

From the Heart of the Pastor

Over the years I've gotten to know many people in many different places. I've universally found that people who are rooted in their faith have a deeper peace, discernment, and contentment. In difficult times they experience an assurance of God. The strengthening of faith is not a solitary journey. People with lasting faith had a group of people encourage, support, and celebrate with them. The most profound relationships happened in small groups with people who trust one another.

I think that is why I am so passionate about people growing in their faith in Jesus. It is a journey from the head (knowing about Jesus) to the heart (experiencing Jesus love and strength). Though it takes time to mature in faith, the rewards are immediate and lasting. I want to see as many people as possible experience the assurance, love, and hope of Jesus. It is why we take time with our children, invest in youth, and are committed to strengthening adults. It breaks my heart when someone falls away from the church or faith. It sparks my enthusiasm and praise when someone discovers how God is protecting them from sin, restoring relationships, and providing hope.

It begins with an invitation to faith or deeper faith. The way we put it at Westwood UMC, it is to "offer Christ". People accept invitations from those we trust, so the first step is to build a relationship of trust. Gone are the days when people simply came to church because most other people were doing it. We live in a skeptical culture, and they want to see integrity in faith. You do the An invitational life does the following:

Pray: Who is someone you want to experience God's love?

Share your story: Who is Jesus to you? What did Jesus do? What difference did it make?

Open up your life: Every day be open to God's message to you. Be open to others. Be open to the Holy Spirit working in your life.

Model Faith: Live with integrity as a child of light, seize the opportunity, and submit to others out of reverence for Jesus.

Radical hospitality is indispensable. Inviting someone to faith or church is like inviting someone to dinner. If you do not invite them they will not show up for dinner. If you invite them and expect them to get their own food it is rude. I believe God sends people to our church, and God expects us to show radical hospitality in God's house. In the last three months a number of people expressed gratitude for Westwood's hospitality, openness, and kindness. Praise God! We are honoring God and others by our caring, radical hospitality. You can invite people to upcoming events: The Dinner With Friends Celebration, January 31, 4:30; Covenant Bible Study, February 3, 6:30; Dinner Cruise (Fine Arts Celebration), February 20, 4:30. Let's continue to open our lives and show radical hospitality, as God changes people's lives.

Gratefully serving our Lord with you,
Pastor Wayne

Midwest Mission Distribution Center – Jan. 31 – Feb. 5



Thirteen persons will make up a volunteer-in-mission team traveling to Chatham, IL to volunteer at the Midwest Mission Distribution Center, a disaster relief facility of the United Methodist Church. We will leaving January 31 and returning February 5. The team is made up 8 Westwood members: Joyce Babbitt, Marion Burkey, Dee Cole, Wanda Horton, Norma Sylvester, Bill Snell, Nancy Snell, and Nancy VandenBrink and will be joined by 5 friends from other congregations. Please keep our group in your prayers as we travel and put our faith into action so that we might touch lives and make a difference.

Westwood to Help Flint Residents - February

Loose coins dropped into the offering plate and Sunday school offering in February will go to purchase water filtration systems and replacement filters for Flint residents. Eight United Methodist churches in Flint are centers where residents can pick up these free items. Flint is located in the Crossroads District of the United Methodist Church which has received a \$10,000 gift from United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), as well as a gift from United Way of Genesee County and private funding. Every cent of every contribution will be spent on the needs of Flint's citizens experiencing this water crisis. Thank you for your donations.

Faith-Hope Circle, A United Methodist Women's group – Jan. 27

Faith-Hope Circle will meet at Friendship Village, 1400 N Drake, Room 1A on Jan. 27 at 1 pm. Everyone is welcome. Questions call Helen Lancaster, 344-9874, or Jeanette Jupp, 345-8833.

Dinner With Friends – “Soup Cook-Off Challenge” – Jan. 31

Please join us for a friendly “Soup Cook -Off” on Sunday, January 31, 2016 beginning at 4:30 pm in Simpson Hall. We are asking that each Dinner with Friends group submit at least 3 types of soup for judging. Other members of the groups should plan on bringing salad or dessert. Voting for the “Best” soup will be by \$1.00 bills. The soup with the most bills at the end of the evening will be crowned the winner. All proceeds from the soup contest will go to the “Souper Bowl” fundraiser that our congregation has supported for many years. Not a part of a Dinner with Friends group? Then come on out and join us for some fun, a little break from the winter weather and see what Dinner with Friends is all about. At the very least, you will not go away hungry! Sign-up is on the back of the Communication Card or on the bulletin board. Hope to see you there!



