

Weekly Newsletter



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A Message from Our Pastor

GOING TO THE POTTER'S HOUSE

"Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." Jeremiah 18:1

In the church, the Lenten season is traditionally a time marked by prayer and self-reflection. It is a time for preparing our hearts and minds to experience once again the ridiculousness of Holy Week, the crazy zeal of the crowds welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem, the audacity of humanity in killing God's child, and the overwhelming graciousness of God to love us anyway. This is a drama like no other in human history. In Lent, we prepare our hearts and minds not only to observe it, but to participate in it.

One of my favorite images of God working in our lives is as the Great Potter, who, like the artist, works the clay to create something beautiful. Sometimes the creation gets damaged or has weaknesses that keep it from being fully useful. But the creator can rework the creation, and make it right again. That's us, friends. Sometimes we need a re-work, a re-do, a 50,000-mile maintenance checkup. This year, you are invited to come with me to the Potter's house and begin that work of restoration.

It all begins on Ash Wednesday, March 2nd. There will be two opportunities to take the mark of the ash upon your forehead or hand as a reminder of our mortality and the need for Jesus in our lives.

7:00 am - 8:00 am: Come early, before work, to dwell in candlelight and silence, and receive a smudge of ash to be worn throughout your day.

6:30 pm - 7:15 pm: Ash Wednesday Service, graced by sacred music and candlelight, concluding with the imposition of ashes.

Part of our re-do involves shaking free of some of our baggage. Down-sizing our belongings is a good start. So here is our challenge: throughout the season of Lent, from March 2nd - April 17th, our challenge is to fill a full-sized yard bag with items from our closet or dresser drawers. It's simple: every day of Lent, one item from your closet goes into the bag. At the end of Lent, take a selfie with your bag and post it on your Facebook page (or send your pic into the church office and we'll post it on the Church Facebook page) with the explanation of the challenge. Then donate your clothing to your favorite ministry for those in need (LifeWise and Salvation Army are two).

God invites us to go down to the Potter's House, and experience a time of renewal and transformation. It's time to look inward, and let the Gospel message convict the parts of our life that are out of whack. It's time to invite God to work in our lives like the Potter works the clay, reshaping us into a stronger, more effective vessel for God's grace.



Won't you join me?

Pastor Sharon

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

LIVING STONES

This program is for children, 4-years-old to 6th grade, to learn about God and is held during worship (10:30 am - 11:30 am). Each Sunday, parents bring their children to Fellowship Hall to check in. The program will be indoors. Children will remain distanced and masks are required. There will be games, stories, snacks, and prayer. We look forward to seeing you every Sunday!

WILD WEDNESDAYS ARE BACK!

March 9th @ 5:30 pm - Our theme will be dance! We will celebrate St. Patrick's day by bringing in Irish Dancers from the Clark Academy of Irish Dance. They will perform and teach us a jig! We will also see how dance is used throughout the Bible to praise God. Sign up [here](#).

April 13th @ 5:30 pm - Our theme of course will be Easter! Sign up [here](#).

If you would like to volunteer, bring food, or cook food for any of these or future events, please email me at directorchildren@websterum.org. I would love your help!

Shae Parsons



YOUTH MINISTRY

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

February 27 - With hope & faith we will bring back ZOMBIE TAG! After working up a sweat, we will sit down to chat about our summer Mission Trip!

****ALL EVENTS WITHIN THE CHURCH REQUIRE A MASK! ****

Youth Ministry meets on Sundays from 5:30-7:30 pm!

Contact directoryouth@websterum.org to connect with Pastor Paige

YOUTH MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISER

The youth are looking forward to engaging again in a summer mission trip. Your support is key in helping us deepen our relationship with Christ in different communities. One way you can help and also enjoy a treat is to participate in our TJ's Fundraiser. We are available from now until Feb. 27, 2022, to take your favorite pizza and cookie orders. Once the forms are turned in, we will let you know the delivery date, likely around March 13. The youth will be able to accept cash or checks made out to Webster UM with 'Youth Fundraiser' in the memo line. Donations can also be made through online giving. Click the GIVE tab on the top right of our website or choose the GIVE option on your phone, and follow the "Give Now" link.

We appreciate your gifts and your prayers as we continue to organize and plan a life-changing mission experience for our youth!!



Blessings,

Paige Foster & the Youth of Webster UM



TREATS FROM HAWAII

This Sunday we will celebrate both January and February Birthdays and Anniversaries! Pastor Sharon is sharing goodies from Hawaii with the celebrants, so be sure to come!



JOIN THESE BIBLE/BOOK STUDIES!



Opportunities to Participate Virtually

FORMING FAITH BIBLE STUDY - WEDNESDAYS @ 7:30 PM

Sign up now on our [website](#), attend in person, or email assistantpastor@websterum.org for a Zoom Link.

THE KING SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS - SUNDAYS @ 8:45 AM

If you are interested, please contact Earl Jones at aemjjones@att.net.

