

July 8, 2020  
Volume 21, Number 27

# The Wesley Witness

**To Believe. To Belong.  
To Become Christ-Like  
Through Discipleship.**



As your new pastor, I am eager to return to in-person worship and to meet more of you face-to-face. Yet as we deal with the reality of the rising number of coronavirus cases in our community, we have discerned that it is not wise to gather in person at this time. In consultation with our lay leadership, we reached a consensus that we will continue with the on-line format for worship through the month of July.

Our hope is that during the next three weeks, we can develop and implement protocols, train and equip ushers, review and enhance our cleaning procedures and acquire necessary supplies so that we have everything possible in place to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19. I ask for your patience as we take these essential steps for your well-being and to do our part as a church family in not spreading this disease in our community. We will depend on your cooperation at every stage of this process. Our membership vows include supporting the church through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness, and that continues in the midst of the current circumstances.

First, please pray for our leadership as we continue to discern the next steps forward and for our congregation to continue to grow closer to God and one another and to reach out in service to our community. Pray for those who are infected, their caregivers, medical professionals, and all who are impacted by this virus. James 5 :16 reminds us “pray for one another that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.”

Second, as we set the guidelines and consider when we can safely return to in-person worship, please understand that we will use the best information and guidance we have from CDC, MS Department of Health, and the MS Conference. Whether we require worshipers to wear a mask or have your temperature checked, we hope you will help us follow these measures. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or your lay leadership with questions or concerns. We do welcome your feedback as we navigate this the best way that we can.

Third, I challenge you to lean in during this time and make the extra effort to stay connected. I know that this time away from in-person worship is disorienting and discouraging in many ways. May we be intentional and creative in how to connect and care for our church family. During this season, we are living into the vow of presence in spirit and online. Perhaps you could make a phone call or join the Sunday School class meeting by Zoom this week, or you could reach out to one of our members at higher risk to offer to run an errand or go to the grocery store for them. Allow God’s Spirit to lead you to who God lays on your heart to reach out and serve this week. And if you are someone who has a need in our congregation, please reach out so we can connect with you.

Additionally, please continue to give financially as you are able to support the ministries of the church. Just as your household has regular expenses, we try to be the best stewards of the facilities and resources here at Wesley. While a few ministries are on hold and have limited expenses at this time, others are continuing uninterrupted. Your giving undergirds these ministries, and remember that your gifts are more than financial. God calls us to give from what we have been given, so your time, talents, and service are needed as well in the days ahead for God’s kingdom.

Finally, your witness as a congregation and as individuals and families continues. Yesterday Madi Garner brought some of her fresh vegetables from her garden to share with the folks who come to our food pantry. For me it was a reminder of God’s abundance, and a sign of the kind of witness that is part of this church family. May we share the excitement of a 6-year-old handing out the fruit from our gardens and our lives, that all might experience the contagious joy and love of God.

grace and peace,

Emily



*Holy Ground  
Matthew 13:1-9,  
18-23 NRSV*

**Wesley United Methodist Church**

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Located at 2010 West Main Street

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Pastor's Cell #: 601.376.9658

Pastor's Email: [revemilysanford@gmail.com](mailto:revemilysanford@gmail.com)

Emily Sanford ~ Pastor

Linda Austin ~ Worship Leader

Vicky Burleson ~ Church Secretary

Martha Webb ~ Pianist

Sandi & Doug Haire ~ Custodians

Frances Heavens ~ Nursery

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Praying for others is an important part of our ministry as the body of Christ. Please incorporate this list as a part of your personal prayer life.

Rick Atwater  
Blake Austin  
Rev. Emily Sanford

Bill & Linda Austin  
Natasha Hutcheson  
Anna Taylor

Ray Alexander (Madie Morton's Brother)

Birdie Burleson  
(Vicky Burleson's Mother-in-law)  
Claudia Ellison (Randy Davis' Mother)  
Mary Pat Hancock  
(Requested by Martha Langley)  
Peggy Taylor (Requested by Raymond Webb)

In praying for one another, please pray for these families: Shorty & Judy Franks; Keith, Anna, Madi, & Jack Garner; Jim Gentry; Chip, Christina, & Rex Gibson; and Terry Gillard.



Would you help our Food Pantry stock their shelves? Each month we feature a specific item to collect.

July's items for the Food Pantry will be Canned Fruits (any brand). You may drop off your donation in the blue tub located in the sanctuary foyer. Thanks for helping those in need by supporting this ministry of Wesley UMC. Without your donations, it would not be possible.



**SERVING FAITHFULLY**

**Food Pantry Volunteers**

July 14<sup>th</sup> - Judy Counce, Ruth Dobbs, & Errol Tootle

July 21<sup>st</sup> - Pam Shields & Natasha Hutcheson



**AT WESLEY UMC**

**Sunday - July 12<sup>th</sup>**

10:30 AM. . . . . Facebook Live Service

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10:30 AM. . . . . Facebook Live Service



Without in-person Sunday School right now, Dale Dobbs invites you to join in on Sunday mornings through Zoom. If you would like to be added to the list, please send an email to Dale ([ddobbs70@comcast.net](mailto:ddobbs70@comcast.net)) so that he can include you on the link to join them.

**For the Record**

July 5, 2020

**Stewardship**

2020 Operating Budget . . . . .	\$296,122
Needed Weekly . . . . .	\$5,695
Needed to Date . . . . .	\$153,756
Weekly Budget Receipts . . . . .	\$6,085
YTD Budget Receipts . . . . .	\$109,842



July 12 <sup>th</sup> . . . . .	Kathy Byrd
July 13 <sup>th</sup> . . . . .	Carley Herndon
July 14 <sup>th</sup> . . . . .	Joe Woody
July 18 <sup>th</sup> . . . . .	Wally Cason
July 19 <sup>th</sup> . . . . .	Emily Sanford