

# Wesley Witness



A year has come and gone and it has been a full year, hasn't it?

I can't thank each and every one of you enough for the ways you have walked with me and supported me through my first year of pastoring.

We have had some fun times and been through some hard times, haven't we? You walked alongside me as I figured out my voice in the pulpit. You were also there for me when my childhood friend tragically passed in October. Your care for me, love for me, and support of me has been profound and shaping.

Though our time together has been short it has been full of scripture and deep conversations at Bible study. Hilarious jokes told over many hands (and feet) of canasta. Many meaningful phone calls through the week. Countless meetings that ran long because I had taken us off topic, but we had fun along the way. Delicious meals shared in the fellowship hall (shout out to our kitchen crew!), as well as a whole lot of sweat accompanied by a few tears shared in the Wesley garden. Most of all... we have shared many hours of glorious worship, prayer, and communion together as a community every Sunday morning.

Now our time together is unfortunately coming to a close. As I shared on announcement Sunday, my mom was diagnosed with Early On-set Alzheimer's this year and so I will be moving at the end of the month to Fruitland Park, where I have a lot of extended family to help with my mom's long term care.

I will be appointed as the associate pastor of Community UMC of Fruitland Park, where I will pass on all of the wisdom and experience I have learned from each and every one of you here at Wesley.

I truly cannot express to you how grateful I am, nor how much I will miss all of you.

As I leave, I know I am both leaving you in good hands with Kolby coming, as well as knowing you will love and support him every bit as well as you have me and Sarah.

Y'all are truly incredible!

In love,

*Pastor Ben*

# Breaking News

## Bible Study



**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.

## ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Let's say goodbye to Pastor Ben in good ol' Wesley style—with ice cream!  
Wednesday, June 22 at 6:30 PM. Don't miss it!



# Fathers Day - June 19

The Steps  
of a  
Good Man  
are  
ORDERED  
BY  
THE Lord

"The lord makes firm the steps  
of the one who delights in Him" Psalm 37:23

## Wesley United Methodist Church

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

*Pastor Benjamin Spangler*

826 NW 23rd Avenue  
Gainesville, FL  
32609  
Office: 372-2845  
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We are on Facebook!!!

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

Website:  
www.WesleyUMCon23.org

## Weekly Sunday Activities

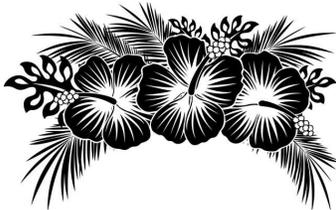
Worship @ 10:45AM  
(Sanctuary)



Barbara Baldwin  
Helen Goddard  
Betty Holder  
Beth Loehr-Moody  
Clydia Reichert  
Beth Senn  
Clarence Witt

Linda Baldwin  
Mary Harris  
Bonniesue Humphlett  
Paula Mathis  
Joe Reichert  
Dale Smith

Carolyn Clarke  
Rachelle Hines  
Barb Loehr  
Moring Family  
Margie Sapp  
Linda Smith



*With God*  
**ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE**

## WESLEY WHITTLERS ARE COMING BACK!

Indeed they are! Danny Aguila joined us at the last Administrative Council meeting to work out the details. And he was just brimming with excitement! He was contacted by the VA's Honor Center that they were ready to come back. Their first meeting will be on Tuesday, June 7th from 1:30 to 3:30PM.

Danny has already contacted all of the instructors, who are excited and ready to return, as are the veterans who came before. Counselors and the representative of the Honor Center will attend on Tuesdays every other week between 1:30-3:30.

At the collapse of all our programs in 2020 when COVID19 hit, there were some things that were perceived as needing change:

- No more furniture hauling
- Dinners may have to stop
- VA needs to provide handicap transportation
- No wearing dogtags—these could be a means of identity theft. Danny is providing plain dogtags with the service branch on them.

We here at Wesley are certainly looking forward to their return!