TRIVIA NIGHT

WEBSTER TACKLES CANCER TRIVIA NIGHT

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2022

7:30-10:00 PM

Come enjoy a fun night of trivia and help raise funds for the Scott Harris Oliphant - SHO Scholarship Fund, awarded to a Webster Groves student who has a family member afflicted with cancer. Connie Kroenung volunteers as the Executive Vice President of the SHO Foundation and her daughter, Lucy, volunteers as the President of the SHO Webster Tackles Cancer Club at the high school. This event is run by Lucy's club. Some of us at Webster United Methodist are gathering to form a table for this event. If you are interested, contact Connie Kroenung at ckroenung@wspaces.com to reserve your seat. Tickets can be purchased at the door or online at <http://www.shofoundation.org/>

Cost: \$200 per table of 8 participants, \$25 per individual
Themed Tables - Decorate with the theme of your choice!
BYOB & Food

Location: St. Elizabeth School
1420 Sappington Rd
Crestwood, MO 63126



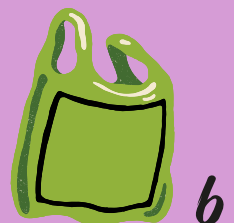
"GREEN BAG" FOOD DRIVE IN THE MONTH OF MARCH

March is traditionally the month we collect grocery items in green bags for LifeWise StL. Hopefully, we can collect enough green bags from LifeWise to still call it by the name we have come to know.

Pick up your bag that includes a grocery list in the Narthex on any Sunday in March and return it full of non-perishable food items the following Sunday. The Mission Team has set a goal of 800 food items for this year's food drive.

Let's exceed our goal!

Helen Fuller and Joel Kichline (Missions Co-Chairs)



LIFEWISE StL SPRING BLING BRUNCH & AUCTION

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 2022

Each year, Spring Bling is one of LifeWise StL's most highly anticipated events.

Guests can expect an empowering atmosphere, a delicious meal, top-tier entertainment, and a silent auction featuring an array of designer handbags, beautiful accessories, and creative gift sets. The event will be in person this year!

Join LifeWise in their efforts to enrich the lives of women in our area, while increasing their impact in the St. Louis community. Check out their website [here](#) for more information.

LifeWise StL (Topic submitted by Jan McCurley, UMW Rep for LifeWise)



OUR FINANCIAL PICTURE

When we budgeted for 2021, we wrongly anticipated that, as the year progressed, we might be close to normal in our church life. The limitations that the pandemic imposed significantly reduced building use for in-person activities for the whole year. This reduction enabled us to avoid a red ink year.

Key elements of 2021 finances include:

*Giving to the general budget at \$294,000 almost equaled the excellent total for 2020.

*Total income (\$366,700) exceeded the amount budgeted and the total expenses (\$350,000).

*We paid our Apportionments in full.

*Healthy support was given to national United Methodist causes and to local ministries.

We start 2022 with a healthy balance sheet and pledges of \$274,000, almost the same as the previous year. Our budget for 2022 has the following key points:

*Giving to the general budget will be \$300,000.

*Total income will be just under \$330,000.

*Total expenses will reach \$364,000.

*Payroll expense will increase to just over \$196,000.

*Strong support of missions and outreach, locally and nationally will continue.

*We start the year with a very strong balance sheet.

We have started the year with an anticipated deficit in our budget, but recognize that in past years initial deficits have been closed or eliminated by year end. The Finance Committee plans to seek creative ways during the year to close the gap.

The financial support of Webster United Methodist continues to be strong enabling online worship, support for needy local ministries, as well as other mission activities. Congratulations.

A FOLLOW-UP: TRUTH IN EDUCATION LET THEM LEARN RALLY

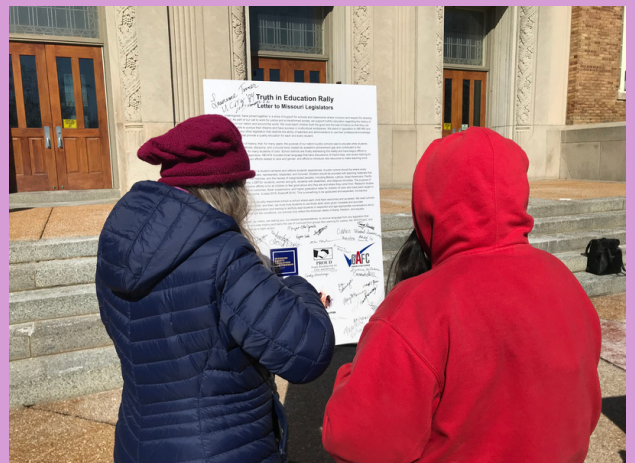
Saturday morning, February 19, the temp was below freezing, but spirits of about 75 St. Louis persons gathered on the steps of U. City High were warm and lively, showing support for equitable and accurate teaching of U.S. History. Metropolitan Congregations United was joined by U. City High students and five community organizations, such as the Alliance for Interracial Dignity and Missouri Equity Education Partnership in sponsoring the rally.

