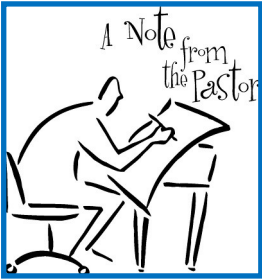


Wesley Witness



Dear Wesley,

As we step into February and the sacred season of Lent, we embark on a profound journey of introspection, repentance, and spiritual renewal. Lent, lasting 40 days, mirrors the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, facing challenges and emerging victorious. It serves as an opportunity for us to draw closer to God, examine our lives, and prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter.

This year, let us approach Lent with a spirit of openness and willingness to embrace the disciplines that can transform our faith. Fasting, prayer, and acts of kindness are timeless practices that invite us to reflect on our priorities, deepen our connection with God, and extend love to those around us.

Fasting is not merely about giving up certain foods or habits; it's a conscious choice to create space for God in our lives. As we abstain from certain comforts, may we use this time to hunger for a deeper relationship with our Creator, seeking nourishment for our souls.

Prayer is the heartbeat of our spiritual life. During Lent, let us commit to intentional moments of prayer – not just asking for blessings but also listening to God's gentle whispers. Through prayer, we can discern the Spirit's guidance and align our will with God's divine purpose.

Acts of kindness and service allow us to embody the love of Christ in tangible ways. As we engage in selfless acts, may we become instruments of God's grace, spreading light and compassion to those in need.

This Lenten season, our faith community will come together for special worship services, small group gatherings, and moments of both personal and shared reflection. I invite each of you to participate actively, allowing this season to be a catalyst for personal and collective growth.

Each of our Sunday worship experiences during Lent will center on one of the last seven phrases Jesus speaks before his death on the cross: "Father, forgive them...", "Today you will be with me in paradise", "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?", etc. Together we'll explore Jesus's final words as seen and heard through the eyes and ears of those who stood near the cross, and we'll consider the meaning of his dying words for our lives today. You aren't going to want to miss this series.

(continued on Page 7)

Breaking News

Bible Study



PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY—Join us for Bible Study every Tuesday from 11:30 – 12:30PM. This month we continue our study of FLUMC Bishop

Tom Berlin's *Reckless Love: Jesus' Call to Love Our Neighbors*.



LENT

PRAYER • FASTING • ALMSGIVING

Wesley United Methodist Church

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

Pastor Kolby Gollifer

826 NW 23rd Avenue
Gainesville, FL
32609
Office: 352-372-2845

We are on Facebook!!!

Pastor's E-mail:
Kolby@gainesvillewesley.org

Secretary's E-mail:
Terri Manche
secretary@wumc.cfcoxmail.com

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

Website:
www.WesleyUMCon23.org
www.facebook.com/WUMCGVL

Weekly Sunday Activities

Worship @ 10:45AM
(Sanctuary)








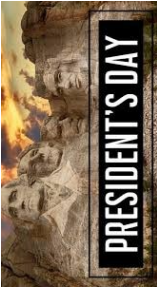





SUNDAY SCHEDULE
Worship Service—10:45AM

WEDNESDAYS
WW Supper 2nd Wed. 5:30PM

February 2024

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

4				1	 11:30AM Card Club	2	
5				8	 11:30AM Card Club	9	11:30AM YAHs Valentine's Luncheon at Weseman's RSVP 2/4
6	11:30 AM Pastor's Class 1:30 Wesley Whit- tlers	6:00PM Worship	7	15	 11:30AM Card Club	16	
12	6:30 Nightingales	14 DAR 5:30PM WWS 6:30PM Ash Wednes- day Service	14 Happy Valentine's Day 	22	 11:30AM Card Club	23	5:30PM Covered Dish Dinner 6:30PM Talent Show Benefit Children's Home
18	19 Office closed 	20 10:00AM Morning Stars 11:30 AM Pastor's Class 1:30 Wesley Whit- tlers 6:30 Game Night	21	29	 11:30AM Card Club		
25		27 11:30 AM Pastor's Class 6:00PM Leadership Board	28				

The Young at Heart fellowship met on Friday, 1/19, at Piesano's Restaurant in the Hunters Crossing shopping center. As usual, a good time was had by all, as we enjoyed a well-prepared- and served-lunch and chattered about our goings-on. Pastor Kolby offered up a blessing.



Around the table from left: Pastor Kolby, Nancy S, Helen, Barbara, Donna, Sharren, Sherry, and Paula.

