



THE UNITED

South Avenue United Methodist Church

A UNION OF CHRIST, ROSS AVENUE AND SOUTH AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES



March 2023

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Pittsburgh PA 15221

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FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART March 2023



Methodism has always played a key role in education. In fact, education was one of John Wesley's core commitments during his life and ministry. He was passionate about enabling both children and adults to learn and this is seen in the founding of schools, the encouragement of class meetings and the distribution of many books and pamphlets for study and further discussion.

Historian Gary Best writes: "John Wesley was as much an educator as a preacher. Methodist involvement in education stems from his passion for education, which was rooted in his understanding of the Bible and centuries of Christian tradition - that the Church should be engaged in constantly seeking and understanding what is the truth by which we should live. For him, education at its best was a life-long process guided by the Holy Spirit towards personal and social holiness, and it was the best possible tool for evangelism, for training in godliness, and for the betterment of society."

Wesley's aim was to create 'model schools', places where relationships were good and where learning could flourish.

I think our founding father, John Wesley would be pleased and proud that his legacy lives on all of these years later at both Mifflin Avenue and South Avenue United Methodist Churches as they provide space within their church walls for educational opportunities. Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church hosts Pals, an after school program as well as providing space for a French Club to teach children a second language. Plea, a school for autistic children has found a home at South Avenue United Methodist Church for many years.

Having found myself in the classroom as a substitute teacher for many years I fully understand the challenge, heartache, joy and blessing of teaching and learning.

We don't often think of Lent as an educational opportunity. Lent is often described as a time of preparation and an opportunity to go deeper with God. Lent is a time for personal reflection that prepares people's hearts and minds for Good Friday and Easter. The three main things people focus on during Lent are prayer, fasting (abstaining from something to reduce distractions and focus more on God) and giving, or charity. I would suggest this Lent we add the educational component in our holy journey. One of the means of going deeper with God is spending time in God's Word. I invite each of us to take at least 15 minutes each day during Lent to read the Bible and at least an additional 15 minutes in intentional prayer: thanksgiving, intercessions, confession, and silence as we give time so that we might listen for God to speak to us. I invite you to participate in the combined Lenten Bible study on Adam Hamilton's, Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws. The study is for 5 weeks on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM via zoom. We also have the opportunity to educate ourselves on racism. Each Tuesday night in March we will meet at South Avenue at 7:00 PM as the Anti-Racism Team leads us in "I am not a racist, am I?"

I pray your Lent is a holy 40 day period of reflection, renewal, growth and learning.

Blessings,

Pastor Russel

WE CAN EDUCATE OURSELVES

On Tuesday evenings, at 7pm, at South Avenue UMC during the month of March, the Western PA United Methodist anti-racism team will hold workshops and educational opportunities. Please consider taking this opportunity to expand your understanding.



UMCOR IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

We see the devastation and human toll the earthquake has brought to Turkey and Syria. If you are moved to be of help, know that UMCOR, working with their international partners, was on the ground there, immediately rendering aid in the form of tents, blankets, heaters, warm clothes, ready-to-eat meals, and first aid kits.

All aid organizations are struggling to keep up as this tragedy unfolds. Know that UMCOR will continue to be there during these difficult times. Donations to this effort can be made through the church or directly online. Please mark your donations through the church for UMCOR-Turkey, and they will be properly directed to this cause.

Another local connection is Brother's Brother Foundation, headquartered here in Pittsburgh. They provide medical supplies that have been donated by numerous area hospitals to relief efforts around the globe. Shipments are already on their way to the affected areas.



BIBLE STUDY

You are invited to join Pastor Russel for a Lenten Bible Study Program every Wednesday, beginning March 1, at 7:00 pm via ZOOM.

BIBLE STUDY
ADAM HAMILTON
LUKE

JESUS AND THE OUTSIDERS, OUTCASTS, AND OUTLAWS

Session 1	March 1	Luke 1 & 2
Session 2	March 8	Luke 7-10
Session 3	March 15	Luke 15-16
Session 4	March 22	Luke 17-19
Session 5	March 29	Luke 20-24

To join the ZOOM event, enter the ZOOM meeting id as 412 731 2511, the PASSWORD is 123456.



UMCOR IN OUR OWN BACKYARD

We have all seen the reports of the recent chemical disaster unfolding in Ohio and Pennsylvania due to the train derailment. The Mission Barn in New Castle was able to send health kits and cleaning buckets to our friends in need as they weather the effects of what has happened in East Palestine, Ohio, which is a half mile from the Pennsylvania border.

When we assemble our kits, we never know how close or far away they will go. We are glad to know we can have a small part in lightening the worries of our neighbors, especially the farmers whose livelihoods are threatened in the wake of this environmental nightmare. Let's keep them in our prayers.

UMCOR SUNDAY – MARCH 19, 2023

Special Sundays are designated Sundays each year that deepen the connection between the local church and ministries on a global scale. On each unique Sunday, individuals and congregations are encouraged to give to support the church's collective work with a special offering. This includes efforts to:

The fourth Sunday in Lent; provides major support of the United Methodist Committee on Relief. UMCOR provides immediate assistance in the wake of disasters and helps support ongoing ministries of food, shelter, health and peace. Allows 100 percent of designated gifts to be used for specified disaster response or other ministry

NEED A BOOK?

Did you know there's a book shelf right inside our church library on the right hand side with donated books from our members and friends? Feel free to borrow or to donate. No need to sign them out. Just borrow and enjoy.

AN INSPIRATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

I Go On Singing: Paul Robeson's Life in His Words & Songs, Sunday, April 23, 3 pm at Warren UMC, 2606 Centre Ave, Pittsburgh.

