



Wesley Window

April 2025

Volume 906 Issue 4

MISSION OF THE MONTH
International Student
Assistance Fund

April Scripture

"Let the children come to me; do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs."

Mark 10: 14b

IMPORTANT DATES

April 1

Pastor Don's Birthday!

April 6

Bishop Kennetha J. Bingham-Tsai Preaching

April 13

Palm Sunday

April 17

Maundy Thursday

April 18

Good Friday

April 20

Easter Sunday





Pastoral Letter

Pastor Don Long Jr.

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This Tuesday, April 1st Becky, Zac and I will have been here at Wesley exactly nine months (It so happens I'll also be 56 years old... Yes, I'm an April Fool. Not surprising, I know!), during which time, if you've been around, you've come to know about my children's sermons. I enjoy the time I get to spend with the kids on Sunday morning, partly because Jesus made it a priority, and it's important enough that all three synoptic gospels include stories about it, as seen in Matt. 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16, and Luke 18:15-17. I wonder why people wanted to bring their "little children" (Matt and Mark) "infants" (Luke) to Jesus for him to touch? Why do the disciples try to stop them, and why do all three gospels record this event as happening when it does?

On Good Friday, March 24, 1978 (47 years ago) a major ice storm hit central Illinois and knocked out power to millions. I was just shy of 9 years old, and everyone in Argenta lost power. My best friend and his family, who lived next door to us, stayed at our house that weekend because we had just finished our new family room the summer before, and it had a fireplace, which we used to stay warm. We closed off the rest of the house, and nine of us lived in that family room for three days, including Easter. On Easter morning, my brothers and I, along with Troy (my best friend) and his little sister went on an Easter egg hunt through the front part of our then unheated house. It was great, and I will always remember that Easter as one of the best! But I imagine, if you ask my mom and dad, and Troy's mom and dad, they may disagree.

Five kids and four adults living in close quarters with no electricity for three days—sound like fun? It was to me. It was a three-day sleep over with my best friend, and we got to cook stuff on an open fire INSIDE! Topped off with an Easter egg hunt. How cool is that!?

In response to the disciple's stern efforts to stop people from bringing their infants and children to Jesus, he becomes "indignant" with them and said, "Let them come! The kingdom of God belongs to children, and if you don't receive the kingdom like them, you won't experience it."

Parents brought their kids to Jesus because they wanted him to bless them. They'd heard about him. They knew what kind of power he had, and they wanted their kids to have a leg up in life. Who doesn't want the best for their kids? The disciples were upset because they had an agenda for the day. There was serious stuff going on. Jesus was taking questions about divorce right before this, and right after this he tells a rich man to go and sell everything he has and give it to the poor, because it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. This is not child's play! This is life-and-death stuff.

Yet, right in the middle of these serious discussions with the very religious Pharisees, and hard questions from wealthy and powerful individuals, Jesus stops, blesses, and expands the kingdom conversation to include what everyone else sees as an interruption and distraction.

The icy Easter interruption of 1978 has become a central memory of gospel grace to my nine-year-old self. It was probably a really difficult time for my parents. They had a lot to worry about in those moments. But just like the very first Easter, the kingdom comes amid our worries and distractions, and when we receive it like little children—curious, trusting, and hopeful—it becomes life changing, and life giving in new and unexpected ways.

Happy Easter and God bless!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Pastor Don Long Jr." with a stylized flourish.



A Different View of Wesley: Reflections from Member Turned Staff

Six months ago, I stepped into a new role as the Office & Communications Manager at Wesley UMC—a church I’ve called home since 2012. Having spent years as a member, I thought I had a good grasp of how things worked. But being on staff has given me a whole new perspective.

It has been incredibly rewarding to use my strengths and passions to further the ministry of the church I love. I’ve received so many kind words about the new website, app, bulletin design, newsletter, and other updates, and I deeply appreciate that encouragement. At the same time, I know that change can be unsettling, especially in a place like church, where familiarity brings comfort.

One of the most eye-opening things I’ve learned is just how many rock star volunteers we have here. So many people give countless hours to keep things running, which is why I started highlighting a volunteer in each newsletter. And speaking of behind-the-scenes insights... let’s just say I’ve also discovered that there’s a little more “church drama” than I previously realized (who knew committee meetings could have plot twists?).

