



Weekly Newsletter

FEBRUARY 29, 2024



AMANDA BERRY SMITH, AFRICAN-AMERICAN HOLINESS EVANGELIST AND MISSIONARY, SEE STORY ON PAGE 6.

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A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

The Season of Lent

In our Church year, Lent is the season of introspection and preparation for the celebration of Easter. It lasts 40 days (not counting Sundays) and kicks off (so to speak) with Ash Wednesday. I was not with you at Ash Wednesday Service this year, but the service included taking the mark of ash on your forehead or hand as a reminder that we are temporal beings who suffer with sin, and need a Savior.

Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for Baptism by member- wanna-be's, and later became a time of penance for all Christians. It concludes with Holy Week, in which we travel with Jesus into Jerusalem through the waving palms of Palm Sunday, eating supper with Jesus on Maundy Thursday, weep at his cross on Good Friday, and awakening to his glorious Resurrection on Easter morning.

Many traditions, including United Methodists, practice denial of something during Lent. Persons may give up ice cream, their favorite soda, or social media, for example. I have done this, and it is helpful in reminding me about the sacrificial nature of Jesus' love for us.

But if forfeiting a habit or favorite treat is not feeling very spiritual to you this year, I propose an alternative. Outside of the Pastor's Study, I have posted a listing of ways that we can add a meaningful action to our lives during this season. I encourage you to pick out one, and pursue it in the next four weeks. I think you will find it stimulating and fulfilling.

Beyond fasting: 10 tips for a more meaningful Lent: Click [HERE](#)

As we prepare our hearts and minds during this time of Lent, let us join the psalmist of old in praying,

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And put a new and right spirit within me.

Psalm 51:10

Hope to see you Sunday,

Grace & peace +

PASTOR SHARON



Meet Your Church Leaders Series III



JOAN BALLAM
CHAIR OF STAFF PARISH RELATIONS



Greetings Church,

This is Joan Ballam and I am pleased to call Webster United Methodist my church. My husband, Gordon, and I became members shortly after moving to St. Louis in 1982. I have been involved in a number of committees since joining WUM and, more than anything, have been impressed by the heart of this church for missions. We truly become the hands and feet of Christ through these efforts. Our children, Christina and Bradley, grew up in the church participating in activities through their high school years and continuing to contribute to mission efforts as adults. We thank our church family for helping to raise them.

I am currently the chair of the Staff Parish Relationships Committee (SPRC). One might think of us as a human resource department. Administratively, we ensure fair hiring practices, conduct performance evaluations and make recommendations on staff compensation. On relationships, we are tasked with providing support for our staff and open channels of communication for the pastor, staff and congregation. Our pastor and each of our staff are connected with a member of the SPRC. I can direct you the appropriate liaison if you have any confidential issues or feedback concerning our pastor or staff. The committee strives to keep the congregation, staff and pastor focused on the mission of the church.

This is a transitional year for our church as Sharon, our faithful pastor of 13 years, will be leaving her position and we will welcome a new pastor. SPRC will work with other church committees to ensure this is a smooth transition for both parties.

BLESSINGS,
JOAN

PRAYER CONCERNS



Ron & Dianne Wallace; Bev Mesey; Margo Petracek; Traci Stuart and her father Lou; Reesor/Stuart Family and their MiMi; Peg & Jerry Chulick (Jo Ann Claywell); Jeremy Henson's brother Dave; Steve & Jan Hanson's grandson Jonah; Teri Samples (Connie & Greg Kroenung); Justin (Mike & Veronica Pallia); Baby "Socks" (Chris Redmore); Marian Junge (Marcia Kennon); our country's leaders; world peace; and for meaningful gun control laws.

Sympathy to...

Teri-Ann Wallace passed away on Thursday, February 22, 2024. We offer our sympathy to her friend Marcia Kennon and other friends and family.

ENHANCING SECURITY

Improving security for the church facilities had been discussed for some time but not acted upon until the Rainbow flag was stolen. A collaboration between the Justice Team, the Safety Team and the Trustees has developed a project to address security. The plan calls for installation of security cameras at each of the four church entrances which has already begun. This is a costly project, just over \$8,000, that will provide surveillance, monitoring and recording 24/7. Any acts of maleficence or mischief will be captured. Commitments of \$4,100 have already been made by church members, led by members of the Justice team.

The Church Council at the February meeting voted to inform church members of the opportunity to support this project. Will you join those who have already contributed?

Contributions can be made by check with a note in the memo line "Security Cameras" or by making a donation online via the church website.

On behalf of the Church Council,
Derek Redmore, Chair of Finance.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

AMANDA BERRY SMITH

(1837-1915)

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HOLINESS EVANGELIST AND MISSIONARY

AMANDA BERRY WAS BORN INTO SLAVERY IN LONG GREEN, MARYLAND. SHE WAS MARRIED IN 1854 TO CALVIN M. DEVINE, AND HER CONVERSION FOLLOWED TWO YEARS LATER. AFTER HER HUSBAND DIED IN THE CIVIL WAR, SHE MOVED TO PHILADELPHIA AND MARRIED JAMES SMITH, AN ORDAINED DEACON AT MOTHER BETHEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH. AFTER VISITING GREEN STREET CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA, WHERE SHE HEARD JOHN S. INSKIP PREACH, A PROMINENT WESLEYAN HOLINESS LEADER, SHE TESTIFIED THAT SHE RECEIVED HER SANCTIFICATION THERE.

FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF HER SECOND HUSBAND IN 1869, SHE TRAVELED AS A HOLINESS EVANGELIST, BECOMING A POPULAR SPEAKER IN MANY CHURCHES AND CAMP MEETINGS. SMITH'S FRIENDSHIPS INCLUDED PROMINENT HOLINESS AND PROHIBITION MOVEMENT LEADERS SUCH AS HANNAH WHITALL SMITH AND FRANCES WILLARD.

HER OVERSEAS MINISTRY BEGAN WITH A VISIT TO ENGLAND IN 1878. FROM THERE, SMITH WENT TO INDIA AS A MISSIONARY; METHODIST BISHOP JAMES M. THOBURN THOUGHT SO HIGHLY OF HER THAT HE WROTE THE INTRODUCTION TO HER AUTOBIOGRAPHY (1893). IN AFRICA, SHE WORKED WITH METHODIST MISSIONARIES, INCLUDING BISHOP WILLIAM TAYLOR. SMITH SPENT HER LAST YEARS CARING FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN AT HER ORPHANAGE IN HARVEY, ILLINOIS. SHE WAS ALSO CONNECTED TO THE FOUNDING OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE.

HER SPIRITUAL FERVOR AND CALLS FOR JUSTICE IN SOCIETY AND HER WORK IN MISSION INSPIRED AN EXPANDED ROLE FOR WOMEN IN MINISTRY, PARTICULARLY WITHIN THE AME AND METHODIST CHURCHES.



Amanda Berry Smith. PHOTO: PUBLIC DOMAIN



Come Join Us!

MOUNTAIN SERVICE MEAL



**THURSDAY
FEB. 29, 2024
AT 6:30PM
WITH SERVICE
TO FOLLOW**

If you have questions, dietary restrictions, or would like to help, email juliaharalson@gmail.com or call/text 206-799-6441

Our Adult Volunteers in Mission Team Is Complete

I am so pleased to announce that our Midwest Mission Team is complete! Welcome to everyone! There are 10 of us, 9 women & 1 man, including several first-timers---very exciting!!

Here are the team members: Ellen Hendrickson, Lettie Morse, Sharon Kichline, Katie Renkins, Alison McCurley, Linda Guth Stangl, JoAnn Claywell, Gordon Ballam, Sandy Reesor, and Jan McCurley.

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**Thanks,
Jan McCurley**

CLIMATE CHANGE - PART 3

REASONS FOR OPTIMISM?



Global warming is due to increasing levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane (natural gas) in the atmosphere. Although the methane concentration is much lower than CO₂ it is 84 times more potent than CO₂ as a global warmer. In fact, methane accounts for a 30% share of global warming. Generation of these gases, certainly in the near term, is likely to continue so that preventing their escape into the atmosphere could play an important role in the fight to reduce global warming.

CO₂ capture technologies are well established. Large investments are being made to sequester the captured gas in appropriate rock formations. The sequestration technology is well developed in the oil and gas industry and is in use already with many more projects planned. A number of research efforts are underway to convert CO₂ into useful materials but these are unlikely to have impact in the near future.

Major sources of methane include Fossil fuels, cattle and landfills. Solutions exist to reduce the volumes from these sources. For fossil fuels, methane from coal mines, oil, and gas fields, solutions include simply plugging leaks, sealing abandoned gas wells, and equipment maintenance. Big reductions can be made. For cattle, breeding to more efficiently produce milk and meat, and diet changes could help. A research study has shown that partial addition of seaweed in the diet of cattle can reduce the methane belching by more than 50%. Cattle account for a not an insignificant 30% of methane emissions. Landfills generate methane from the materials dumped in them. This gas is collected in some landfills but more extensive use could have an important impact. It might be noted that Waste Management powers many of its vehicles with the collected methane. You might recognize that CO₂ is generated from combustion of methane but the significantly lower global warming potency makes this a positive result.

Watch for part 4 where some interesting new technology to address climate change is shared.

Derek Redmore

Protecting Reproductive Health Care: A Petition



Missourians for Constitutional Freedom have launched a campaign collecting signatures for a ballot initiative putting reproductive freedom into the state constitution, to be voted on in the November general election. With the support of the Justice Team Katie Renkins and I have gone through training to collect signatures over the next few weeks at church and beyond from persons registered to vote in Missouri.

What the constitutional amendment will do:



- Protect the right to make and carry out decisions relating to all matters relating to reproductive health care, including but not limited to pre-natal care, childbirth, postpartum care, birth control, abortion care, miscarriage care and respectful birthing conditions.
- Prohibit denial of abortions when the life, physical wellbeing or mental health of the patient is in jeopardy.
- Prevent prosecution or penalization of, or government discrimination against, those who receive abortions or people helping a person's access to abortion care.
- Allow the government to impose specific restrictions once Fetal Viability occurs (usually 27 weeks) but sets a high bar for imposing them.
- Restriction must improve the health of the person seeking care, be consistent with accepted clinical standards of practice
- Not infringe on autonomous decision making of the person seeking care.

