

the spire

wesley student center & united methodist church at the university of illinois

january 2016

INSIDE AMERICAN POLITICS

WESLEY LITERARY TEA
American Politics
Sunday January 31st
West Lounge
2-4:30 p.m.

Come and hear some of your Wesley friends review books on American Politics on a winter Sunday afternoon! Current partisan politics will not be discussed; rather we will take a brief look at our political history, with some of its glorious wonders and disappointing warts. You will recognize many of the writers and players and marvel that we have survived for almost

261 years as an ongoing functional democracy, imperfect as it is.

The books (all nonfiction except as noted) and reviewers will be:

Democracy in America by Alexis de Tocqueville – Melissa Applebee

All the King's Men by Robert Penn Warren (fiction) – Jean Hitch

Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream by Doris Kearns Goodwin – Chuck Lansford

The Victory Lab: The Secret Science of Winning Campaigns by Sasha Issenberg – Sheldon Jacobson

This Town: Two Parties and a Funeral – plus, plenty of valet parking! – in America's Gilded Capital by Mark Leibovich – Kay Romans

The Myth of the Strong Leader: Political Leadership in the Modern Age by Archie Brown – Bill Breeding

Refreshments will be served. This afternoon of stimulating discussion of books and ideas is open to everyone. Bring a friend or two!

Sponsored by the Wesley United Methodist Women

Grow at Wesley

Find A Mentor at Wesley this Spring!

The Adopt-A-Student program is being offered again this spring at Wesley. This program seeks to link students with community members at Wesley Church for general support and encouragement, a family or individual to connect with for a meal or coffee, and to help a student come to feel more at home at Wesley Church and Student Center. If you are a student and would like to participate and be connected with a mentor, contact Pastor Miriam (msnider@wesleyui.org) or fill out one of the sign-up cards in the back of the Sanctuary or the Center Office. If you are a community member at Wesley and you'd like to participate by adopting a student please contact Pastor Miriam.

The commitment is for 2 hours a month for 4 months (February - May 2016).

New Spring Small Group Opportunities at Wesley

On Care for our Common Home
Thursdays at 10:15 a.m.
beginning January 21st

All are invited to join this three-week small group which will be reading and discussing portions of Pope Francis' encyclical on climate change and the environment.

There are books available in the Center Office for \$10.

Wearing God: Finding Meaning in the Metaphors
Thursdays at 10:15 a.m.
beginning February 11th

Spend Lent discovering who God is and who we are called to be through the Bible's many metaphors for God. We'll be reading Lauren Winner's new book, ***Wearing God: Clothing, Laughter, Fire and Other Overlooked Ways of Meeting God***. Join Wesley's pastors on this six-week journey during this important season of the year.

Becoming the Answers to Our Prayers

Thursdays at 10:15 a.m.
beginning April 7th

This spring we'll learn how prayer and action must go together. We'll explore Shane Claiborne and Jonathan Wilson Hartgrove's book, ***Becoming the Answers to Our Prayers***. This book's exposition of key Bible passages provides concrete examples of how a life of prayer fuels social engagement and the work of justice. Join us for this four-week discussion series as we prepare for Wesley's annual Peace with Justice Sunday in May.

Looking for a Good Read this Winter?

At Wesley we are really looking forward to a special combined service coming up on February 14th at 10:30 a.m. This is the third year we've participated in the Preach-In on Climate Change. We are especially excited about the guest preacher this year, the Rev. Dr. Philip Amerson. Dr. Amerson is a retired United Methodist pastor and seminary president and is passionate about the care of creation. In preparation for the event, Pastor Miriam asked Dr. Amerson about the books and

articles that have had the most impact upon him as he considers a Christian response to the crisis of climate change. He graciously provided the following list. Miriam has read several of the selections on the list and she offers them to you as writings that will inform and inspire you to be agents of change and hope in the world.



You'll see one of the books on the list is the recently released book by Pope Francis on caring for our common home. We'll be reading portions of this book as a small group study beginning Thursday, January 21st at 10:15 a.m. If you'd like to participate in this reading and discussion group, books are now available in the Center Office for \$10. We'll just be meeting for three weeks and the conversation will help prepare us live more faithfully in the world.

If you have any questions feel free to contact Miriam (msnider@wesleyui.org). Enjoy a good read and we'll see you on Sunday, February 14th. Invite a friend to this special service.