Friendship Luncheon for February

There will be no February Friendship Luncheon. The next Friendship Luncheon will be March 2, 2016.

Covenant Bible Studies – Book 3 Begins Feb. 3

Book 3 of Covenant Bible studies begins on Wednesday evening, February 3, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. We will be meeting in the theater for a video and then Wesley Room for discussion. This 8-week session is entitled “Trusting the Covenant.” We will be studying and discussing what it means to live out our faith with God and others. Please put your name on the list on the Sign-up Board in the Lobby and note if you will need a book. Note: It is not necessary to have completed the first or second session (books 1&2) of Covenant Bible Studies to participate in the third session (book 3). This study is led by Louise Jameson.



Lenten Study – Begins Feb. 7

Our Lenten study is based on the book The God We Can Know: Exploring the “I Am” Sayings of Jesus by Rob Fuquay. Taking these sayings to heart can bring us into closer connection with Jesus. Christianity is not a religion. It is a relationship. A living relationship requires nurture and attention. This study is about knowing God and, more specifically, knowing God through Jesus. In many ways, the Bible is a story of humanity's attempt to know God. Think of this study as a journey into the world where Jesus spoke these sayings. Included in this class is a DVD which enhances the study through visuals from The Holy Land as well as interesting commentary on Scripture and offers further discussion opportunities for the class. Class will be held Sunday mornings 9:45-10:45, starting Feb. 7 and will be facilitated by Beth Mitchell. The location will be announced Jan. 31.

Souper Bowl of Caring – Feb. 7

Westwood will again join with thousands of congregations across the country to support the Souper Bowl of Caring. Westwood youth will be at the sanctuary doors with soup pots following worship on Sunday, February 7 (pro-football's Super Bowl) to collect your donations which will go to feed the homeless at the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission, our chosen designee of this offering.



Together we can help make a difference in the lives of people in this community.

Racial Ethnic Local Church Sunday – Feb. 7

A special offering will be received on February 7 to support the mission and ministry of our Racial Ethnic United Methodist Churches (such as Native American, Vietnamese, Hispanic, Korean and multi-racial) in the West Michigan Conference. Special envelopes are available in your giving envelope packet to strengthen these culturally diverse congregations.

Friday Films – Feb. 12

February is Black History month, and so, on Feb. 12th, we will meet to share a simple meal at 6:00 pm, followed by the 1-hour documentary Broken on All Sides. This film compellingly discusses the intersection between race and mass incarceration, and offers new visions for criminal justice in the U.S. We will have a discussion time afterwards. Please sign up on the bulletin board and the back of the green cards. ALL are invited and welcomed to attend this important evening!

Women's Prayer Breakfast – Feb. 13

Women's Prayer Breakfast will be held Saturday, February 13th at 9:00 a.m. in Simpson Hall. Our theme is "Love and Relationships" so our woman's focus will be Ruth. Please be sure to read the book of Ruth as preparation. We are also asking if anyone would be willing to contribute fresh muffins or fresh fruit that morning. If so, please make note when you sign the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Any questions, please ask Dana Tipken or Helga Mortensen. We are looking forward to another blessed morning of spiritual insight, food, and fellowship. Hope to see you there!

Men's Prayer Breakfast – Feb. 20, 2016

The Men's Prayer Breakfast will be held on Saturday, Feb. 20 beginning at 9:00 am in Simpson Hall with prayer time to follow. Sign up for the breakfast either on the sign-up board or on the back of the Communication Card.

Dinner Cruise and 10-cent sale – Feb. 20

Sat., Feb. 20, 4:30 pm will be a wonderful opportunity! The Dinner Cruise and 10 cent sale. A complete 5 course meal will be offered. Plan to bring an item from home that you may want to pass on, but has value. You can enter it into the 10 cent sale for bidding. It may become someone's treasure!! Tickets for donation and reservation will be available in the lobby in February. Seating will be limited. Donations will be divided to benefit the Fine Art Ministry purchase of new choir chairs, and the new kitchen upgrade for the lobby kitchen. Beth Mitchell is cooking - so you know you will love it. And - entertainment will be provided. It promises to be a fun night.