The story of this American hero, Paul Robeson, who struggled and triumphed comes alive in a rousing 90-minute song-filled presentation performed by Pittsburgh native and gifted American baritone and international ambassador of peace, Anthony Brown.

"I Go On Singing" brings music and history alive with equal parts documentary and live concert experience. Musical numbers range from spirituals to Broadway, and include Robeson's original arrangements of favorites like "Wade in the Water," "Ol' Man River," "It Ain't Necessarily So," "Water Boy," and many others. Robeson's musical colleague, the legendary folk singer Pete Seeger, makes three video appearances discussing his friendship with Robeson, the music they shared, and the turbulent times in which they lived. "Once in a lifetime a human being comes along who stands head and shoulders above the rest. Paul Robeson was such a man."

A freewill offering will be accepted.



UNITED DEADLINE

The deadline for the April UNITED will be Monday, March 20. Please leave articles in the church office or email them to Helen McAfoos at hmcafoos@comcast.net.

GIVING STATEMENTS FOR 2022

Your Giving Statement for 2022 has been mailed. If you did not receive your Statement or if you have questions about your Statement, please contact the Church Office at 412-371-7421 and someone will get back to you.

FINAL CROP WALK RESULTS

Here is very good news. The 2022 CROP Walk results are in. The final tally is an amazing \$40,000.26! Remember 25% of this comes back to support Wilkinsburg Community Ministry. Your many contributions helped make this all possible. The local committee thanks you very, very much.



AN ADDITIONAL WAY TO HELP

The Lions Club sorts, rehabs and distributes old eye glasses to underserved people. Mifflin Avenue church collects eye glasses and gives them to the Lions club. We will start collecting glasses here and getting them to Mifflin Avenue. If you don't already donate your old glasses, consider bringing them in for redistribution.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME CHANGE

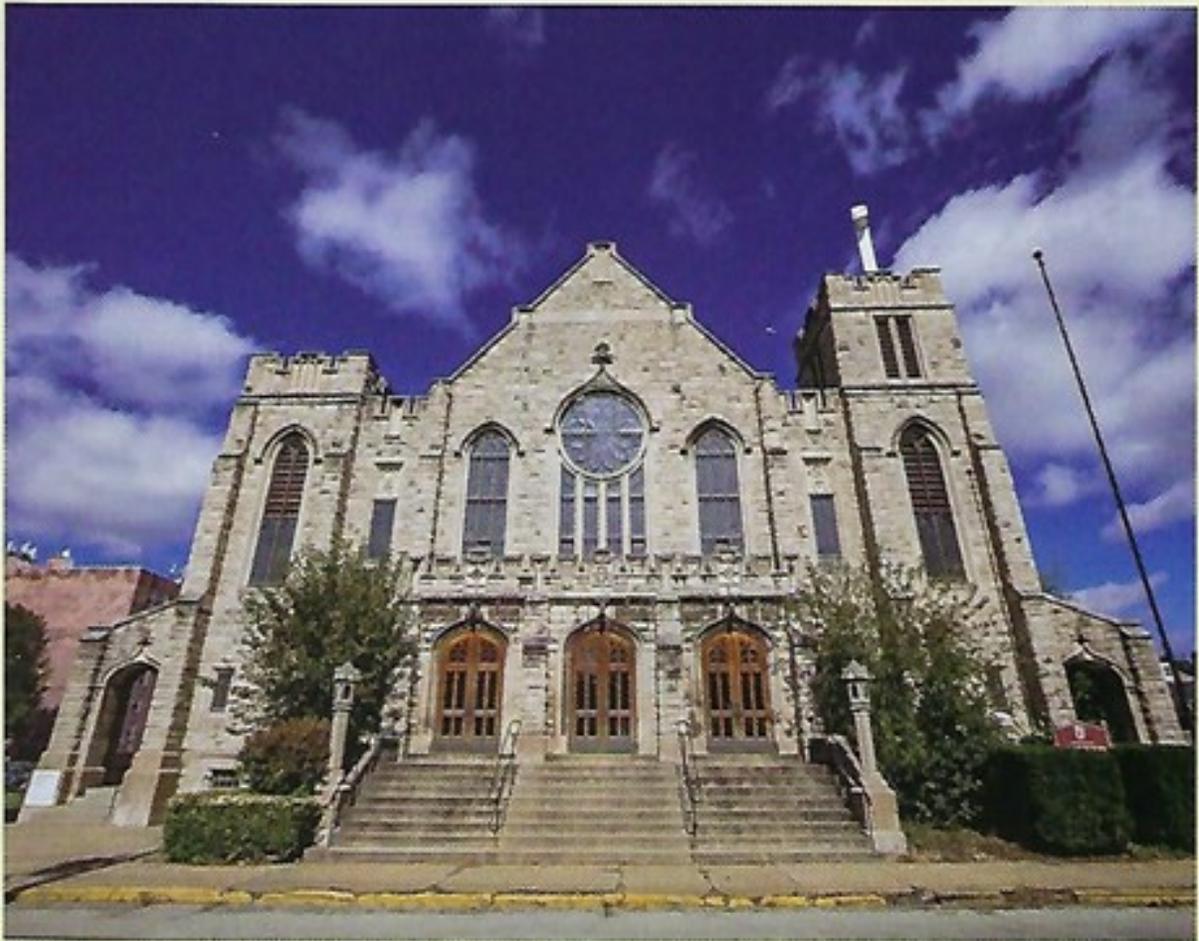
Daylight savings time starts on March 12. Remember to set your clocks ahead on Saturday night, March 12th.



LOOKING FORWARD DETAILS TO FOLLOW

Mar. 9 12:30— Longwood Circle, at Longwood

April 2 – Palm Sunday
April 6 – Holy Thursday
April 7 – Good Friday
April 9 – Easter



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