

FEBRUARY 2026

Wesley Journal Newsletter



Sunday Worship Times



8:30 a.m. In-Person & 11:00 a.m. In-Person & Online

Pastor's Corner



Martha Ognibene

Pastor



Dear Friends,

February is often considered the month of love, with Valentine's Day sitting right at its center. There are so many forms of love: the love between friends, the love that family members share, romantic and erotic love, my undying love for potatoes...!, and, of course, our love for God and God's perfect love for us. "Love is as strong as death," the writer of Song of Solomon (8:6) reminds us, and we can attest to the bonds of love that continue strong even after a loved one has died. Love is a vital part of what makes us human. Why is it then that so many people find love so hard to share? When persons refuse to see the humanity in a brother or sister, when we cheer for the troubles of others because it makes us feel stronger, when we ignore others' suffering or deny others' dignity, we are not showing love, and we are not living as God intends. The results of withholding love are alienation, violence, suffering, and death for both the unloved and the unloving.

My sisters and brothers, this is not how God has created us to live. God is alive in each one of us, and in each one that we meet, or avoid, or hear about on the news, and each of us is equally valuable and beloved in God's eyes. We need to see every human being as valuable and worthy as well, and we need to recognize that every unloving action toward any person: any act of war, of violence, of oppression, of bullying, of exclusion, of cruelty-is an action against the will of God, and an action that diminishes us as persons, too. "This is my commandment," Jesus says to us, "that you love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12) Just as Jesus loves us completely, so we are to love one another, without reservation and without qualification. This can be a difficult commandment, but nothing is more important. Even St. Valentine-who was martyred for his loving ministry among persecuted Christians in the Roman Empire-would approve of that!

Cordially,

Pastor Martha

February 18, 2026

Ash
Wednesday



Curbside Ashes Noon - 1PM

7 PM Service

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten season, is February 18. This day is an opportunity to draw closer to God and to examine our lives in the light of Christ's saving acts. Ashes will be distributed outside the church on High Street and on Willey Street from noon to 1:00 PM, and our Ash Wednesday service will be held in the church sanctuary at 7:00 PM. Come start anew this season!

African American Ministry Emphasis - for February

One of the greatest problems of history is that the concepts of love and power are usually contrasted as polar opposites... *"What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive and that love without power is sentimental and anemic."* Martin Luther King, Jr

INHALE: there is power in this breath.

EXHALE: there is agency in this body.

INHALE: where can I go?

EXHALE: God, take me where it's safe.

INHALE: God, tear down the evil, exploitative, and tyrannical.

EXHALE: Lift up the healers, seekers, and those that act for peace.

May you wake and rest with humility in your hearts. May you be protected from the greed and fear that tempt us to dominate others. Possess such moral clarity that you would be able to be both leader and follower without threat to your sense of self. May you live respectfully and tenderly, that your power never comes at the expense of someone else's. Amen.

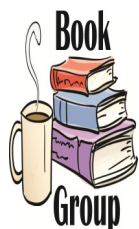
Arthur Riley, Cole. Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human (pp. 126 and 133).

ENJOY COUPON BOOKS

Wesley's Church is selling the NEW Enjoy Coupon books for \$40 each. All proceeds will be applied to Wesley's 2026 final apportionment obligation. Books have been ordered and will be distributed from the Church Office when they arrive.

Please notify the church office at 304-292-9485 or wesleymorgantown@gmail.com if you would like to place an order.

23 books left to sell!



Wesley Book Club - Zoom Only

7:30 PM - 1st & 3rd Tuesdays

(February 3rd & 17th)

Book Club Leader - Mary Ragland

304-282-1947 / mhragland5@yahoo.com

Please contact for more info.

February book study is on

Immortal Diamond by Richard Rohr

PRAYER for ALL

This prayer was written by Bishop Lanette Plambeck, Resident Bishop of the Dakotas-Minnesota Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church

God of mercy and nearness, we come to you with heavy hearts.

We grieve lives lost and hold close all who mourn.

Be near to those whose hearts are broken, to those who are afraid, and to all who are waiting for truth to come into the light.

In this tender space between tragedy and understanding, teach us to lament honestly, to seek justice with humility, and to walk gently with one another.

Guard us from haste, from hardened hearts, and from the temptation to let fear or violence shape our way.

We place our hope in you, O God of resurrection.

When death and grief seem to have the final word, remind us that life and love endure.

Make us instruments of your peace, and keep us faithful in the days ahead.

We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus, who brings life out of death and hope out of sorrow.

Amen.

LECTIONARY STUDY w/Pastor Martha

We'll be meeting weekly via Zoom on WEDNESDAYS at 6:00 PM. Everyone is invited to take part in this lively discussion of the upcoming Sunday's scripture lessons. Contact the church office to get the Zoom link.

No Class Ash Wednesday, Feb 18th.

