

the spire

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

January 2023



Wesley Church and Foundation Hires Chanda Davidson as Wesley's Business Manager

Wesley United Methodist Church and Foundation is proud to welcome the newest member of the Wesley Staff, Chanda Davidson. Chanda will work as Wesley's Business Manager. In taking on this position, Chanda will oversee the accountancy work for the church and foundation, in addition to the building operations. Previously, Chanda has 10 years of experience in property management in both student and conventional housing. With her prior work in property management, she oversaw the upkeep and success of large properties that housed over 200 tenants.

Prior to being hired at Wesley Chanda worked at the University of Illinois where she processed medical bills and coordinated benefits between student and parental insurance for student athletes. Chanda, says she is excited to learn the financial aspects of both the Church and Foundation and helping both grow in the coming future.

Fellowship Opportunities

The Discipleship and Family Ministries Team is having a great time hosting our monthly fellowship gatherings. Most recently, we were so glad to join together with the Education Committee for our Advent Family Fair! If you haven't had a chance to join us, we will continue to have opportunities planned throughout 2023. All are welcome to join in the fun – and feel free to invite a friend!

- This month, we are joining with the Education Committee to host a trivia night! This event will be on Saturday, January 14 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. Snacks will be served and childcare will be available. Information about how to RSVP will be available soon.
- We are continuing to explore options for February and beyond, so stay tuned to the Spire newsletter and the Wesley Weekly for updates! And, if you have any ideas for future fellowship events, contact Pastor Jess at jesslecrone@wesleyui.org



Fresh Air Yoga

Fresh Air Yoga is a yoga class for yoga practitioners of all levels. We meet in the Watseka Lounge on Fridays at noon. On the 2nd Friday of each month, we practice chair yoga, which is an excellent option for anyone who needs extra support to practice yoga, or cannot or chooses not to practice yoga on the floor. On the 4th Friday of each month, we will practice yin yoga, which includes stretches held for longer in order to target deep connective tissues. Any schedule updates or cancellations will be announced in the Wesley Weekly and on Facebook with as much advance notice as possible. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Jess at jesslecrone@wesleyui.org.

Thank You for Your Support!

The Wesley Student Center would like to say a big “THANK YOU” to all those who brought treats, made cookies, served in the coffeehouse, and prayed for students during finals week as we encouraged and helped them make it to the finish line of the fall semester. Everything was greatly appreciated and helped us provide a warm welcome to folks coming into the coffeehouse to study, write papers, and work on final projects. Y’all are awesome!



Jonestown Mississippi Mission Trip

Ray Norton, Craig Chamberlain and John and Ann Spurgeon were joined by 4 members of the Channahon UMC for a week-long Habitat Mission trip to Jonestown MS. the week of October 23–29. While we were there, the group successfully installed all the soffit and fascia coverings on a home. Wesley members were fortunate to work with and get to know the new homeowner, Tiokie, and her 4 daughters who are scheduled to move into the home next March. One of Tiokie’s daughters also worked with the team and is the valedictorian of her 6th grade class and wants to become a doctor later in life. One of the group’s highlights was teaching Tiokie and her daughter how to use a circular saw to cut the materials we were putting up.

While in Mississippi, the group also visited the Delta Blues Museum and Ground Zero Blues Club in Clarksdale and sampled BBQ from a local restaurant. Wesley’s team defined the trip as “bittersweet” because they had to say goodbye to Carl Fuller, the Jonestown construction supervisor, who is retiring and moving to Connecticut where he and his wife, Lorna, can spend more time with their family. The Jonestown affiliate is also closing, and this is the last home they will build.

Expenses for the trip were paid for from previous donations from the generous members of Wesley. The group truly appreciates the financial and spiritual support of the congregation for this life-changing mission.



Education

Youth Group Meetings this Month

Youth Group will meet January 15th & 29th this month from 4:30pm to 6:00pm in Watseka Lounge. There will be no Youth Group on New Year's Day. All youth in middle and high school are welcome to join for fun, fellowship, and food. Please let Ms. Liz (LMartin@wesleyui.org) know by the Friday before whether you think you'll be able to make it, and if you might bring a friend, so that she can plan for supper.