I’ve also come to appreciate just how fortunate we are to have a staff as large as ours. Many churches don’t have this kind of support, yet even with our great team, there is always more work to do than there are hours in the day. We’re all full of ideas and passionate about seeing Wesley grow, which means our to-do lists are never empty. And of course, alongside the exciting projects, there’s the less glamorous side—data entry, bill paying, and all the logistical work that keeps things running smoothly.

One area of ministry that has really opened my eyes is the Good Samaritan Fund. As a member, I knew it was there to help those in need, but I had no idea how much goes into running it. Requests come in throughout the week, and each one is carefully reviewed to ensure that funds go to those who truly need them. Some days, it feels like we’re all part-time detectives, trying to discern genuine need from those attempting to take advantage of our generosity. The amount of poverty in our community is staggering, but it’s a privilege to be able to help those who need it most.

Finally, if there’s one thing I’ve gained a new level of respect for, it’s our pastors. I always knew they worked hard, but I had no idea just how much they pour into this church. They are in the office all week, serve on many community committees, attend every church committee meeting (and trust me, there are a lot), they make countless home visits and check-ins, they pray constantly for this congregation, and they step in wherever needed—even if that means Pastor Don is out cutting up a fallen tree for an elderly couple who aren’t even members but called for help.

This experience has deepened my love for Wesley in ways I never expected. It’s a joy to serve alongside such dedicated people—both staff and volunteers—and I can’t wait to see what’s next for our church.

Lauren Merritt
Office & Communications Manager



EASTER



This Easter season, we invite you to give generously to support the ongoing ministry and operations of Wesley United Methodist Church. This year, we are focusing on strengthening the foundation that makes all of our ministries possible — our church operations fund. Your gift will help sustain the vital work of our church, from worship services and small groups to community outreach and pastoral care. Every contribution ensures that Wesley remains a welcoming place of faith, fellowship, and service for generations to come. Giving envelopes will be mailed to every household in April, with additional envelopes available in the sanctuary throughout the month. You can also give online by scanning the QR code. Thank you for your faithful support as we continue to grow and serve together! - Bridget Huggins, Finance Manager

Worship News

Bishop Kennetha J. Bigham-Tsai to Preach at Wesley



We are honored to welcome Bishop Kennetha J. Bigham-Tsai to Wesley United Methodist Church on **Sunday, April 6, at 11:00am**. She will be delivering a sermon titled **"To Know Christ"** and will join us for fellowship before (10:30am) and after the service.

Bishop Bigham-Tsai was elected to the episcopacy by the North Central Jurisdiction in 2022 and has served as the resident bishop of the Iowa Area since January 2023. Prior to her election, she was the Chief Connectional Ministries Officer for the Connectional Table, guiding the vision and mission of the United Methodist Church globally. She has also served as a local pastor, district superintendent, and leader in church justice initiatives.

A graduate of Harvard University, Bishop Bigham-Tsai began her ministry serving urban youth before answering her call to ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church. She brings a passion for inclusion, justice, and discipleship, shaped by her deep faith and love for the church.

We hope you will join us for this special opportunity to hear from Bishop Bigham-Tsai and extend a warm Wesley welcome!

Worship With Wesley This Easter Season

April 13 - Palm Sunday

8:30am: Contemporary Palm Sunday Worship Service

11:00am: Traditional Palm Sunday Worship Service

April 17 - Maundy Thursday

7:00pm: Maundy Thursday Worship Service

April 18 - Good Friday

7:00pm: Good Friday Worship Service

April 20 - Easter Sunday

6:30am: Sunrise Easter Worship Service

8:30am: Contemporary Easter Worship Service

11:00am: Traditional Easter Worship Service



1212 W. Calhoun St. | Macomb, IL 61455
www.macombwesleyumc.com



or worship online!

Announcements

Wesley UMC Camp Scholarship Application Available

Wesley United Methodist Church believes in the value of summer camp experiences for personal growth, learning, and community building. To support our youth, we offer camp scholarships to help cover the cost of attending both faith-based and non-faith-based camps, including Illinois Great Rivers Conference camps, Scout camps, and other qualifying summer programs.

