6 | 19 9:00 UMW Exec Co. 10:00 UMW general meeting SPRING AHEAD |
| 20  | 21 Noon Pastor's Class 7:00PM Finance | 22 Noon Pastor's Class 7:00PM Finance | 23 6:00PM Nominations Committee | 24  11:30AM Card Club | 25 11:30AM YAHs NW Grille RSVP by 3/6 | 26 9:00 UMW Exec Co. 10:00 UMW general meeting SPRING AHEAD |
| 27  | 28 Noon Pastor's Class | 29 Noon Pastor's Class | 30 7:00PM Admin Council |  11:30AM Card Club | 11:30AM YAHs NW Grille RSVP by 3/6 | 12 9:00 UMW Exec Co. 10:00 UMW general meeting SPRING AHEAD |

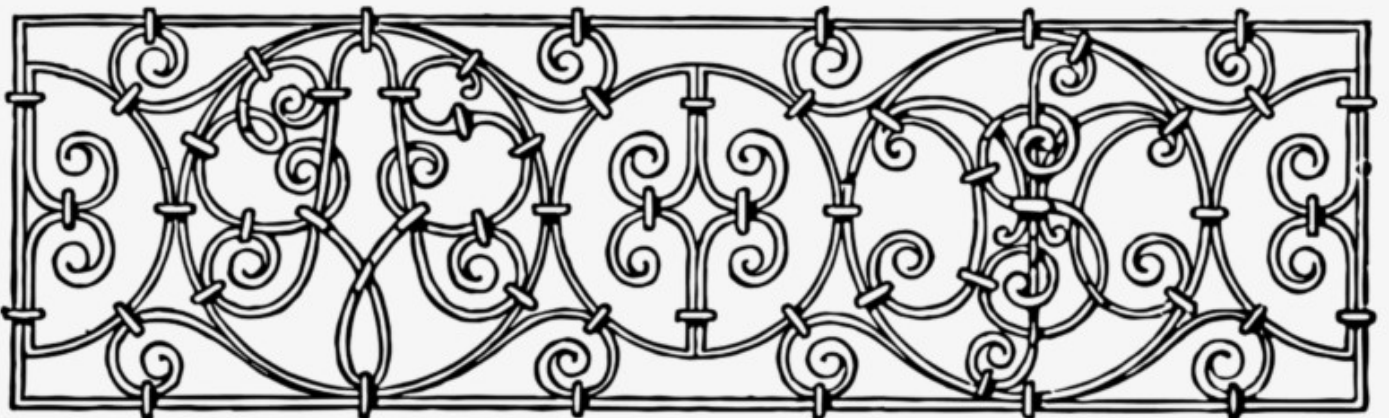


O Lord,
in the name of Jesus Christ your Son our God, give us that love which can never cease,
that will kindle our lamps but not extinguish them, that they may burn in us and en-
lighten others.



O Christ, our dearest Savior,
kindle our lamps,
that they may evermore shine
in your temple,
that they may receive
unquenchable light from you
that will enlighten our darkness,
and lessen the darkness of the world.

Lord Jesus, we pray,
give your light to our lamps,
that in its light the most holy place may be revealed to us
in which you dwell as the Eternal Priest, that we may always see you, desire you,
look on you in love, and long after you; for your sake. Amen.



Saturday, March 5th at 10:00 AM is the District-wide Spiritual Enrichment Day. Below is the flyer and registration site. It is a ZOOM meeting, and registration is required. If you would like to attend, but do not have WiFi access, call Sherry Adams at 352-316-0066 if you would like to join her at her home to view the session.



United Methodist Women



Spiritual Enrichment Day

Saturday, March 5th from 10:00 - 12 noon via Zoom

“Nurturing Our Spiritual Growth”

Deaconess Ester Kim, Chair of Nominations, Florida Conference, United Methodist Women, will be our speaker. Ester has a passion for nurturing women in their faith and membership in UMW. We will consider new ways to enhance our spiritual growth.

[Click here to register](#) (Pre-registration is required):

Registration Deadline is Thursday, March 3, 2022

The session is **Free** and Open to anyone you would like to invite. Please sign on starting at 9:45. The session will start promptly at 10:00. You will want to have your Communion elements available and have paper and pencil ready for a Spiritual Gifts activity.