Books:

Berry, Wendell, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*, Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint Press, 2015. (New edition – first published in 1977.)

Berry, Wendell, *Our Only World: Ten Essays*, Berkeley CA: Counterpoint Press, 2015.

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, July 18, 2015. This is also available online at: http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

Rasmussen, Larry, *Earth Honoring Faith*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Norman Wirzba, *From Nature to Creation: A Christian Vision for Understanding and Loving our World*, Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2015.

Wirzba, Norman, Fred Bahnson and Bill McKibben; *Making Peace with the Land: God's Call to Reconcile with Creation*, Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2012.

Articles:

Bruggemann, Walter, "The Earth Awakens: Reading Hosea in the Age of Climate Change," *Sojourners*, January 2016.

Johnson, Carol, "And the Leaves of the Tree are for the Healing of the Nations: Biblical and Theological Foundations for Eco-Justice," Office of Environmental Justice: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 2006.

See:

<http://www.pcusa.org/media/uploads/environment/pdf/andtheleaves.pdf>.

Web Resources:

National Religious Coalition on Creation Care. See: <http://www.nrccc.org>.

ecoAmerica Leadership Summit at Washington National Cathedral.

See:

<http://ecoaffect.org/2015/06/18/13-resources-to-help-you-understand-pope-francis-climate-encyclical/>

Take Action



PREACH-IN ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Wesley UMC and the Wesley Green Team invites you to our third annual **PREACH-IN ON CLIMATE CHANGE**. The speaker on Feb. 14, 2016, will be **Rev. Dr. Philip Amerson**, past President of both Claremont

Theological Seminary (2001-2006) and Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary (2006-2013). He will give his sermon entitled **Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor** at the combined 10:30 a.m. service. He has thought much about the relationship between humans and the environment over the years and has supported the idea of sustainability, especially at Garrett Evangelical Seminary. It is an intriguing sermon title. Come and hear an inspiring message.

There will be a potluck in the Great Hall after the Sunday Service starting at 12 noon. Please bring a dish to share and your own reusable dinnerware. There will be reusable dinnerware available for students and those who cannot bring their own.

Dr. Amerson has graciously agreed to engage in a Q and A in the Watseka Lounge following the potluck. Paper and pencils will be available on each table for you to formulate your questions for this event. If you prefer, you can ask questions directly. The Q and A will be approximately 30 minutes in length. Ashlynn Stillwell, a fellow Wesley UMC member and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Assistant Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering and Assistant Professor in the Institute for Sustainability, Energy and Environment, will moderate the discussion.

The Wesley Green Team will be asking Wesley members to financially support three environmental organizations that

we have picked out for 2016. These three organizations are:

Faith in Place

A statewide organization of over 1,000 houses of worship which seeks to inspire religious people of diverse faiths to care for the earth through education, connection, and advocacy. Faith in Place works to protect our common land, water, and air. It seeks a sustainable future and advocates for good environmental legislation for all the people of Illinois. Faith in Place is a member of Interfaith Power and Light along with approximately 37 other states.

Champaign County Health Care Consumers

A nonprofit, community-based, citizens' organization that focuses on health care, advocacy, and community action. They have spent much time recently on dealing with threats to our water source, the Mahomet Aquifer. There is still work to be done on this issue.

Prosperity Gardens

A Champaign nonprofit that uses its urban gardening programs to provide a hands-on garden-based education and green business employment opportunities. Prosperity Garden partners with the Regional Office of Education's READY Program, a Champaign-based alternative education program for at-risk students (grades 6-12). The partnership between READY and Prosperity Gardens combines agricultural and nutrition education coupled with an intensive health and wellness curriculum. Finally, all these activities also provide affordable, locally-grown produce for Champaign-Urbana's low income residents.

The Wesley Green Team will be providing additional information on these organizations later in the month. We hope that you will generously support Faith in Place, Champaign County HealthCare Consumers, and Prosperity Gardens at our Combined Service at 10:30 a.m. on February 14, 2016.

We hope you will also attend the potluck and the discussion in the Watseka Lounge. It is a great opportunity to listen to and have a conversation with a noted spiritual leader on a topic of such great importance. Dr. Amerson's visit, coming on the heels of the recently concluded Paris Climate Talks, offers us a great opportunity to learn more about the Climate Change issue and our role of being good stewards of the planet God has entrusted to us. Let your friends and relatives know about this upcoming Wesley experience. See you Sunday, February 14, 2016 at 10:30 a.m.