Justice Team member, Katie Renkin's take away: "I'm so glad I went... It was inspiring but also showed how serious this situation is." The rally protested bills pending in the Missouri legislature that challenge and undercut inclusion and respect for diversity in Missouri schools. Because of the pushback on the initial round of bills HB 1474 and HB 1975, the legislative focus has shifted to parental rights (rights already protected in law) with the imposition of financial penalties on schools (\$20,000) and employees (\$1,000 per violation) when successfully sued by parents. Those in attendance were asked to sign a position letter to members of the Missouri General Assembly on reasons to support equitable and accurate U.S. history teaching and oppose the restrictive bills under consideration.



To read/add your signature to the position letter: Scan the QR code below or click [here](#). On that page also is an explanation of the bills.

Carolyn Redmore (Justice Team Coordinator)



FAITH AFTER FERGUSON: RESILIENT LEADERSHIP IN PURSUIT OF RACIAL JUSTICE

Over the course of four 90-minute virtual sessions, led by the book's author Rev. Dr. Leah Gunning Francis and guest facilitators, you will experience fruitful conversation, deepening connections and mutual learning from small group discoveries and reflections on key learnings and insights.

The deadline for registration is today!

For more information, dates of the book study offerings, and to register click [here](#).



INTENTIONAL FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Format of Lenten Devotional Book Request Form

When joining the United Methodist Church, we state that we will faithfully participate in the ministries of the Church by our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. It is an encouragement to others and helps all of us grow in faith. That is our intent as we compile devotions to be used during Lent. Fill out this [form](#) to let us know which format you wish to receive the booklet (or email secretary@websterum.org to request your copy and format preference: a physical or digital copy).

The Intentional Faith Committee thanks everyone for participating!



CALLING ALL QUILTERS AND CRAFTERS



All quilters and crafters are invited to join WUM's quilter and crafting groups. Quilters meet in the old nursery from 9 am until noon every Tuesday. Crafters meet in Fellowship Hall from 9:30 to 11:30 am every 4th Tuesday of each month.

Each group has a sale or auction with the money going to missions. If you would like to join or have questions, call Sharon Wersching.

JOIN A VOLUNTEER-IN-MISSION WORK TEAM FORMING FOR MAY!

We have reserved a workweek with space for 10 people for May 1st - 5th at the Midwest Mission Distribution Center near Springfield, IL. Some people from last year's team are eager to return, but there are plenty of spaces open to join.

Depart on Sunday, May 1st – Return either Thursday, May 5th in the evening or Friday, May 6th in the morning

*What is MMDC? It is a United Methodist-affiliated disaster relief facility providing disaster relief kits, school desks, educational & medical supplies, etc., locally, nationally, and internationally.

*The work: There is something for every ability — packing kits, sewing school bags, building & refinishing school desks, repairing bicycles and sewing machines, organizing materials, unloading items, filling shipping containers, etc.

*Cost: TBD based on number of people going, but it will be minimal for dormitory lodging and supplies, plus food & gas expenses.

If you are interested in joining the team, call Jan McCurley or email janis.mccurley@gmail.com no later than March 3rd.



JOIN OUR WORSHIP STREAMING TEAM!



VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO ASSIST IN THE EXCITING WORLD OF
STREAMING SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES!

If you have an interest in learning new and valuable skills and assisting with streaming, please contact Gordon Ballam at gcballam@gmail.com. You do not need previous experience, but should be comfortable using computers and learning different types of computer software programs. Training will address each piece of equipment and the challenges specific to it. We look forward to hearing from you!

OUR PRAYER CONCERNS

Margo Petracek; Meagan Day; Tim Mosier's family (Kris Maly); Jace Bantz (Deanna Jent); Family of Jeff Jason (Debbie Lund); Kathy Linss (Beth Gewinner); Marilyn Cline, Mary Lynn Wright (Cindy Andrews); Sandy Hoyer, Darlene, Debra (Vicki Hoyer); those with cancer; elderly parents; safe travel; healthcare workers; social justice for all; and for all to be vaccinated.

Prayers & thanksgivings will remain in the newsletter for two weeks.

To have your prayer requests included, please contact us using the:

*Connection Card ([online](#) or in-person)

*Prayer Requests (on our [website](#))

*Email secretary@websterum.org

*Contact one of our pastors



NEWSLETTER ARTICLE DEADLINE

All articles and submissions must be sent to secretary@websterum.org and admin.communications@websterum.org

by Monday at 10 am to be in that week's newsletter.

CHURCH SPACE RESERVATIONS

If you want to schedule a space for your group, check the calendar and

send your request to

admin.communications@websterum.org

to schedule all usage!



COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

The current requirements are:

- Worshippers are welcome to choose their own seats in the sanctuary.
- Please maintain appropriate physical distancing.
- Please wear masks throughout worship.

-Pastor Sharon and Tom Pacatte (Chair of Safety Team)