February Lectionary Scriptures

February 1st—4th Sunday after the Epiphany

Mic 6:1-8

Ps 15

1 Cor 1:18-31

Matt 5:1-12

February 8th—5th Sunday after the Epiphany

Isa 58:1-9a

Ps 112:1-9

1 Cor 2:1-12 (13-16)

Matt 5:13-20

February 15th— Transfiguration Sunday

Exod 24:12-18

Ps 2 or Ps 99

2 Pet 1:16-21

Matt 17:1-9

February 22nd—1st Sunday in Lent

Gen 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Ps 32

Rom 5:12-19

Matt 4:1-11



For your information...here are the birthdays of our Ukrainian friends

Leo Pukhov-January 12

Anastasiia Pukkhova-January 21

Eli Petrov-February 26

Sergei Pukhov-April 28

Slava Pukhova-September 3

Prayer Shawl Ministry ~ Tuesday, Feb 3rd

10:00 AM - Lecture Room

If you can knit, crochet

or would like to learn please join us!



Empty Bowls
MONONGALIA

18th Annual

SOUP AND BREAD LUNCHEON

FEBRUARY 28, 2026

11:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

**Hazel and J.W. Ruby Community
Center at Mylan Park**
111 Mylan Park Lane
Morgantown, WV

Tickets are \$25

\$10 Children 12 & Under (no bowl)

FREE Children 2 & under

Wesley UMC is selling tickets!

Contact the church office at

304-292-9485 or email

wesleymorgantown@gmail.com.

Tickets available online at

ebmon.org

Children 10 and under eat free.
Walk-ins and take out served as
available. *Please note that children
eating free will not receive a bowl.*

www.ebmon.org

Concerts In The Loft

Wesley UMC
503 N. High Street
304-292-9485
wesleymorgantown.org

2026 Concert Series

March 8
Aurora Celtic

April 12
Damon Buxton

May 3
Gary Antol

June 14
Carol Markstrom

July 5
Miss Freddy's Trio

August 9
Schnell & Paris

September 13
Kittens Ain't Biscuits

October 4
Jeff Miller

November 8
Lady D

December 13
Jenny & Nathan

CONCERTS START AT 5:00 P.M. ~ Refreshments served

CONCERTS & PARKING are FREE ~ Compliments of Wesley UMC

SUNDAYS AT 6:00 P.M. (3RD FLOOR CLASSROOMS)

COLLEGE BIBLE STUDY

ALL COLLEGE STUDENTS WELCOME!

College Study led by Lawrence DeLeurere

Contact info: 304-319-7740 / semangeloph@gmail.com

UMYF *United Methodist Youth Formation)

ALL YOUTH (6th thru 12th grade) WELCOME!

Youth Leaders Chad & Arielle Harvey

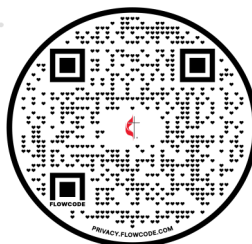
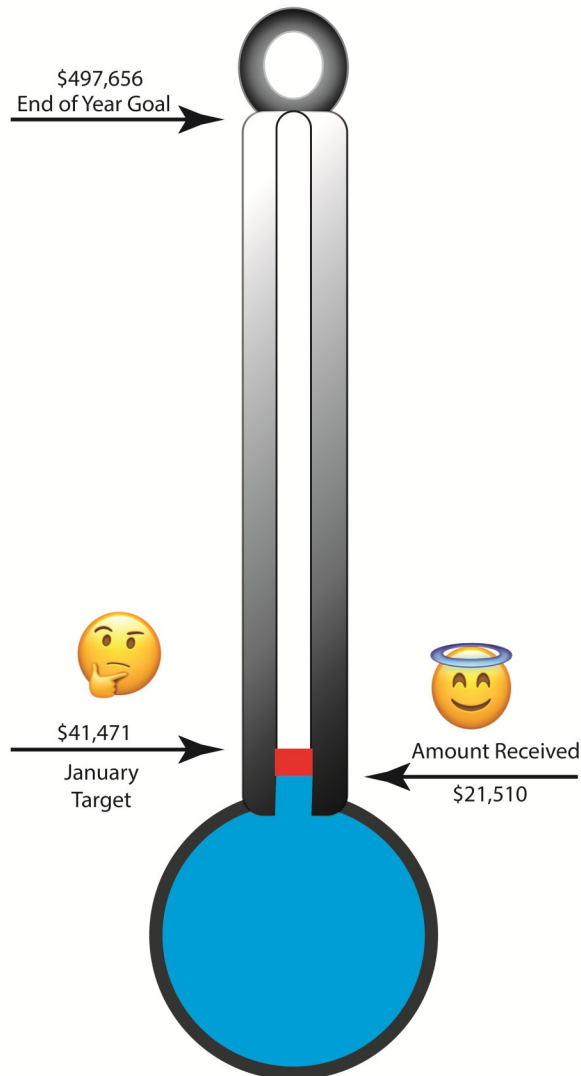
Contact info: 304-619-9441 / simplysouthernphotographywu@gmail.com

Youth are invited to bring a friend!!

