



March 9, 2023

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Brown Bag Food Drive for LifeWise StL



March is Webster United Methodist's month to collect food for the City Market at [LifeWise StL](#). Please pick up a brown bag in the Sanctuary Lobby or First Floor Lobby (aka Elevator Entrance) any Sunday in March and return it with food items (from the list) the following Sunday. The Missions Team has set a goal of 400 food items for this year's Brown Bag Food Drive. ***Let's work to exceed our goal! We are off to a great start! Last week, we collected 93 cans of food, 58 bags & other packages of food!***

Foods requested for this drive:

Canned vegetables	Canned fruit	Soup	Canned tuna
Canned chicken	Dried beans	Rice	Pasta
Cereal	Oatmeal	Cream of Wheat	
Toilet Paper	Tissue (Kleenex, Puffs, etc)		

Please check labels and avoid foods high in salt and sugar content.

Volunteers in Mission Team April 30th—May 4th

We are pleased to announce that the 2023 V.I.M. Team going to work at [Midwest Mission](#) April 30th-May 4th is complete; there are 7 of us. Some are first timers, some returning after a few years, and some were part of the 2022 team. **Here is the team: Katie Renkins, JoAnn Claywell, Pastor Sharon Kichline, Ron Boelloeni, Lynne Wehrman, Linda Guth Stangl, and Jan McCurley.**

Midwest Mission is preparing to send [Personal Dignity Kits](#) to Turkey for those victims of the horrific earthquake, and also to Ukraine. Part of our work may be putting together those kits. Please watch the newsletter for more details about Midwest Mission's needs as we may be asking for donations of needed kit items to take with us.

Socks & Skivvies Drive was a Big Success!

The recent **Socks N' Skivvies** collection for **LifeWise STL** was a big success during the month of February, with over 570 new items collected! Thank you to all who contributed to this drive!

Drum roll...here are the final counts!

- Girls' underwear-57
- Boys' underwear-66
- Women's underwear-78
- Men's underwear-81
- Girls' socks-69
- Boys' socks-87
- Women's socks-75
- Men's socks-57

The Youth sorted all of the donations by type and size Sunday night and placed them into labeled bags in sets of three for the **LifeWise STL Bodega** thrift shop.

A big thank you to the Youth and Missions teams for spear-heading this collection. We are so proud of our church and neighbors who donated their time, talents, and gifts to bless the LifeWise STL community.



WUM Youth Ministry

March 12th, 5:00 pm-7:30pm

Meeting about mission trip at 5pm, followed by youth group activity TBD

Fundraiser for Youth Group Summer Mission Trip

WUM Youth are fundraising for their upcoming summer mission trip.

They will be selling **TJ's Pizza and Heritage Candles**. Members of the

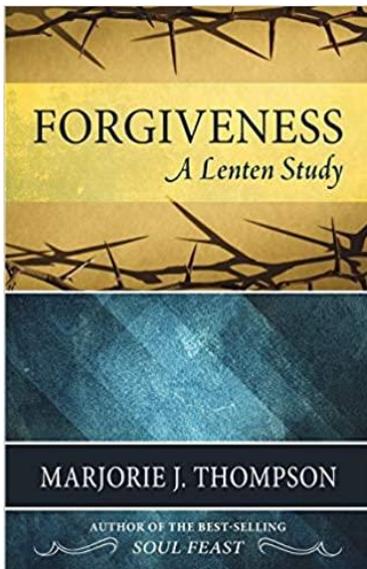


youth group will be in Fellowship Hall **March 12th from 10AM-Noon**. Please stop by to make a purchase to support our youth!



All-Church Lenten Study Sunday Mornings

9:00 AM Fellowship Hall



Learning to ask and grant forgiveness is necessary for our lives because of an inescapable fact of human nature: we are bound to hurt each other, sometimes on purpose & sometimes unintentionally. Youth are invited to participate at their own table and the Discovery Room will be available as an option for children. **This study continues through April 2nd.**

Contact Pastor Sharon, pastorsharon@websterum.org for more information.

Good and Evil: Small Group Discussion with Pastor Josh

Join Pastor Josh in a small group discussing the theology of free will, good and evil, and the presence of God among all of these. **This five-week course began Wednesday, March 1st, 5:30—6:30 PM** and meets in Fellowship Hall. Sign up on the Connection Card on Sunday morning or contact Josh, assistantpastor@websterum.org

UMCOR Sunday Special Offering March 19th



Through the **UMCOR Sunday Special Offering**, local churches underwrite all the operational costs of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). *This offering allows UMCOR to use 100% of all funds given to humanitarian response and recovery efforts directly to communities in need.* These gifts ensure UMCOR can respond swiftly to disasters around the world and as a source of hope and healing for those left most vulnerable.

Special donation envelopes will be available at the March 19th worship service. Please designate UMCOR on the memo line of your check to the church. Thanks for your support of these life-changing ministries.

Prayer Concerns

Rick Austin (son of Linda Austin); Margaret Christensen; Becca Stevens; Traci Stuart and her best friend's son; Roger Hessling (Katie Renkins); Chase Nordlund, Carol Carinci (Debbie Lund); Susan Smith, Linda Kincaid (Marcia Kennon); Marty Moro & family and sister of Angela Behnke & family (Kris Maly); two friends (Jan McCurley); baby Sloane (Joan Ballam)

Living Stones Children's Ministry

Living Stones program is for **children aged 4 years old to 6th grade** and is held during worship (10:30AM-11:30AM). Each Sunday during worship, children are called forward for a blessing and then go to the Discovery Room to learn about God. We have games, stories, snacks, and prayer. If you have any questions, please contact Shae Parsons at directorchildren@websterum.org. We look forward to seeing you every Sunday!