Covenant Renewal Service – Feb. 21

The covenant renewal service is a time to recommit our lives to the lordship of Jesus Christ. As we start the new calendar year, let us come together to reaffirm our commitment to Christ by acknowledging his sacrifice for our sins to redeem us as a people chosen by God. Since we are called to make disciples, let us live in a way that transforms the world through the presence of the Holy Spirit in our thoughts and actions. The service begins at 5:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

Alpha and Emmaus Reunion Dinner – Mar. 1

The Alpha and Emmaus Reunion Dinner will be held on Mar. 1 from 6-9 pm. Save the date for dinner and fun.

Special Dates

March 20 – Palm Sunday
March 24 – Maundy Thursday
March 25 – Good Friday
March 27 – Easter Sunday

Advent Mission Giving 2015 Wrap-Up

Thank you for all your special gifts to help people in need in our community! Here is what was collected and delivered:

to Free Store of Kalamazoo: 19 men's underwear, 4 men's t-shirts, 35 pair men's socks, 72 women's underwear, 8 pair women's socks, 6 women's bras, 6 boy's socks, 9 girl's underwear, 6 girl's socks, 4 children's toys, 26 blankets (November loose coins/Sunday school offering). Also, 200 persons were served a sloppy joe lunch provided by Westwood at the Christmas Cheer shopping event at the Free Store on December 5.

to King-Westwood School: 158 girls underwear, 61 pair girl's socks, 78 boy's underwear, 82 pair of socks, 6 sweatpants/leggings, a few miscellaneous items,

to Kalamazoo Humane Society: 107.60 lbs. dog food, 66.65 lbs. cat food
15 packages/boxes dog treats, 5 packages cat treats, 9 dog toys, bag full of cat toys

to Kalamazoo Gospel Mission: 30 food service size cans fruits/vegetables.

Also, 7 families from King-Westwood adopted through Community in Schools coordinator totaling 33 persons.

The Building Project

As you may have heard last week in worship or noticed as you entered the building today, the building project has begun. The library has been dismantled and the temporary wall has been put up in the lobby so that work can begin in the courtyard area. The Simpson Hall (in the basement) has had the window wells filled in and they have been cemented.

This week has been dusty and loud, but progress has been made! So what is happening next? What is the timeline? And I'm sure some of you are wondering what will happen the next time you are here for a meeting, or an event and where you will meet if some of these spaces are not available. Although we are working to contact leaders if and when we are made aware of space not being available, we all need to be flexible and extend some grace during this construction time.

Below is a very (*very, very!*) rough timeline of the areas that will be affected with the dates. Please remember that these are *VERY TENTATIVE* and we will try to keep you updated as the information changes.

We encourage you to be careful as you enter the building during the next few months as there may be construction materials, extra dust, etc. throughout the building. Thank you for your patience and understanding!

Line Item	Expected Start Date	Duration (Weeks)	Item
1	1/18	1.0	Library taken down - Temporary wall built
2	2/29	1.0	Education wing - Rooms 10 & 11 turned into new nursery
3	4/1	6.0	Sanctuary/North Entrance - New Wesley Room (May 1)
4	5/16	6.0	Music room/Prayer room - Hallways will be blocked off. New Wesley Room built before old one is of-line/unavailable.
5	6/13	1.0	East Entrance/Back door - Back stairs

~The Building Team



The Building Project – Part 2

As the building project progresses, there will be a need for additional volunteers throughout the project. There has been discussion about utilizing some of the gifts and talents of some of our Westwood UMC folks in specialized areas as well as the time and energy to clean and small projects such as loading books into boxes.

We will try to provide notice to folks that need to be aware of places that will be inconvenienced during the construction process. We will also try to let everyone know of opportunities that will come up to help – from dusting, to moving chairs, to moving things in the rooms around, to bringing a snack or beverages for those that are volunteering. Please take time to see if there is something you can do to help at least for an hour or so during the construction process. We will do our best to get the information out so you can determine what may work for you in the upcoming months.