**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

Worship Service—10:45AM

**WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE**

Wesley Wednesday suppers—5:30PM

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

# June 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
<p>5</p>  <p>6PM Sisters in Faith</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>7:00PM Nightingales</p>	<p>7</p>  <p>10:00AM Property Stewardship Meeting Noon Pastor's Class 1:30-3PM Wesley Whittlers</p>	<p>1</p> <p>8:30 Garden Work-day</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>11:30AM Card Club</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10AM Finance Noon Pastor's Class</p>	<p>15</p> <p>8:30 Garden Work-day</p>	<p>16</p>  <p>11:30AM Card Club</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p> 	<p>20</p> <p>Office Closed</p> 	<p>21</p> <p>10:00AM Morning Stars Noon Pastor's Class 1:30-3PM Wesley Whittlers</p>	<p>22</p> <p>6:30PM Ice Cream Social</p>	<p>23</p>  <p>11:30AM Card Club</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>  <p>11:30AM Card Club</p>		



# MISSION OF THE MONTH

## Grace Marketplace

Since Grace Marketplace opened its doors in 2014, it has become a center of help, healing, and hope in our community. Grace meets its clients where they stand and walks with them toward a better future by providing meals, shelter, and other immediate needs while connecting them with essential services. These services include medical care, job training and skill building, mental health services, and more. Grace makes this possible by providing space on their campus for other community services providers — often space that is shared with numerous providers.

GRACE always needs your donations:

- Adult new or used clothing
- Work boots (men's and women's)
- Non-slip work shoes
- New underwear
- Hotel-sized toiletry items
- Sunscreen
- Aloe
- Bug spray
- **Razors**
- Tampons and pads
- Laundry detergent
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Non-perishable food items
- **Bags & luggage**
- **Towels**
- Twin/full bedding
- **Blankets**
- **Pillows**
- Sleeping bags
- Unopened first-aid supplies
- Working computers and tablets
- Pens, notebooks, folders
- Shovels
- Working power tools
- Household goods
- Gently used furniture
- Bicycles
- **Bicycle accessories (locks, air pumps, lights, etc.)**

Help prevent and end homelessness by making a donation toward an immediate need. We've set up a fund to cover the small expenses that tend to be the tipping point pushing people into homelessness. Things like a flat tire, needing to be able get back to Mom, or having to choose between groceries or rent. Often, households will call looking for emergency shelter before they actually lose their housing. This fund lets us address those issues and prevent households from ever becoming homeless.

As much progress as Grace has made, it has not yet reached its full potential. Local agencies that want to provide services at Grace now have a facility in which to do so, as renovation of an existing building into the Community Services Building expanded the agencies that can participate at Grace. Some of the services to be added include: expanding veterans' services; more frequent 12-step meetings; creating a women's safe space ; providing room for additional mental health services; and expanding case management.

For more information, visit <http://gracemarketplace.org/>

The Young at Heart senior fellowship will take the summer off, restarting in September. Hope you have a wonderful summer!

Last month we had a lovely lunch at one of our favorite places—Northwest Grille. Pictured around the table from the left are Sonny, Joan, Sharren, Becky, Donna, Helen, Nancy, and Cindy. We hope you'll join us when we reconvene!



Young at Heart  
Fellowship



### **NEW PASTOR COMING NEXT MONTH**

The sad news that Pastor Ben is leaving us to help with family matters down south was followed by the news of a new pastor—Kolby Gollhofer will join us on July 1st! Kolby is also a recent graduate of the Duke Divinity School (like pastors Sarah and Ben before him) so we know he will do just fine. Be sure to read next month's Witness for an introduction to the Gollhofer family!



Wesley United Methodist Church has been a part of the Christian ministry in Gainesville since 1941. During this time, Wesley has impacted the lives of many individuals and has spread the Word of God over the community in many ways.

And Wesley has continuously been blessed with a generous and faithful congregation that has served as the ministry's foundation and worker bees.