Get ready for an *extra special Wild Wednesday on March 15th!* This month, it's not just for children. Ages 4—12 will have dinner, hear a Bible story, and participate in activities from 5:30-6:30. *Then, from 6:30-7:15, anyone is welcome to come see Irish Dancers from the Clark Academy of Irish Dance to help us celebrate St. Patrick's Day!*

Daylight Savings Time Begins March 12th 2:00 AM



Don't forget to set your clocks forward one hour before going to bed on Saturday night, March 11th. Daylight Savings Time begins March 12th at 2:00 AM. *(You don't want to be late to church on Sunday morning!)*

The BIG Supper Club

Welcome Neighbor STL's Biggest Fundraiser of the Year



The BIG Supper Club is the annual Welcome Neighbor STL fundraiser where we promise to feed your soul and fill your heart with stories of rebuilding lives and restoring hope. Refugee cooks will share their culinary skills with dinner and dessert from Afghanistan, Syria, India, and Africa. Our new friends will discuss their journey to St. Louis and the joys & struggles of settling in a new world. You can be a part of this special celebration by joining as a sponsor, making a donation, or purchasing tickets to the event. Follow this link for more information and to purchase tickets: [The BIG Supper Club](#). Deadline for tickets is March 20th!

Volunteer at Bethesda Dilworth March 19th

Every other month, volunteers from WUM assist Pastor Sharon provide a thirty-minute worship service for the residents at the skilled nursing facility Bethesda Dilworth (9645 Big Bend Road in Kirkwood). At 2:00, volunteers gather in the chapel on the second floor to receive assignments and disperse to escort residents who use wheelchairs to the chapel. Residents particularly enjoy the WUM Sundays because we sing many old hymns before and at the conclusion of the service. If you have questions, would like to volunteer, or wish to be added to the e-list of volunteers for future dates, please contact Beth Anderson, 314-781-9923 or treblecross1980@gmail.com.



WEBSTER GROVES TOWN HALL MEETING

hosted by
Unity United Methodist Church
627 Cornell Avenue | 314.962.6488

Sunday, March 12 at 2 p.m.

TOPIC:

**Dismantling Systemic Racism
- Racial Covenants
in Webster Groves**

Trans Justice

Once upon a time...God took the great DNA molecule, perhaps God's greatest creation, and tinkered with it to separate us from the bullfrog and the giraffe. Then God tinkered with it a bit more to distinguish us from each other. Then for reasons known only to God, He tinkered with it to make some of us heterosexual, others of us homosexual, some of us bisexual, others of us transgender, and a few of us androgynous.

Unfortunately, people are not always appreciative of all this diversity, and have reacted with a mixed bag of responses, ranging from warm acceptance to cool tolerance, to disdain and judgment, and some, to unbridled violence. As a consequence, persons not fitting the traditional binary of male/female, are at greater risk of problematic development that, without positive support, disproportionately results in depression, suicidal tendencies, and assault, including homicide.

Our own Methodist tradition has struggled mightily over how to understand our LGBTQIA+ siblings; whether they are a holy creation of God, (the theology embraced by our church), or an aberration to be fixed, or a sin to be confessed. This deeply felt conflict has recently caused our global Methodist connection to fracture, and we are amid the fallout now. Webster United Methodist will stay within the more progressive United Methodist connection, welcoming and honoring our LGBTQIA+ siblings.

This conflict in the religious community is also very real in the political arena. In Missouri, a number of bills would institute an all-out ban on gender-affirming health care for transgender minors, with exceptions for intersex youth. Parallel measures, also filed by conservative Republicans, include a bill to penalize any adult who "coerces" a minor into undergoing gender-affirming care, classifying such coercion as child abuse or neglect, which is a felony. Other proposed legislation would prohibit the use of public funds for gender transition procedures for minors.

These are oppressive and frightening times for families with transgender children. Sunday's Post-Dispatch featured an article about three clergy families of transgendered children, and their concerns for the well-being of their kids as they mature. The article states: "At least 31 bills have been introduced by the Republican supermajority, targeting youth participation in competitive school sports, the ability to revise gender on birth certificates, gender-affirming medical treatments, and other rights of LGBTQ people."

For many families with transgender children, the most threatening element of this wave of proposed anti-trans legislation is that it will identify treatments to delay puberty or help transition their child to the child's preferred gender as "child abuse" and invoke criminal penalties for medical providers and possibly parents. If these bills become law, transitioning children in Missouri will have to wait until adulthood before they can interrupt the progression of their gender development, making the physical and social transition more difficult and potentially less successful, as well as, causing irreparable harm as they must stay encased in a body in which they feel like they do not belong.

"Do no harm" is one of the three General Rules of our faith. Forcing children to wait until adulthood before they and their families can seek gender intervention will certainly do harm.

The United Methodist Social Principles remind us that God made all persons unique and that we are beloved. To love God's creation is to work toward its health and wholeness. Under The Nurturing Community, Human Sexuality section of the Social Principles, it says, "All persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured and to be protected against violence. The Church should support the family in providing age-appropriate education regarding sexuality to children, youth, and adults."

Friends, this is a justice issue, and we can make our voices heard. We encourage you to contact your state legislators (you can look them up at [Legislator Lookup](#)) to let them know where you stand on this important, and we believe, egregiously harmful wave of proposed legislation.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Sharon and Carolyn Redmore