

Date	Event	Birthdays	Anniversaries
Monday, December 21		Nicole Bates Aimee Terry Vicky VanDalsen	
Tuesday, December 22	Praise Team, 7 pm		Bruce & Brenda Payne
Wednesday, December 23	Prayer Group, 10 am	Amy Carpenter Aubrielle Valdez	
Thursday, December 24	Christmas Eve, 7 pm Christmas Eve, 11 pm	Zoe Christensen	
Friday, December 25	Merry Christmas!	Zack Kinney	
Saturday, December 26		Pam Hoag Kathy Hoeksema	
Sunday, December 27	Worship, 10 am	Deb Workman	

New address: Don Joldersma, Vista Springs, Wyoming, MI, Room 20

Wesley Park United Methodist Church  
 1150 32nd Street SW Wyoming, Michigan 49509  
 616-988-6738 [wesleyparkumc@gmail.com](mailto:wesleyparkumc@gmail.com)  
[www.wesleypark.org](http://www.wesleypark.org) (new website)

Our Mission is to build a Christian community with all people.

Our Vision: By 2018, Wesley Park will strive to inspire from the youngest to the oldest and everybody in between to live out the greatest commandment: to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.



## Preparing for Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve is the culmination of the Season of Advent Waiting. On Christmas Eve, we gather to rejoice that on that night so long ago God chose to be born among us. And as we contemplate the birth of Jesus Christ, we also consider the new beginnings God is creating for us and for the world. We are all given the gift of new life, and that is worthy of our praise and adoration. So, invite your family, friends, and community to worship this week. Both the 7 pm and 11 pm services will be filled with music and carols, with the lighting of candles. The 11 pm service will include the celebration of Holy Communion. Come early. If you are physically able, consider parking further from the church building to allow the parking spots nearer to the door for those who might need that hospitality.

## Adult Faith Formation

Please consider joining us during this Advent season for Faith Formation Sundays at 10 am in the Family Life Center. All are welcome!

**December 20:** What do we learn in seasons of waiting that we have a hard time learning otherwise? The Magnificat (Luke 1:47-55) + Taize Songs + Labyrinth

January through March @10am Sundays we will be discussing a book called Tattoos on the Heart. I read it this summer and have not been able to stop talking and thinking about it since. This book showcases a brilliant vision of the kingdom of God made tangible for all.

Here's Publishers Weekly review: In this artful, disquieting, yet surprisingly jubilant memoir, Jesuit priest Boyle recounts his two decades of working with gang members in Los Angeles County. Boyle's Homeboy Industries is the largest gang intervention program in the country, offering job training, tattoo removal, and employment to members of enemy gangs.

Books are \$9. If you would like a copy ordered for you please let Anna Spencer know.

# Prayers

- **Marilyn Knapp** - Thank you for praying for our team in Nepal. The Lord blessed in many ways, even though the country is going through very difficult times.
- **Esther Fernandez** - Dawn, you touched my heart. I am sorry about the passing of your dear father. You are loved. God bless you. I love my church family. Sara, you did a great job. Thank you!
- **Adrienne Prentiss** - Please pray for Will as we discern next steps for his schooling. Pray for the right people to help us. We pray for open minds among the people already involved; for wisdom for us as we advocate for him, and for faith and strength for us to trust God and Will's strong spirit. Thank you!
- **Jackie Price** - The choir was wonderful, thank you!
- **Myrtle Hartzog** - Choir, beautiful job.
- **Ron & Dolores Sanford** - Donna Mulder broke her foot last Sunday.
- **Ava Kropp** - Pray for everyone you know and others also.
- **The Elliott's** - Thank you for inviting Zimmer and me to act as greeters to our family promise individuals who arrived at the church this Monday.
- **Chuck & Sally Dear** - Prayers that the doctors can find out why Chuck is having so much pain in his joints.
- **Carolyn DuBuis** - Great music from the choir. Sara, you are amazing!
- **Paula Pawloski** - Please pray for my husband, Fred. His cluster headaches have returned and they are terribly painful.
- **Jason & Kim Johnson** - Prayers for a friend, Bridget, and her two sons. Her oldest has some mental illness and someone has told some very serious lies about the three of them.
- **Lynda Edsall** - Praise God! Rhonda Chapin's mass in her kidney was cancer, but contained and no further treatment is necessary.
- **Nancy Carpenter** - Loved the medley, "We Shall Overcome". It reminded me of the time I was part of a march in Washington DC. We took petitions to the capital to make Mart Luther King's birthday a national holiday.
- **Jessica, Connor, & Brennan Hughes** - I ask for prayers for people who are grieving this holiday season. May they find joy and peace even through their sadness.
- **Dori DeCommer** - I pray that Malinda doesn't have to have another count.
- **Julie Riemersma** - Pray that my family can be together this year. We can be a light to the world at this time. Family promise is such a great gift for us, thank you God! You know what we need.
- **Barb DeCan** - Please pray for my first boss, Ron. His wife, Yvonne, died Monday of Alzheimers.
- **Brian & Judy Hepp** - Pray for a nationwide "awakening to God" and then may it spread worldwide.
- **Challa's** - Kristen, that was a beautiful ending to your story a week ago. What an awesome time at the candlelight dinner. Thank you! Singing was so great, awesome, beautiful, and meaningful! Wow.
- **John Koops Sr** - Blessed that I could worship with you all this Sunday while back in Michigan on vacation.
- **Dan & Dena Scribner** - Send prayers for baby Glen, who is going to have his 2nd open heart surgery on Monday the 14th. Pray for steady hands and a quick recovery.
- **Continued Prayers:** Prayers for Hannah Steenhagen, Ben Peterson, Warren Slesman, Bill VanDalsen, Jack Boyer, Karin Drost, Jan Kutschinski, Rev. Myron Williams, Bev Slesman