Children's Sunday School and Childcare on New Years Day

Children's Sunday School for Pre-K through fifth graders will not be held on New Year's Day but will resume on January 8th after the Children's Time during the 9:30 service. If you'd like to volunteer to help teach Sunday School, please contact Liz Martin at LMartin@wesleyui.org. Childcare will not be offered on New Year's Day, but the nursery will be open to families with children under three years of age in case any little ones need a break during church with a family member. Please do not leave children unattended in the nursery.

Wesley Praise Team In Search of Drummer

The Wesley Praise Team is looking for a drummer! Please contact Liz Martin, Contemporary Worship Leader, if you know of anyone who might be interested in playing Sunday mornings for the 11:15 Contemporary Worship Service. LMartin@wesleyui.org

Adult Bible Study – The Study of Daniel Begins on January 22

The Adult Bible Study Class has finished Ezekiel and is taking a break for the holidays. We will begin studying the book of Daniel on Sunday, January 22 at 11:00 AM in the Conference Room. According to one commentator, Lawrence R. Farley, the book of Daniel "is a book of wonders and extremes – mad kings, baffling dreams with gifted interpreters, breathtaking deliverances, astounding prophecies – with even what may be the world's first detective stories added in for good measure." Adults of all ages are welcome to join us as we learn more about God's people and discuss what messages scripture may have for us today. Attendance by Zoom is also an option. Contact Barb Hughes at blhughes3@gmail.com with questions or to get the Zoom link.

Thank You All Who Joined

The Carol Concert and Advent Family Fair was a wonderful celebration of the Advent Season here at Wesley, enjoyed by folks of all ages. We ate delicious oven-baked grilled cheese sandwiches and soups prepared by Pastor Jess in the Great Hall, assisted by Coady and Alex, and crafted beautiful ornaments for our Christmas tree in Watseka Lounge, led by Barb Hughes, Steve and Diana Herriott, Kara and Steve Whiteley, and Emily and Scott Lux. Coady even brought his Polaroid to take pictures of families by the Christmas Tree! Best popcorn-stringer this year was Isla Hoiem, with close second tie by Noah Lux and Joie LeCrone.



campus ministry

Wesley is Here for You!

Students and young adults - if you're feeling down or depressed, would like someone to pray with you, or just want to talk over winter break, we're here for you! Contact Pastor Julie (jdowler@wesleyui.org), or Coady (cmurphy@wesleyui.org), or call/text 918-533-7217 to set up a time to meet virtually or in person. We look forward to connecting with you. Have a restful break and a wonderful new year! Merry Christmas!!



Free ESL Class for All Levels - Resumes January 20!

The Wesley Student Center offers an ESL class (in-person and online at <https://bit.ly/3SXAIIC>) for beginning through advanced students Fridays from 3:00pm to 4:00pm at Wesley. We invite international students, visiting scholars, family members, and community folks to join us as we practice English, make new friends, and learn about American culture. Questions? Contact our campus minister, Julie (jdowler@wesleyui.org), for more information.



Queer Space - Resumes January 22!

This group is for questioning and LGBTQ+ students and young adults who gather to celebrate and support one another through the unique challenges of being a Queer Christian. We are a safe and confidential place, and you don't have to be out to join us. What happens at Queer Space stays at Queer Space! We meet Sundays at 7:00pm for conversation, films, deep dive discussions, game nights, and more! For questions, contact Coady at cmurphy@wesleyui.org.

Etc. Coffeehouse Opens January 23 for Spring Semester

The Etc. Coffeehouse will open for the spring semester Monday, January 23, and will be open Monday through Friday, 10:00am to 5:00pm. The coffeehouse offers free coffee, tea, hot chocolate and snacks to all students, as well as multiple study spaces with numerous tables, couches, and chairs. Everyone is welcome here, so bring your friends and come study in the coziest, comfiest place on campus!