- **Wesley UMC youth who are active participants may receive up to \$350 toward their camp fees.**
- **Friends of Wesley youth attending camp with them may also apply to receive assistance.**

To apply, complete the online application (www.macombwesleyumc.com/missions) and provide details about the camp you plan to attend. Scholarships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, so early applications are encouraged! We are excited to help make camp a reality for our youth and their friends!

Support Our Students with Study Bags!

The Nurture Committee is assembling Study Bags for high school and college students to support them during their study week. Our goal is to create **75 bags** to hand out, and we need your help!

We are collecting donations of the following items:

- 🍿 Microwavable Popcorn
- 🍜 Ramen Noodles
- 🍬 Candy
- 🍟 Chips
- 🍌 Granola Bars & Breakfast Bars
- 🍭 Mints & Gum
- 💧 Flavor Packets for Water
- 💧 Small Bottles of Water



Please bring any contributions by **April 13** and drop them off in the labeled Study Bags bin at the church. Your generosity will provide encouragement and snacks to help our students power through their studies. Thank you for your support!

Spring All Church Work Day!

We are cleaning up the Wesley grounds before Easter!! Please join us on **April 5 from 8am-noon** and help us pick up sticks, rake leaves, and clean off the flower beds. We will also be getting a load of mulch to go around the church, memorial garden and both parsonages. Bring your favorite tools - rakes, leaf blowers, wheel barrows, small chain saws, etc. and help us get ready for Easter!

Thank you, Wesley Trustee Committee

Bells In Motion to Perform at Wesley

Bells In Motion, a progressive handbell ensemble from Central Illinois, will be performing in Macomb on **Saturday, May 3rd at 7:00pm**. The ensemble combines seven octaves of bronze and aluminum handbells and chimes, string bass, drums, and other musical instruments. They perform music ranging from jazz to pops, big band to Broadway to American Spirituals. Mark your calendars and be prepared to enjoy an evening of toe-tapping and entertaining music with this talented group.

Volunteer Spotlight: Bonnie Barker

Bonnie Barker is a dedicated volunteer who helps in the church office and faithfully records attendance each week. She spends countless hours serving behind the scenes, and we are truly blessed by her kindness and commitment.

Thank you, Bonnie! ❤️



A black and white poster for a musical performance. On the right side is a photograph of a man wearing a baseball cap with a logo and a t-shirt, with his arms crossed. On the left side, the text reads: "MISON BONES" in large, stylized letters; "w/ LUKAS KETCHUM & LOGAN MITCHELL" below it; "PERFORMING SONGS FROM UPCOMING EP" above "Vespers" in a large, bold font; "FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER!" below "Vespers"; "APRIL 11TH" in large letters; "@ WILM WESLEY FOUNDATION" below it; "1326 UNIVERSITY • MACOMB" below that; "DOORS @ 6:30PM" and "SHOW @ 7PM" below that; a "\$10 LIMITED ENTRY BE THERE EARLY!" logo at the bottom left; and "MISONBONES.COM" at the very bottom.

April Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			Noon: Prayer Circle 5:00pm: Praise Kids 6:00pm: Men's Bible Study 6:30pm: Wesley Ringers 7:00pm: Praise Band	7:00pm: Choir Practice	7:00am: UMM, Hy-Vee Noon: Church Office Closed	8:00am: All Church Work Day
8:30am: Worship 9:30am: Coffee Fellowship 9:45am: Sunday School 11am: Worship - Bishop Bingham Tsai Preaches 6:00pm: Youth Group	1:00pm: Staff Meeting, Library	6:30pm: Boy Scouts #315, Scout Room 11am: SUAA Annual Meeting 2:00pm: Prayer Shawl Ministry 7:00pm: Christian Education, Zoom	10am: Faith/Love Noon: Prayer Circle 5:00pm: Praise Kids 6:30pm: Wesley Ringers 7:00pm: Praise Band	7:00pm: Choir Practice	7:00am: UMM, Hy-Vee Noon: Church Office Closed 7:00pm: Mison Bones (AKA Tim Rice) @ Wesley Foundation	8:00am: All Church Work Day RAIN DATE 1:00pm: Bengali New Year Celebration
8:30am: Worship 9:30am: Coffee Fellowship 9:45am: Sunday School 11am: Worship 6:00pm: Youth Group	1:00pm: Staff Meeting, Library	5:30pm: Finance Committee 6:30pm: Boy Scouts #315, Scout Room	Noon: Prayer Circle 3:00pm: Nurture Committee 5:00pm: Praise Kids 6:00pm: Men's Bible Study 6:30pm: Wesley Ringers 7:00pm: Praise Band	5:30pm: WCCDC Board Meeting 7:00pm: Maundy Thursday Worship Service	7:00am: UMM, Hy-Vee Noon: Church Office Closed 7:00pm: Good Friday Worship Service	
8:30am: Sunrise Easter Service 8:30am: Worship 9:30am: Coffee Fellowship 9:45am: Sunday School 11am: Worship	1:00pm: Staff Meeting 4:00pm: Missions Committee 7:00pm: Worship Committee	5:00pm: Witness, Hospitality & Communications Committee 6:30pm: Boy Scouts #315, Scout Room	9:00am: Fellheimer Trust Noon: Prayer Circle 1:30pm: UWF 5:00pm: Praise Kids 7:00pm: League of Women Voters	1:00pm: XYZ 7:00pm: Choir Practice	7:00am: UMM, Hy-Vee Noon: Church Office Closed	
8:30am: Worship 9:30am: Coffee Fellowship 9:45am: Sunday School 11am: Worship 6:00pm: Youth Group	5:30pm: Staff Parish Committee 7:00pm: Trustees Committee	6:30pm: Boy Scouts #315, Scout Room	Noon: Prayer Circle 5:00pm: Praise Kids 6:00pm: Men's Bible Study 6:30pm: Wesley Ringers 7:00pm: Praise Band			



INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

coffee fellowship

greeting

choir

SPECIAL EVENTS

ushering

Suncheons

office help

VBS

welcome

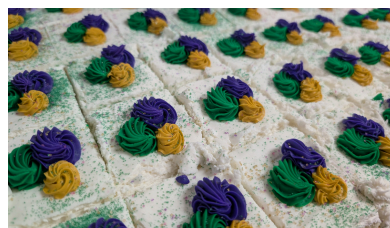
Sunday School

Scan me



or contact the church office

Last Month @ Wesley



April Worship Volunteer Schedule

DATE	TIME	USHERS	GREETERS (Downstairs)	WELCOME (Upstairs)
April 6	8:30am	Dennis Danowski & Bonnie Barker	Merritt Family	Marilyn Hopper
April 6	11:00am	Michele Long & Scott Smith	Kim Smith	Sharon Evans
April 13	8:30am	Lois Bigham & Marlin France	Steve & Janet Hopper	Genie Marshall
April 13	11:00am	Janice Monninger & Dana Walker	Jon & JoAnn(Hairston) Jones	Louise Reynolds
April 20	8:30am	Gina Anderson, Rick Iverson, & Jerry Lieber	John & Rita Corson	Ginny Kessler
April 20	11:00am	Michele Long & Dale Hample	Param & Abha Singh	Dave & Marilyn Eck
April 27	8:30am	Beth Shryock & Wayne Steward	Carlos Bustamante	Laurie Black
April 27	11:00am	Joe & Marcia Moulden	Ben & Kim Lampitt	Jan Armstrong
April 17	7:00pm	Maundy Thursday		Samuelson Family
April 18	7:00pm	Good Friday		Michele Long

Mission of the Month:
International Student
Assistance Fund

At Wesley United Methodist Church, we are committed to extending care and support to those in need, both locally and globally. This month, our Mission of the Month is the International Student Assistance Fund, which provides financial aid to international students at Western Illinois University and Spoon River College who are in financial need and are affiliated with our church or the Wesley Foundation. International students often face unique challenges, including visa restrictions that limit their ability to work, unexpected financial hardships, and being far from their families and support systems. Through this fund, we can help provide assistance for essentials and urgent needs, ensuring that these students can focus on their education and well-being. Your generosity makes a difference! If you feel called to support this mission, donations can be made through the church office or online. Thank you for helping us extend kindness and hospitality to the international students in our community.

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Sunday Services

Contemporary Worship: 8:30 am
Coffee Fellowship: 9:30 am
Sunday School: 9:45 am
Traditional Worship: 11:00 am

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 8:00am-4:00pm
Friday: 8:00am-NOON

Closed on national holidays

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SENIOR PASTOR

REV. MELLY MOMO
ASSOCIATE PASTOR