YOUNG AT HEART SENIOR FELLOWSHIP

Here are the upcoming dates and places through the next few months. As always, we meet at 11:30 AM for this fun and purely social event. Also, as always, you need to RSVP to me the Tuesday before the meeting on Friday so I know how many tables and chairs to reserve. Join us!

DATE	WHERE	RSVP BY:
February 9	Valentines luncheon at the Weseman's	February 4
March 22	Cedar River Seafood Restaurant	March 17
April 12	Piesano's Restaurant	April 7

GAME NIGHT IS BACK!

I was commissioned to set up another Game Night for us, so I thought I should learn something about playing games. So I went to the Internet. I read through several sites and finally selected what I thought were the best versions of the positive reasons to play board games. As if we *really* need a reason! Don't wait for dinner parties and formal meetups to socialize. Do it by playing board games! Just lay out the game and start having fun.

- ☺ Board games foster the ability to concentrate and focus for a period of time.
- ☺ Games challenge creative and analytical thought processes, giving both sides of the brain something to do. Even the simple act of learning the rules and playing a new game can help your mind grow stronger.
- ☺ Stimulating leisure activities are considered possible protective factors against dementia and cognitive decline.
- ☺ Board games trigger the release of endorphins, the body's natural "feel-good" chemicals. They can help lower stress and increase feelings of calmness.
- ☺ Playing board games is the perfect way to spend time with good company and strengthen bonds with other human-beings.



So do your brain, heart, and soul some good and join us to play a few board games on **Tuesday, February 20th at 6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall**. Bring your favorite game and maybe a "table snack" to share with your friends and get ready to laugh. See you there!

WHITTLERS SAY THANK YOU!

The Wesley Whittlers, who meet the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays every month, recently recognized the extra work done by Danny Aguila for the group. Each meeting day, Danny prepares a hearty lunch for all the attendees. Christie Tattersall crocheted this beautiful red, white, and blue afghan for him. I'll bet it feels good with all this cold weather we've been having!



(continued from Page 1)

Let us journey through Lent as a community, supporting and encouraging one another. As we walk this path together, may we discover the transformative power of God's grace and emerge from this season with hearts renewed and spirits revitalized.

May Lent be a time of profound spiritual growth, deepening our understanding of God's love, and preparing us to celebrate the resurrection joyfully.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Kolby

What is Lent?

- one of the five seasons of the church year
- a time when people who want to follow Christ reflect on Jesus' journey to the cross
- an invitation to renew baptismal promises: to reject evil and turn to Christ as Saviour and Lord
- the three pillars of Lent are traditionally prayer, fasting (self-denial as a spiritual exercise to express repentance) and charity/works of love (self-denial to free us from attachment to material goods)
- 'Lent is about becoming, doing and changing whatever it is that is blocking the fullness of life in us right now. Lent is a summons to live anew.' *Henri J. M. Nouwen*



WESLEY UMC PRESENTS...

A Really Big Shew*
TALENT, TALENT, TALENT! WHO KNEW???

FEBRUARY 23, 2024

**Fried Chicken Covered Dish Dinner at 5:30 PM
Talent Show at 6:30 PM**

**Supporting the
FLORIDA UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME
*Donations accepted***

Music, skits, comedy, singing, you name it!

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

826 NW 23rd Blvd. Gainesville

(352) 372 2845



* No, this is not misspelled. Check with Ed Sullivan.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Wesley Unit of UWF

March 9th at 10:00AM - Wesley UMC Fellowship Hall

General Meeting "Call to prayer and self denial."



North Central District Spiritual Enrichment Day

March 16th at 10:00 AM - Trinity UMC in Gainesville

Speaker: Lorraine Mayfield-Brown from the Gulf Central District

Lunch: \$10

Mission Project: Unscented, long, ultra-thin sanitary napkins for Florida UMCOR

Available now from the UWF website:



The **Daily Prayer Guide 2024** theme, "Let Us Break Bread Together," calls to mind that we are created to be in community and welcome all to God's table. Daily prayers and devotionals are reminders of the steadfast love of God and invite us to the table, encouraging a deeper connection with God and one another in community.

M3376 \$19.99

A digital-only version of the *Daily Prayer Guide* on our **digital platform**.