Brief Biography for Rev. Dr. Philip A. Amerson

We are thrilled to welcome Rev. Dr. Philip Amerson to our congregation to share his thoughts on ecojustice and creation care. The title of his sermon will be "Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor." Dr. Amerson, President Emeritus of Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, has spent decades reflecting on our relationship to the natural environment. He has written, taught, and preached on these subjects, and his musings on sustainability and other issues are at www.philipamerson.com.

Dr. Amerson earned a Ph.D. in the Sociology of Religion at Emory

University and has taught in a number of college and seminary settings. Early in their careers, he and his wife, Elaine, were on the faculty at Emory University. They stepped away from academia for a time and joined the founding of Patchwork Ministries in Evansville, Indiana in 1977. Patchwork is an intentional Christian community with multifaceted ministries, including ecumenical worship services, after-school programs for children, sustainability efforts, economic development centers, health programs (the Washington Avenue Clinic), minority leadership initiatives, and other activities focusing on social, economic, and environmental justice.

Dr. Amerson served for six years as President of the Claremont School of Theology (2000-2006) before becoming President of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois from 2006 to 2013. An ordained United Methodist pastor, Dr. Amerson also served as senior pastor of three congregations in Indiana from 1982 to 2000 and as interim pastor of a congregation in Colorado in 2014.

Dr. Amerson and Elaine are currently settled on a small farm in La Porte, Indiana, where he enjoys gardening, beekeeping, consulting and writing. The Amersons have a daughter, Lydia, in Chicago and a son, Andrew, in San Francisco and four grandchildren.



United Methodist Women

UMW January Birthday Luncheon

End the first month of 2016 by celebrating your January birthday at the **luncheon on Wednesday, January 27th at Milo's, 11:30 a.m.** Even if you are not a January birthday please join us for fun, good food and warm fellowship.

Reservations are helpful but not necessary. (Call 217-344-6331 to make a reservation.) We have many birthday members in January. They are: *Pat Tymchyshyn, Allie Jones, Ingrid Hutchings, Deborah Tamime, Jeanette Forrest, Phyllis Webster, Barbara Norton, Sue Kiddoo, Rachel Maehr, Helen Miller, Sharon Harkness, Laura Weger, Amy Campbell and Rev. Julie Dowler.*



Children's & Youth Ministry

SUNDAYS

Nursery Care is available from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

9:30 a.m. Service Infant – 3 years
11:15 a.m. Service Infant – 5 years
1st Sunday Infant – 5 years

Children's Ministry at Wesley

Sunday School for Pre-K through 5th grade students meets the 2nd-5th Sundays from 9:45-10:30 a.m. in Room 127 A and B, after the children attend the Children's Moment in Church with their parents from 9:30-9:45 a.m.

Youth Ministry at Wesley

Sunday School for Middle and High School meets the 2nd – 5th Sundays from 9:45-10:30 a.m. in the Conference Room.

2nd – 5th Sundays: Fellowship, scripture study and doughnuts are always included!

A Story From Ms. Rachel's 3 year old - 5th Grade Sunday School Class

On December 20th, during our student sharing time, many students were discussing their Christmas plans.

Each child was getting excited as they heard about what their classmates would be doing. A student then asked me what was the true meaning of Christmas. She said that she was confused if it was about Santa or Jesus. A three year old then joined in and wanted to know the answer. This was a wonderful teachable moment that teachers look for, as all of my students were highly engaged in

learning the real meaning of Christmas. I re-shared the Christmas story that they had all learned for the Christmas Pageant that they had been in. I was also able to discuss why Santa exists, and that it was okay to be excited for Santa to visit, but to remember that the best gift that we ever received on Christmas was when Jesus was born!



Announcements

Farewell to Jan Robinson Coffee Hour, January 24th

One of our dearest church members, Jan Robinson, is leaving. Jan has been a faithful, active and loving member since 1970. Jan and her husband Jim had three children, Mark, Margie and Glenn, who were in our church school program. Mark and his family live in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, which is where Jan and Jim are relocating to. They have bought a lovely condominium in a beautiful retirement community and will be close to Mark and his family, who recently adopted three children from Haiti. Jan and Jim are looking forward to helping with their new grandchildren.