If we could ask of you one more thing it would be to please lift up in prayer the building project, the various workers, the congregation, the staff, and the building team as we continue through this project. Please pray for safety for all as well as a smooth and quick project!

Again, we so appreciate our volunteers and everyone who is participating with the building project and those of you who may be able to in the future! You are a blessing!



Fine Art Ministries New Year News

Happy New Year 2016!!

Thank You to my Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I would like to thank you for the Christmas bonus gift found in my box this past Holiday. You are a huge blessing in so many ways to so many. Thank you for the opportunity to serve with you here at Westwood UMC.

Dinner Cruise and 10 Cent Sale – Feb. 20

Sat., Feb. 20, 4:30 pm will be a wonderful opportunity! The Dinner Cruise and 10 cent sale. A complete **5 course meal** will be offered. **Plan to bring an item** from home that you may want to pass on, but has value. You can enter it into the 10 cent sale for bidding. It may become someone's treasure!! **Tickets for donation and reservation** will be available in the lobby in February. Seating will be limited. **Donations will go** to benefit the Fine Art Ministry purchase of new choir chairs, and the new kitchen upgrade for the lobby kitchen. Our cook is Beth Mitchell - so you know it will be wonderful. Entertainment will be provided. It promises to be a fun night.

Come by yourself, or come with a friend or spouse, or come with a crowd. Friends, relatives and neighbors are all welcome. Just be sure to let us know your number by purchasing tickets in advance. You can choose to donate whatever amount you like when you purchase the tickets. We suggest a minimum of \$10.00 per ticket. Seating will be limited, so be sure to reserve beginning February 1. Email: jwrightwumc@gmail.com or call the office to reserve: 344-7165 or pick up tickets in the lobby on Sundays between services. Be thinking about what you might bring for that sale. Bring your item and one dollar to participate.

Kids Praise Restart Could Happen in February

If you have a child or children who are in preschool or early elementary ages, we are very interested in your thoughts regarding their involvement in KIDS PRAISE. This has been designed to help kids learn more about music through a Christian music education program that allow them to learn through games and age appropriate activities. They will also learn things with a Christian emphasis, that will allow for spiritual growth with music centered around what they are learning in Kingdom Kids and beyond. We hope there is interest and would love to hear from you. This program is here for your child and it is free. We have been meeting on Wednesdays at 4:30. If that is a bad time for you, please let us know what works better. Call Jane: 544-2390 or 517-204-2439.

Serving you on Sundays

If you are unable to help on your assigned Sunday, please switch with someone on the list and let the office know of the change. Your help in finding a replacement is deeply appreciated! If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

	January 31, 2016 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.	February 7, 2016 8:30 & 11:00 a.m.
<i>Serving you in Worship</i>		
Worship Assistant	Bob Strobel	Sandra Bibiloma
Altar	Tracy Quintanilla	Laura Anderson
1st Service Audio	Bill Rotgers	TBD
1st Service Video	Jim Frey	TBD
2nd Service Audio	David Knewtson	TBD
2nd Service Video	TBD	TBD
Children's Moment	Helga Mortensen	TBD
Children's Worship	Nancy Snell, Kevin Secord and Joyce Babbitt	Sarah Mannschreck and Nancy Snell
Videographer		
PowerPoint Preparer	Pastor or Office	Pastor or Office
<i>Serving you through Welcoming</i>		
1st Service Greeters	Jane & Gary Waite and Wanda Horton	Jeanne Ullrey and Betty Dustin
2nd Service Greeters	Laura Anderson and Lisa Fuller	Cathy Cowham Tyler and Sheila Skinner
Hospitality	Beth Mitchell, Karen Bowman	Carol Tolis-Bucklin, Roxanne Frey
1st Service Ushers	Doug & Pam Phillips	Joe & Shirley Mitchell
2nd Service Ushers	Roxanne Frey, Art Klute, Jimoh Bibilomo	Diane Rathburn, Mark Reid, Tom & Paula Willson
<i>Staff</i>		
Nursery Workers	Rachel Fuller, Linda VanOrder, Mary Landreville	Kristen VanOrder, Rachel Fuller, Linda VanOrder
Keyboardist	Gail Secord	Gail Secord

Prayer List

We have an active prayer chain to lift up individuals in prayer whenever there is special need. To make your request known, please call Mary Grant (345-9422) or the Church Office (344-7165). To keep our prayer list updated, please contact the church office with updates.