## Tonight, Christmas Caroling

Plan to meet at the church at 5 pm to car-pool to various locations where the church will sing Christmas Carols. Hot cocoa and sloppy joe's will be prepared for you when the singing is completed. So far, over 40 people have signed up to go Caroling! The more, the merrier!

## Pledges to Honor Christ

Thank you for your pledges to honor Christ with your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness! If you haven't made your pledge yet, please mail it or bring it to the church as soon as possible.

## Ministry Shares

### 100% Ministry Shares Challenge

Received To Date:

**\$34,262**

**(25 Weeks Completed)**

Remaining Balance Needed:

**\$6,225**

**(2 Weeks Remaining)**

Offered last week: **\$1,965**

Questions? Contact: Al Pittenger

## Dates to Remember

☆ Christmas Eve Worship: **December 24, 7 pm & 11 pm**

☆ *The offering on Christmas Eve is designated to the Good Sam Fund, which provides assistance to those who are in need, supports area social service agencies, and funds the monthly Food Truck. Your generosity is appreciated.*

☆ One 10 am Worship Service: **December 27**

☆ Florentine's Dinner: **December 28**

☆ *Purchase your ticket (\$10 adult, \$4 child) after worship today just outside the sanctuary.*

☆ Vital Church Initiative Home Team Update: **January 3, 10 am. All Invited!**

☆ *Plan to come to the FLC in between the 9 and 11 am services to learn more about Vital Church Initiative from the Wesley Park UMC VCI Road Team!*

The Theme for the Season of Advent is Waiting. Take Some Time to Reflect on Scripture, Practice the Spiritual Disciplines, and Pray Throughout the Week.

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2015

### Lectionary Texts:

Micah 5:2-5

Luke 1:46-55

Hebrews 10:5-10

Luke 1:39-45

### Reflection

The story of Jesus' coming is filled with the reminder not to fear. We read in the gospel accounts, of angels urging Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds to "fear not". But how? My own experience of waiting in matters of health has been so readily mixed with emotions of fear, anxiety, and frustration. Is it even possible to wait without these emotions?

Advent waiting seems no different. We desperately long for greater and greater manifestations of God's Kindom among us. Our new mission statement echoes this longing. We want to be a people building Christian community with all people. We want to live the first and second commandment more wholly. It can be discouraging though because of the gap between how things are and how we would like them to be.

### Question

**What do we learn in seasons of waiting that we would have a hard time learning otherwise?**

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## Practice:

It is into this contentious time that Mary's famous song (The Magnificat) comes forth.

Read through the Magnificat, Mary's Song from Luke 1 (included below)

Imagine yourself in Mary's shoes... what do you think, feel, and notice in her words?

### The Magnificat || Luke 1:47-55

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.  
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.  
His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.  
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.  
He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

## Prayer:

My soul yearns for you, O God.

I keep vigil with you through the night.

Prayer taken from [Seven Sacred Pauses](#), by Macrina Wiederkehr.

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