Spring Semester Welcome Week, January 23-27

Students are invited to join us for special events and opportunities during the first week of classes. We'll enjoy catching up after winter break, making new friends, and having some laughs with games, movies, etc., as we get the semester off to a great start! Check out our Facebook/Instagram pages (Wesley Student Center and Etc. Coffeehouse) and website (uiucwesley.org) for details. We look forward to seeing you in the new year!

International Reading Group - Resumes January 24!

The International Reading Group (for Advanced ESL learners) meets on Zoom every Tuesday at 9:00am (<https://bit.ly/3TJMtvK>) to read and discuss newspaper articles, improve English pronunciation, expand vocabulary, and explore the challenges of the English language. Questions? Email Dave Mies at dwmies@gmail.com.

Campus Ministry Calendar

The Wesley Student Center will be closed through January 16 for the U of I Winter Break. We will resume regular programming Tuesday, January 17.

The Etc. Coffeehouse will be open weekly (M-F), from 10:00am to 5:00pm (beginning January 23). Enjoy free coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and plenty of snacks to keep you nourished as you study. We also have free Wi-Fi, lots of tables for group projects, and some of the comfiest couches on campus. Bring your friends and come hang out!

Sunday, January 1, 10:30am, Wesley Sanctuary

Combined worship service (in-person and YouTube livestream). Start the year off right with our New Year's Day Covenant Worship Service!

Thursday, January 5, 5:00pm to 7:00pm, Wesley Foundation (and every Thursday)

Wesley Food Pantry – We all need help from time to time... Wesley is here for you, or someone you know who needs food assistance. It's also a great place to volunteer if you need service hours (wesleypantry.org). Please share this information and help us help others!

Sunday, January 8, 9:30am & 11:15am, Wesley Sanctuary and Great Hall (and every Sunday)

Traditional (in-person and YouTube livestream) and contemporary (in-person) progressive, inclusive, and affirming worship services.

Friday, January 13, 12:00pm to 12:45pm, Watseka Lounge (thru 1/27)

Free Friday Yoga with Pastor Jess – Bring your friends and join us every Friday at noon for Fresh Air Yoga. This is a gentle yoga class for all levels, so everyone is welcome! Bring your own yoga mat, or borrow one from Wesley. Questions? Contact Pastor Jess (jesslecrone@wesleyui.org).

Wednesday, January 18, 7:00pm, Etc. Coffeehouse

Midweek Campfire – Join us for gourmet s'mores, great conversation, and fun with friends! Our new meeting time for the spring semester is **7:00pm**, which will be followed at 8:00pm with a new small group opportunity. Look for more details to come!

Friday, January 20, 3:00pm to 4:00pm, Watseka Lounge/online (and 1/27)

Free ESL Class - We welcome beginners through advanced students as we practice English, build conversation skills, and learn about American culture, traditions, and history.

Sunday, January 22, 12:30pm, Etc. Coffeehouse (and 1/29)

Sunday Student Lunch – Students and young adults from both worship services are invited to join together for a meal in the coffeehouse as we deepen existing friendships and cultivate new ones!

7:00 p.m., Etc. Coffeehouse (and 1/29)

Queer Space - This group is for questioning and LGBTQ+ students and young adults who are interested in connecting with others and exploring faith, identity, and more.

Monday, January 23 – Friday, January 27

Spring Semester Welcome Week – Wesley will welcome everyone back for the spring semester through a variety of special events and opportunities in the Etc. Coffeehouse during the first week of classes. Check out our Facebook pages, Instagram, and website (uiucwesley.org) to learn more!



Tuesday, January 24, 9:00am to 10:00am (and 1/31)

International Reading Group (for Advanced ESL learners) on Zoom – International students and visiting scholars are invited to join us as we read and discuss newspaper articles, improve English pronunciation, and expand vocabulary.