Unfortunately, church membership and attendance in general has been trending down recently on local, regional, and national levels. Accordingly, Wesley membership and Sunday attendance have also been trending downward in the recent past. And to make matters worse, the COVID epidemic hiatus has reduced Wesley's Sunday attendance even lower ... typically 30-40 souls every Sunday. The current low attendance levels have, among other things, reduced church program participation, shortened the list of volunteers for committees, weakened our music ministry, and eliminated any form of youth outreach. Low attendance and giving have reduced the financial resources available for the church to a level that is not sustainable. In fact, IF the current level of giving is maintained ... Wesley will NOT be able to cover the church's operating costs. In other words ... Wesley will not be able to pay salaries, keep the lights on, or keep the doors open. Simple as that. Simple ... but sad.

So ... how long can Wesley continue to answer God's call to ministry in the future, how do we "keep the doors open" given the current status? The Finance Committee has determined, given our expected giving level, there are enough funds in the cash reserves to keep Wesley viable for only two more years. After that period of time, Wesley will simply not be able to meet our budgetary needs. And that is after the annual budget has been reduced to absolute bare minimums with regard to those things that we need as a church to function and provide a safe, comfortable, and clean facility within which to worship.

Do options exist?? The good news is ... Yes!! And the church leadership feels that an option is to find a way to rent our facilities that are otherwise not being used.

The Wesley campus is quite large. And we have rooms that are currently not being used, or only periodically used, within our normal, weekly routine.

However, as we consider this option, we must be mindful of our purpose – to share the love of Christ. How do we first answer our call to ministry while keeping our doors open? Those empty rooms could possibly be

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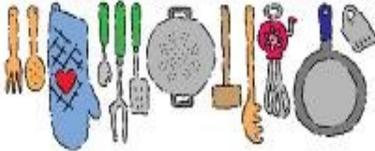
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rented to non-profit organizations or agencies at a reduced rate ... and the space benefits the ministry and those rental incomes could be utilized to strengthen Wesley's financial position. For example, if we can find someone to rent the various rooms in the "Sunday School" wing ... those dollars will help extend the financial life of our church. Those dollars will help us "keep the doors open."

But ... finding potential ministry partners who need space will take time and effort. And the Finance Committee is calling upon the Wesley membership to help. We need individuals who are willing to lend a hand toward this process. Any and all ideas, suggestions, help, etc is needed and will be appreciated.

A meeting will be held at 10AM, June 7<sup>th</sup> in the advanced classroom to kick off this effort. This will be a combined in-person and zoom meeting. If you have an interest in helping explore rental opportunities for our underutilized facilities, please plan on attending this meeting and contact the Church office to be added to the participant list. A week before the meeting an email reminder will be sent out with the zoom link for anyone who wishes to attend on line. Please keep the church's finances in your prayers.

## FROM THE KITCHEN COMMITTEE



We hope you enjoyed the picnic last month—Ben and Ron did a great job "burning" those hotdogs, didn't they! And Ben thought we were kidding...

We will take June, July, and August off and return to dinners in September. Have a wonderful summer! Thanks to Ben, Ron and Reid from GatorWesley for cooking, and thanks to Linda, Elaine, and Kathy for baking cookies.





### Committee Meetings

6/7	10:00AM	Property Stewardship Meeting
6/8	6:00PM	Missions
6/14	10:00AM	Finance Mtg



It's Your Day  
DAD

### June Birthdays

1<sup>st</sup> Chuck Adams  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Barbara Loehr-Fox  
 9<sup>th</sup> Sam Adams  
 12<sup>th</sup> Bonniesue Humphlett  
 17<sup>th</sup> Robert Loehr  
 June Voyles  
 19<sup>th</sup> Jeffrey Carlin  
 23<sup>rd</sup> Linda Crenshaw  
 25<sup>th</sup> Janis Bishop  
 27<sup>th</sup> Doris Welsh

### June Anniversaries

2<sup>nd</sup> Sherry & Chuck Adams  
 16<sup>th</sup> Donna & Gary Weseman



# 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 boosters!**

### 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.

