

## Dates to Remember

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

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

☆ Wesley Park UMC has a monthly meal at Florentine's Restaurant in Grandville the 4th Monday of each month. Florentine's generously gives the church a percentage of the cost of the all-you-can-eat spaghetti, salad, and breadsticks. Purchase your tickets (\$10 for adults, \$4 for children) at the church in the weeks before the meal. It helps to know how many Florentine's can expect each month. If you miss purchasing your ticket, you can let the people at Florentine's know that you are there with Wesley Park on the night of the fund raiser.

☆ 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!

## To Build a Christian Community With All People

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.

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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)

Contact the church if you would like to receive weekly prayers and communications by email.



# Wesley Park Weekly

December 24, 2015

## Tonight's Offering for Good Sam Fund

The Christmas Eve Offerings tonight will go toward our Good Sam Fund at Wesley Park UMC. Please make checks out to Wesley Park UMC. Your generosity is a celebration of the gift we receive tonight, of the One who came to bring light and life to all.

Over the last five years, Wesley Park UMC has distributed \$76,586 in Good Sam Funds. This averages out to \$16,934 per year.

The Food Truck has disbursed 434,911 pounds of food in the last five years. That's 217 1/2 tons of food. In January, 2015, the Food Truck passed 1,000,000 pounds of food distributed in the community, or 500 tons! Wesley Park pays around \$7,000 a year to purchase the food that comes on the Feeding America Food Truck. Beginning in 2015, that \$7,000 comes out of the Good Sam Fund if the funds are available.

You may wonder how the Good Sam Funds are disbursed. Wesley Park has developed guidelines which help us determine how much support we can offer in various situations (rent, utilities, emergencies, etc.). Our guidelines set a minimum amount that must remain in the Good Sam Fund to make it viable. We work closely with Access of West Michigan. When someone asks for assistance, the request is forwarded to Access, who is able to coordinate with all the social service networks in the community to share with us places that person has received assistance in the past, and where additional resources might be provided throughout the community. The goal is to provide as much help as possible, and not to replicate what others are already doing well. We try to help as many people as we can. If we determine that funds from the Good Sam Fund could provide meaningful assistance, Access of West Michigan pays the amount we tell them, then sends us an invoice. Their knowledge and ability to make the contacts to landlords and utility companies has helped our process tremendously. If you are looking for an area of ministry, consider helping us to build relationship and connection with people we relate with through Access of West Michigan.

## The Food Truck

On July 7, 2005, Wesley Park UMC began its mobile food pantry. The food comes from Second Harvest Gleaners. They have a large warehouse located near the Fifth-Third Baseball Stadium off West River Drive. They receive excess food, food approaching "Must be sold by date" and produce from local grocery stores, distributors, growers, etc.

We never know whether the produce we are receiving is going to be bagged or will need bagged. Therefore it can take 20-35 volunteers to operate the pantry any given month. Whatever the situation, we have always had enough volunteers show up to get the job done. Many times strangers in the line to receive food have volunteered to help. God does provide!

In nice weather the food was distributed in the church parking lot directly out of the truck compartments onto tables and families walked along the tables with boxes. In the winter the food was unloaded from the truck and wheeled into the FLC. Tables were set up in a U and families walked around the outside of the U with boxes. The church youth and other volunteers would carry the boxes for those who were not able.

We have served from 100 families to 280 families a month. We never know how many families will show up any given month. Since we do not have a good place to store excess food, any food we have left over we donate to an area food pantry.

Due to coordinators being sick, going up north in the summer or south in the winter. We had to cancel the pantry for July and August 2014 due to a lack of coordinators. We also cancelled the pantry for January 2015 because it fell on New Year's Day. The only other time the pantry was ever cancelled was a few years ago due to a big snow storm. (4 times in 10 years. Not bad!)

January 2015 we reached 1,000,000 pounds of food handed out at the mobile food pantry. July 2015, was our 10 year anniversary. Assuming an average of 185 families passing through the line each month over the past 10 years, approximately 22,000 families have been served. (History compiled by Earl Morrow.)

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.

## The Work of Food Pantries

Wesley Park UMC has transitioned our emergency food pantry. We now bring our food and personal care items to UCOM, SECOM, or Family Network of Wyoming Food Pantries. We have discovered that the food pantry is an extremely helpful and valuable resource in our community, providing not only food but also connecting people with needed services and assistance. The food pantries have social workers and people with a wide knowledge providing care for each person who comes through their doors. Once a person is connected with a food pantry, their network of support expands exponentially. There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer at area food pantries. If you have a heart that wants to reach out and care for your neighbor, call one of the food pantries and ask how you can get involved. They are blessings in our community.

## Youth and Hunger Ministries

The Youth Group at Wesley Park UMC travels the first Sunday of each month, directly following worship, to Kids Food Basket. Dozens of youth go and prepare thousands of meals to be taken to children in area school districts to provide food and support for those in need. The youth group also participates annually in a 30-Hour Famine, learning about the affects of hunger in our community.

## 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. Pledge forms are available in the Kiosks or office window.

## Ministry Shares

### 100% Ministry Shares Challenge

Received To Date:

**\$35,244**

**(26 Weeks Completed)**

Remaining Balance Needed:

**\$5,243**

**(1 Weeks Remaining)**

Offered last week: **\$982**

Questions? Contact: Al Pittenger