On Saturday, March 12th at 10:00 AM, the UMW will meet in the Fellowship Hall for the annual “Call to Prayer and Self Denial.” Sisters in Faith Circle will present the program defining and celebrating Deaconesses in the Methodist church.





Aahhh, MEATLOAF!

Our Wesley family gathered on February 9th to enjoy our favorite meal—meatloaf! Mashed potatoes, green beans, salad, roll, and yummy desserts rounded out the evening.

And we didn't just eat—we also visited with our friends and neighbors.

A good time was had by all!

**Thank you,
Donna Weseman!!!**



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 **plan** to hold a Wednesday fellowship dinner on March 9th at 5:30 PM. As usual, please call or e-mail the office by the previous Sunday to let us know if you are coming. We sure hope so!

ALL ABOUT ASH WEDNESDAY

Each year, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and is always 46 days before Easter Sunday. Lent is a 40-day season (not counting Sundays) marked by repentance, fasting, reflection, and ultimately celebration. The 40-day period represents Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness, where he fasted and where Satan tempted him. Lent asks believers to set aside a time each year for similar fasting, marking an intentional season of focus on Christ's life, ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection.

The History of Lent and Ash Wednesday

The history and beginnings of Lent aren't clear. According to Britannica.com, Lent has likely been observed "since apostolic times, though the practice was not formalized until the First Council of Nicaea in 325 CE." Christian scholars note that Lent became more regularized after the legalization of Christianity in A.D. 313. St. Irenaeus, Pope St. Victor I, and St. Athanasius all seem to have written about Lent during their ministries. Most agree that "by the end of the fourth century, the 40-day period of Easter preparation known as Lent existed, and that prayer and fasting constituted its primary spiritual exercises."

Verses to Reflect on for Ash Wednesday

If you'd like to start thinking through and observing Lent and Ash Wednesday, here are a few verses specific to Ash Wednesday to meditate and reflect on, and then a prayer you can pray to observe the day.

- **Our Creation:** Genesis 2:7 - Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.
- **Our Curse:** Genesis 3:19 - By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."
- **Our Cry of Repentance:** Psalm 51:7-10 - Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

A Prayer for Ash Wednesday:

Lord, Holy One, have mercy on us. We confess our sins to you. We have fallen short of your glory and without your mercy and grace, we would be dust. We repent now. Lord, as we enter into this Lenten season, be near to us. Help us, by your Holy Spirit, to feel the right conviction and repentance for our sin. Help us, by your Spirit, to have the strength to overcome the enemy.

Thank you, Lord, that Easter is coming! Death has no sting, no victory, because of Jesus! Glory and honor and praise to His name! Thank you for rescuing us. Help us keep both the weight and the joy of this season in our hearts as we move through the next several weeks. Help us bear the good fruit of your Spirit.

Thank you that the ashes on our forehead do not symbolize our ultimate reality. From dust, we might have been formed, but our bodies, our spirits, ourselves, await beautiful redemption and the restoration of all things. Help us long and look forward to that day, and let it come quickly, Lord Jesus. Amen.



The YAHs celebrated Valentine's Day with a festive luncheon at the Weseman home. A good time was had by all!

Left to right, front to back. Becky, Nancy, Cindy, Joan, Jim, Barbara, Bruce, Sonny, and Mary.

They will gather again this month at the Northwest Grille on Friday, March 11th. Please RSVP to Donna by Monday, March 7th.





Committee Meetings

3/9 6:00PM Trustees
 3/26 6:00 PM SPCR
 3/22 7:00PM Finance Committee
 3/23 6:00PM Nominations Comm.
 3/30 7:00PM Administrative Council



March Birthdays

2nd William Strawder
 4th Madison Holder
 6th Lori Hales
 7th Keith Holder
 9th Allan Holder
 Thad Martin
 14th TJ Martin Jr. (Linda Nosko's grandson)
 15th Steven Robert Holder
 Sena Bergeron
 16th Donna Dotts
 Beth Loehr-Moody
 19th Diane Blucher
 25th John Hodges

March 13
2:00 AM

March 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