Ongoing Prayer Requests:

Julian Blair

Gary Cumming

Vicki Hale (friend of Louise Jameson)

Jean Marie Peters (Pastor Wayne's sister)

Frank Sierawski (son of Nancy Snell)

Serving in the military:

Ryan Cavey, Marine Sergeant (serving in the Middle East and friend of the Rotgers family)

Prayers for healing and strength to the home-bound

King-Westwood Elementary School & Staff

Our Westwood Neighborhood



*Have updates on
these friends?
Let the church
office know!*



Share God's Word

F.R.A.N.

*Be a part of FRAN and
invite, invite, invite!*

F = Friends

R = Relatives

A = Acquaintances

N = Neighbors

Our Vision

We are a disciple-making community that encourages and equips all people to live in Christ by the power of the Spirit and in fellowship with one another through worship, prayer, study and service.

Our Values

- *Worship*
We celebrate our faith in many ways so that God is encountered and lives are changed.
- *Justice*
We confront injustice and work for change within ourselves, our community, nation and world.
- *Lay Ministry*
We help people discover, develop and use their spiritual gifts and talents to serve God and others.
- *Fellowship*
We are a caring, compassionate Christian community open to all.
- *Spiritual Growth*
We nurture children, youth and adults in their journey toward mature discipleship.
- *Mission*
We go and serve others in our community, nation and world through our time, talents, and resources as we proclaim the Gospel and meet human needs.
- *Witness*
We prepare and encourage people to share the experience of God's love in Christ.

Worship Celebrations

Worship Celebrations are held at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. (10:10 a.m. from Memorial Day through Labor Day, inclusive). Nursery care is provided during both celebrations.

Prayer Chain

We have an active prayer chain to lift up individuals in prayer. To make your request known or to sign up for the prayer list please contact the church office.

Stephen Ministers Are There to Care

Stephen Ministry is a confidential care giving ministry of our church. If you would like a Stephen Minister to walk with you during a difficult time in your life, contact the church office.

Lotsa Helping Hands

Westwood UMC is signed up on the Lotsa Helping Hands website. Sign up today by going to <https://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/c/628393/> and fill out the right side of the form ("Request to Join the Community"). After approval you will receive instructions for setting a password and signing-in.

Keep up with church news...

- Join up for Worship!
- the Messenger,
- the email news list,
- the prayer chain,
- the website (Including the calendar),
- Find us on Facebook,
- Lotsa Helping Hands,
- and make sure your personal information is on file in the church office!

Messenger Deadlines

The Westwood Messenger is published bi-weekly. Deadlines are the Thursday prior to publication. Go Green! Email the editor or the church office to receive the Messenger electronically.

Messenger Articles

Please email all Messenger information to: info@westwood-umc.org. Messenger deadlines are the Thursday prior to publication.

Future Messengers and Deadlines

Deadline	Publication Date
Feb. 5	Feb. 9
Feb. 19	Feb. 23
Mar. 5	Mar. 9
Mar. 19	Mar. 23

Our Mission

Offer Christ, Grow In Faith, Touch Lives, and Make A Difference

Westwood United Methodist
Church

538 Nichols Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49006



Westwood Messenger articles relate to the activities of Westwood United Methodist Church. Any member or constituent may submit articles for publication. Place articles, with your name and phone, in the *Messenger* mailbox outside the church office or send an e-mail to info@westwood-umc.org by the deadline. Your name may be used in the article. The *Messenger* is mailed Tuesday. Subscribers do not receive it before Wednesday. Articles must be submitted at least two weeks before events. All articles are edited to correct errors and conform with postal regulations. Due to space constraints, some articles are abbreviated or postponed at the discretion of the editor. If you have any questions or comments, address them to the editor.

Westwood United Methodist Church Staff and Volunteers

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The *Westwood Messenger* is a newsletter published by the members and friends of Westwood United Methodist Church. There is no subscription fee. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe, email or call the church office.