Jan has served in many areas of Wesley on committees and boards. She has been Pastor Parish Chair for two terms; on the Worship Committee for many years, where she was also co-Chair for many years with Alora Bowles, Meg Rauschenberger, and Susan Haney; a member of the Inclusiveness Committee; the Education Committee; and Youth Coordinator when her children were active at Wesley. She has also been very active in United Methodist Women throughout her years at Wesley, serving as Spiritual Growth Chair. She gave beautiful devotions at the UMW monthly meetings and Executive Board meetings. She has shared her artistic ability in creating beautiful bulletin boards advertising UMW programs and events. Thank you, Jan, for your ministry and service to Wesley through the years. We love you and appreciate all you have done for our dear Wesley Church family. You will be missed

but we know the memory of your warm greetings, hugs, committee chairing and all your special gifts will be forever in our hearts. We wish you happiness and joy in your new home and with Mark's family and your grandchildren.



Congratulations!

On Sunday, November 29th the community at Wesley was proud to welcome **Riley Lou Conrad** into the family. Riley's parents are Matt and Marti Conrad. Congratulations to the whole Conrad family!

Thank you from Wesley Staff!

Thank you to all who contributed to the love gift for Wesley Staff and for the cards and treats. We appreciate your generosity!

Wesley Sound System Volunteers Needed

Can you help with sound one or more Sundays per month? Training is available. The time commitment is for setup, operation, and closure for the 9:30 worship service on an ongoing basis. We would like to have a team so volunteers can plan on one to two services each month. Interested? Have questions? Contact Donna Giffen at 344-1120.

Wesley Handbell Choir

Did you enjoy the Handbell concert during Advent? Would you like to try your hand at ringing bells? The handbell choir is always looking for new members to join in the ringing. If you are interested in joining, contact Morgan Boes, handbells@wesleyui.org. We rehearse once per week on Wednesday evenings, and usually play in the 9:30 a.m. worship service once per month.



Food Pantry News



Happy New Year!

As we look forward to the year ahead, we would like to express our deepest gratitude for the amazing work of the many Food Pantry supporters. Your support has made 2015 a truly incredible year. From our clients, to our dedicated volunteers, donors, and board members, thank you for all that you've done this past year to help spread the Food Pantry's mission and values.

New Volunteers

Though the winter months are traditionally difficult to staff, last month's Evening distribution proved just how dedicated Food Pantry volunteers are to feeding our neighbors.

Church and community members rose to the occasion by volunteering to work longer hours. College students still on campus donated their time to the cause too. Several experienced volunteers invited friends to join in. And new volunteers took a leap of faith.



A special thank you to AMDOCS employees who, in the spirit of giving, chose the Wesley Evening Food Pantry for their corporate volunteering last month.

New Grants and Donors

The Community Foundation of East Central Illinois recently awarded the Wesley Food Pantry with a new grant in the amount of \$943. The grant will help purchase 10 recycled wood pallets for the Evening Pantry as well as two poly box trucks for transporting rice and beans at the Parkland Pantry.



The Community Foundation of East Central Illinois is a philanthropic organization founded in 1972 which distributes donated funds to local charities and community programs and other relevant causes that support the long-term advancement of the East Central Illinois Community.

Each year, Wesley UMC's Social Action Ministry (SAM) members engage in social justice and equality, and focus on important societal themes related to Poverty, Hunger, Crime, Violence, and Education amongst many others. This past year, SAM awarded the Food Pantry \$1800 to continue its work in alleviating hunger and food insecurity in Champaign County.



The Wesley Food Pantry would also like to welcome a new donor, the St. John's Episcopal Church Foundation. Their donation of \$500 is greatly appreciated!

Their donation of \$500 is greatly appreciated!

Thank you to the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois, Social Action Ministry, and St. John's Episcopal Church in Champaign for their support!



Updates from the Social Service Desk

A total of 313 children's books and 44 adult books were distributed at last month's Evening distribution. Meanwhile representatives from the Champaign County Health Care Consumers returned to help clients stay informed about their medical care options, and a volunteer performed SNAP outreach in the waiting area.

empty tomb & BonTon Fundraisers Coming Up!