Friday, January 27, 11:30am to 1:30pm, Lamb Courtyard/Etc. Coffeehouse

Friday with Friends Lunch– Depending on the weather, join us on Green St. or in the Etc. Coffeehouse for food, friends, and fun! Bring your own lunch or enjoy hot dogs & veggie dogs, grab some goodies to go, play games with friends, and celebrate the start of your weekend!

Announcements

Sympathy to Jack McManus and Family

Sympathy to Jack McManus and family at the passing of his wife and long-time Wesley Member, Sandy McManus, on Saturday, November 19 at the age of 80. A memorial service will be planned at a later date. Cards may be sent to Jack at 8340 Wingate Drive #1024, Sarasota, FL 34238.



Sympathy to the Family of John McKay

Sympathy to the family of former Wesley Member, John McKay, who passed away on Thursday, November 24 at the age of 84. He lived at Clark Lindsey in Urbana.

Sympathy to Gayle Walden and Family

We extend Sympathy to Gayle Walden and family at the death of her father and Wesley member, Rev. Donald Walden, who passed away Monday, December 19th.

Wesley Holiday Hours from December 26 - January 2

Wesley building and office hours will be reduced from December 26 - January 2.

Monday, December 26: CLOSED

Tuesday, December 27: Open 8am – Noon

Wednesday, December 28: Open 8am – Noon

Thursday, December 29: Open 8am - Noon

Friday, December 30: Open 8am – Noon

Monday, January 2: CLOSED



In Loving Memory – The food pantry received donations in the past month honoring the following individuals with ties to Parkland College:

John & Ruth Aldrich • Merida Drake

Raymond Meredith, Sr. • Towanda Frazier

In Your Honor – We also received donations in honor of: **Dick Swain** in honor of his Run for Charity

Donna Giffen, in honor of her 25 yr. anniversary with Wesley Church & Foundation on December 1 (Belated cards for Donna are always welcome!)



Thank you to those that helped at our Giving Tuesday Rice Repackaging!



Granting Help for 2023

Wesley Food Pantry Director, Dawn Longfellow, attended the Junior League of C-U’s Festival of Trees in November where we received a grant from their Community Assistance Fund. The funds will be used to purchase books to supplement those donated to our resource room. Each week, guests can spend time picking out books for their children or themselves while waiting to shop at the pantry. The new books will focus on main characters of color or reflecting the languages spoken in the family home of our guests. We look forward to seeing the joy in a child’s face when they choose a book and see themselves or their language reflected on the cover.



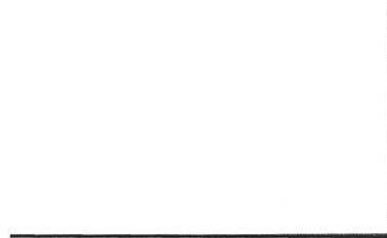
Wesley Food Pantry is happy to announce that we received a \$5000 grant from Bayer Fund. This grant will help us support our efforts to provide fresh produce throughout the year. The pantry is committed to having fresh fruits and vegetables available at each of our community distributions.



Wesley United Methodist Church
1203 W. Green St.
Urbana, IL 61801

TEMP-RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit 299
Champaign, IL 61821



Wesley Staff

Interim Senior Pastor/Director **Rev. Vaughn Hoffman** | Campus Minister **Rev. Julie Dowler**
Associate Pastor **Rev. Jessica LeCrone**

Director of Contemporary Worship and Music **Liz Martin**
Director of Christian Education and Youth **Liz Martin** | Childcare Coordinator **Qutey Sayles**
Director of Choral Music **Dr. Barrington Coleman**

Administrative Assistant **Donna Giffen** | Office Secretary **Dawn Longfellow**
Business Manager **Chanda Davidson** | Director of Communications **Blake Warman-Neal**

Food Pantry Director **Dawn Longfellow** | Food Pantry Assistant **Brian McDermott**
Full-Time Custodian **Samantha McIntosh** | Part-Time Custodian **Christopher Livesay**

Sunday Services

Traditional Service 9:30am
Contemporary Service 11:15am

Wesley Building Hours:

Open Monday - Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm
Sundays 9:00am to 12:30pm