As United Methodists we are fortunate in having Social Principles outlining official positions on societal issues that cast a vision for a just and equitable world. Relevant to this petition is the following affirming statement: “the basic freedom to petition for redress of grievances”. (Section V. A.: The Political Community: Basic Freedoms and Human Rights).



Immediately after the Supreme Courts' breaking precedent and ruling against Roe V. Wade, the Missouri legislature imposed and our Missouri government is enforcing one of the most stringent abortion bans in the nation that risks lives, threatens women's health, and co-opts decisions best made in the context of one's faith and medical consultation. Passage of the proposed Missouri constitutional amendment, “The Right to Reproductive Freedom” returns reproductive rights to where they were before the Supreme Court ruling against Roe v. Wade.

Carolyn Redmore for the Justice Team





UMCOR SUNDAY SPECIAL OFFERING

MARCH 10TH, 2024



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 10th worship service. Please designate UMCOR on the memo line of your check to the church. Thanks for your support of these life-changing ministries. You can also donate via our website under the GIVE tab. <https://websterunitedmethodist.org/give-2-2/>



LIFEWISE STL ANNOUNCES SPRING BLING FROM ROOTS TO WINGS" BRUNCH & AUCTION

Tickets are now available for the LifeWise annual spring fundraiser, Spring Bling, to be held Saturday, April 13, 9:30 AM-1 PM at Missouri Athletic Club, 405 Washington Ave., St. Louis, 63102. Attendees will enjoy a delicious brunch as well as a silent auction featuring jewelry, handbags, beautiful accessories, and unique gift sets.

For more information and to register, go to WWW.LIFEWISESTL.ORG or call 314-260-6369.

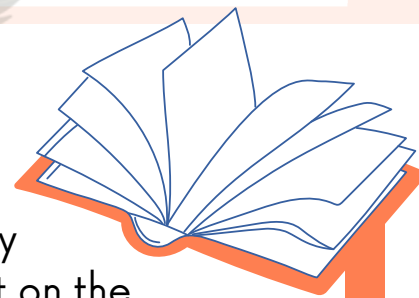
BOOK SUGGESTION

Are you interested in the border issue and the role it will play in this year's election? Reading a true story of an immigrant on the border between Mexico and Douglas, AZ may bring this issue into focus.

"The Death and Life of Aida Gonzalez", published in 2019, is a rich, novelistic tale of a woman whose life from childhood on spans both sides of the US-Mexico border. It's a riveting account of her struggle to get back to the U.S. and reunite with her son. She embarked on a journey to survive the militarized US-Mexico border and take on the U.S. immigration system. Well documented, the author includes a lot of facts and figures about the Border Patrol and how prevention through deterrence did not stop immigrants, but just increased police presence in these small towns.

The book is available from the Webster Groves Public Library. It is on the United Women in Faith reading list and counts in the Education for Missions category.

Carol Gilker
Reading Resources Secretary
United Women in Faith





Webster-Rock Hill Ministries

111 East Waymire Ave. Webster Groves, MO. 63119

The following letter of thanks was received this week for the congregants of our church who contributed to the food drive and other aspects of Webster-Rock Hill Ministries' Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday programs

February 20, 2024

To our holiday program donors,
On behalf of Webster-Rock Hill Ministries, we want to thank you for donating to our 2023 holiday program. The families who participated in the holiday programs were so appreciative of the food and gifts that you provided to them. Following are comments from several of the families that participated in the holiday program:

"It really means a lot to know that someone cares." T. H.

"I am always grateful for people who have given to me. I thank God for their kindness and help." J.M.

"Funds are really tight. This will allow my son to have a good Christmas." A. H.

"I appreciate the opportunity to participate as it relieves my financial burden and gives me more to be thankful for." E. J.

"So grateful to be included in this program. I was in tears when I learned we could participate." J. M.

"This is a blessing for us and our family." H. H.

Your gifts of food, presents and funds were appreciated!

Regards,
Kathleen Hurley & Lynne Shields
Holiday Program Coordinators



The hospitality committee and the SPRC are planning a celebration party for Pastor Sharon, and we are having an initial planning meeting on March 10th directly after the church service.

If you cannot attend the meeting, but want to be involved in the planning, or have any ideas, please email juliaharalson@gmail.com or call/text 206-799-6441

WHERE ART SERVES THE WORLD: AN AFTERNOON WITH INTERNATIONALLY-NOTED ST. LOUIS SCULPTOR DON WIEGAND.

Wednesday, April 10, Noon – 2:00 PM at Mercy Conference and Retreat Center in Frontenac. Doors open at 11:30 AM; box lunch & drinks served at noon.

Cost: \$50

individual ticket; \$275 table of 6; livestream \$15 per household.

Purchase tickets at MERCYCENTERSTL.ORG

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE DEADLINE

All articles and submissions must be sent to secretary@websterum.org by Monday at 5pm to be in that week's newsletter.