Welcome Home is an adult curriculum that explores how we can know God as an intimate friend who welcomes all — encouraging us to open our hearts to embrace God's power and presence. The explorations lead participants outward, expanding to welcome others to join us in our work as co-creators establishing God's kingdom on earth. The sessions include Scripture reviews, discussions, and activities to apply what is being learned, and two intergenerational sessions. By author Neomi Fletcher.

M3380 PRINT \$14.99 KINDLE \$5.95

TALENT SHOW COVERED DISH DINNER

There wasn't enough room on the event poster, and I wasn't sure you would notice the "covered dish" mentioned ever so briefly. The Kitchen Committee will provide fried chicken for the dinner, but we all need to bring a covered side dish or dessert to share. Please try to have your dish feed at least 12 people!



MISSION OF THE MONTH

BREAD OF THE MIGHTY FOOD BANK

Bread of the Mighty Food Bank has been helping to feed Gainesville and surrounding areas for 36 years.

They collect, sort, store and distribute donated food and basic essentials to over 200 nonprofit agency partners such as food pantries and feeding programs. Their dedicated team hits the road five days a week to collect donated food from generous retailers and wholesalers, which is then redistributed back into the community, addressing hunger and supporting those in need throughout Alachua, Gilchrist, Levy, and Union counties.

In May 2023, the organization proudly joined Feeding Northeast Florida as a branch, expanding their reach to collectively serve 12 counties in Northeast and North Central Florida. The collaborative strength and efficiency inherent in this network ensure not only immediate impact but also long-term, enduring success. Together, they strive to make a significant difference in the lives of those they serve, fostering a resilient and nourished community for years to come.

Volunteers are an essential support network to their warehouse staff. They welcome both individual and group volunteers including churches, corporations, students, families, and more. The warehouse is open Monday-Friday, 9am-3pm. Please visit breadofthemighty.galaxydigital.com for more information.

*Bread of The Mighty
Food Bank*

Food & Non-Food items that our families need:

- Soup
- Coffee/Tea
- Personal Hygiene Items
- Paper Products
- Toiletries
- Canned Fruits
- Condiments
- Rice
- Jelly
- Grits
- Potatoes (instant or canned)
- Juice (bottled or canned)
- Pasta/Macaroni & Cheese
- Granola/Breakfast Bars
- Cereal/Oatmeal
- Shelf Stable Milk
- Snack Crackers
- Peanut Butter
- Canned Vegetables

Critical Items List:

- Shelf stable milk,
- Canned proteins (tuna, chicken),
- Canned vegetables,
- Canned fruits



www.breadofthemighty.org



Committee Meetings

2/7	6:00PM	Worship
2/21	6:00PM	Nominations
2/27	6:00PM	Leadership Board

February Birthdays

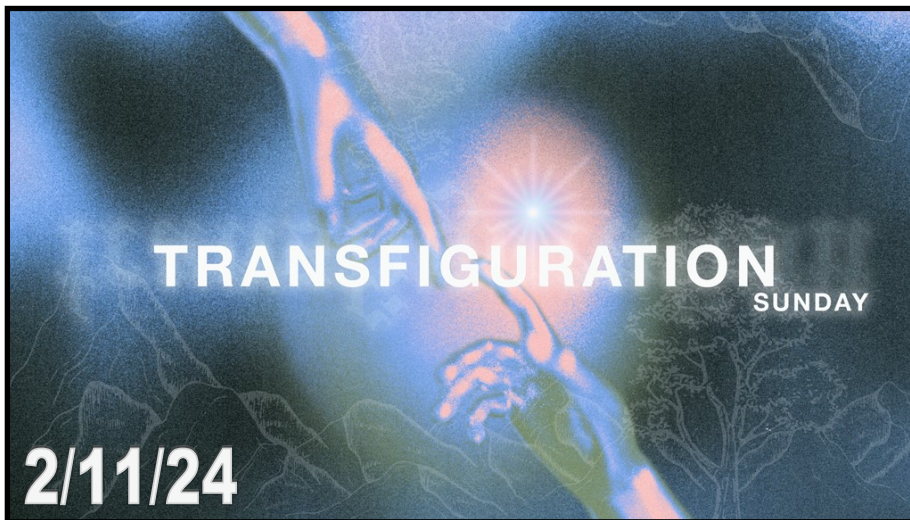
- 1st Jan Ripley
- Ashley Weseman
- 4th Clydia Reichert
- 20th Leslie Alday
- 24th Sandy Miller
- 25th Darryl Davis-Schulz
- 26th Rebecca Weseman
- 27th Donna Weseman

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!

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.