This year the Food Pantry will again be facilitating the Church's participation in empty tomb's Mega Work-A-Thon. We will be collecting donations in February and March for packaging rice. We will also be selling coupon booklets again for Bergner's Community Days later this month and next month. Look for us between services!



| @Wesley | @Parkland |
|--|---|
| 2,551 Households 11,674 Individuals 5,274 Children | 1,557 Households 5,334 Individuals 2,200 Children |

Wesley Staff

Senior Pastor/Director

Rev. Dan King Crede

Campus Minister

Rev. Julie Dowler

Associate Minister

Rev. Miriam Snider

Dir. of Contemporary Worship & Music

Brian Sullivan

Dir. of Christian Education & Youth

Rachel Maehr

Director of Chinese Ministry

Jie Wu

Organist

Adam Gruber

Dir. of Choral Music

Dr. Barrington Coleman

Bell Choir Director

Morgan Boes

Kingdom Singers Director

Samantha Barra

Parish Nurse/Spiritual Caregiver

Meg Rauschenberger

Administrative Assistant

Donna Giffen

Office Secretary

Vicki Johnson

Accountant

Bonnie Taylor

Aide for Development

Wayne Wilson

Food Pantry Director

Katie Thomas

Food Pantry Operations Manager

Dawn Longfellow

Food Pantry Volunteer Coordinator

Brittany Coleman

Director of Communications

Derek Attig

IT Computer Specialist

Laura Licari

Property Manager

Richard Young

Full-time Custodian

Jack Driver

Part-time Custodians

**Chris Livesay, TJ Jackson,
Mason Driver**

Weekend Custodians

Justin & Megan Farkas

Campus Ministry

Tuesday, January 19th

**8:30-10:00 p.m., Etc. Coffeehouse
(and every Tuesday)**

Grad Student Book Study - Graduate students from all disciplines are invited to participate in our book study.

Questions? Email Michael Drummond at gradstudy@wesleyui.org.

Wednesday, January 20th

**9:00 p.m., Etc. Coffeehouse
(and every Wednesday)**

Midweek Student Worship - Our student-led worship gathers in the coffeehouse for fellowship and snacks, then enjoys casual worship together in the Student Lounge. It's a great way to help you make it through the week!

Friday, January 22nd

**3:00-4:00 p.m., Conference Room
(and every Friday)**

ESL Class - We welcome beginners through advanced students as we practice English and learn about American culture.

**4:00-6:00 p.m., Etc. Coffeehouse
(and every Friday)**

International Coffeehouse - International & domestic students, along with visiting scholars and community members, are invited to join us for coffee, snacks and conversation as we practice English, make new friends & learn about each other's cultures!

Sunday, January 24th

**9:30 & 11:15 a.m., Sanctuary &
Great Hall (and every Sunday)**

Sunday worship

Sunday, February 7th, 5:00-9:00 p.m.

Etc. Coffeehouse, Watseka Lounge
Superbowl party & Champion Chili Cookoff! Join us as we celebrate the best of American football (the commercials, of course!) and compete to see who ranks supreme among chili-makers! Bring a pot of your best spicy, sweet, meaty or veggie offering for our tasters, and we'll see who gets this

year's bragging rights – prizes will be awarded!

Tuesday, February 9th

6:00-8:00 p.m., Etc. Coffeehouse
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper – Enjoy \$5 all-you-can-eat pancakes with all the fixings in our newly-renovated Coffeehouse. Invite some friends to come along, too!

Wednesday, February 10th

7:00 p.m., Sanctuary
Ash Wednesday service – Join us for this quiet and reflective service in Wesley's Sanctuary as we begin the observance of the Lenten season. Everyone is invited!

Friday, February 12th

4:00-6:00 p.m., Etc. Coffeehouse
Valentine's Day party at International Coffeehouse – Everyone is invited to join us as we celebrate the day of love together! Students, visiting scholars and family members can decorate cookies, join in a special Bingo game, and make valentines for the ones you love!

**Spring ESL Class & International
Coffeehouse**

The spring session of our ESL class and International Coffeehouse begins Friday, January 22nd! The class meets in the Conference Room from 3:00-4:00 p.m. each week, followed by the Coffeehouse gathering in Etc. from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Students, visiting scholars, family and community members are invited to join us as we enjoy coffee and snacks, practice English and learn about each other's cultures!

Sunday Services

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
9:30 a.m. Children's Church School
10:30 a.m. Coffee/Punch Hour
11:15 a.m. Contemporary Worship
**11:00 a.m. Children & Adult
Education Classes**