GOD says I am



2026 Finance Budget Thermometer Sunday Offerings - January



**Quick & Easy method for your
Sunday offering.**
**SCAN the QR Code with your
electronic device! THANK YOU!**

ALTAR GUILD

Would you like to dedicate flowers to someone *special in your life*? *Sunday altar flowers can be given in loving memory of in honor of your loved ones or a special occasion (birthday, anniversary, baptism, etc.,).* Altar Guild member Michelle Smith handles all flower arrangements. To place a dedication please contact Michelle at 304-216-8870 or email her at michelle012067@gmail.com.

OPEN DATES: February 15th and 22nd

Saturday, February 14th

Monday, February 16th



**Backpack Feeding Program
Scott's Run**

Wednesday, Feb 11th - 12:30 p.m.

Do you want to make a practical, visible difference in the life of a child? Then come help fill weekend backpacks for Mon County students at Scotts Run Settlement House. Every second Wednesday—so, October 8 this month—is our turn to help fill bags with shelf-stable, easy to consume food items for over 800 students who would otherwise go hungry from Friday night to Monday breakfast. We begin around 12:30 PM, and the work takes about an hour. Come help somebody-join us at Scotts Run!

Cheat Lake location:

750 Fairchance Road
Morgantown, WV 26508
304-435-5098

THE THREE PILLARS OF LENT



"Prayer makes your heart bigger, until it is capable of containing the gift of God himself". -St Teresa of Calcutta
Prayer strengthens our personal relationship with God.



"Fasting is the support of our soul: it gives us wings to ascend on high, and to enjoy the highest contemplation!"
-St John Chrysostom
Fasting helps us to fight temptation, strengthen our will, and rely on Jesus in a deeper way.

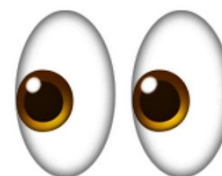


"For it is in giving that we receive."
-St Francis of Assisi
Almsgiving engages us in the virtue of charity, uniting us to Christ in his poverty.

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS - WESLEY CHURCH 2026

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Jan 31, Feb 1 | Morgantown North Rotary | Cathie Falvey | 304-282-8594 |
| Feb 14, 15 | Faithseekers Class | Linda Bagby | 304-599-5676 |
| Mar 14, 15 | Gabi & Mark Smith | Gabi Votta Smith | 304-319-2490 |
| Apr 11 | MHS Spanish Honorary | Joyce Hu | 681-214-5438 |
| Apr 12 | OPEN | | |
| May 9, 10 | Young Life | Brian Shirak | 304-771-0962 |
| May 30, 31 | Morgantown North Rotary | Cathie Falvey | 304-282-8594 |
| June 13 | Service League | Donna Tennant | 304-449-1410 |
| June 14 | OPEN | | |
| July 11, 12 | OPEN | | |
| Aug 8 | Service League | Donna Tennant | 304-449-1410 |
| Aug 9 | OPEN | | |
| Aug 29, 30 | Morgantown North Rotary | Cathie Falvey | 304-282-8594 |
| Sep 12, 13 | OPEN | | |
| Oct 10, 11 | OPEN | | |
| Oct 31, Nov 1 | Morgantown North Rotary | Cathie Falvey | 304-282-8594 |
| Nov 14, 15 | Faithseekers Class | Linda Bagby | 304-599-5676 |
| Dec 12 | Service League | Donna Tennant | 304-449-1410 |
| Dec 13 | OPEN | | |

Helping hands are needed!
We are looking for any family,
work group, community group,
or friend group to help fill in the
OPEN DATES for the COF Meal.



Take a look at the
open dates.
Can you help out?

FOOD WILL BE DISTRIBUTED FROM WESLEY'S GYM.

Please refer scheduling questions to Carolyn Hendricks (304-276-6580). Thank you!

February Committee Meetings

Finance Meeting
Tuesday, 10th—6:00 PM

Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, February 10th—7:00 PM

Administrative Council
Monday, February 16th—7:00 PM

SPRC Meeting—TBA

Staff Meeting—TBA

Church Office Hours have changed

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursday, and Fridays

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Tuesdays Closed (phone calls only)

access to building will be available



Next Sunday, February 8th - Will YOUR team win the SOUPERBOWL?

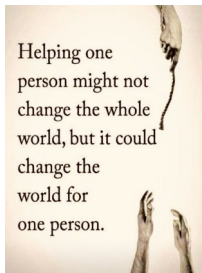
Wesley Church will be collecting the following items for the Community Kitchen's WEEKEND FOOD BAGS that are given out on Fridays to their meal participants to provide a meal over the weekend when the kitchen is closed. Place all donations in the TEAM SOUP POT you support!

1. CANS OF SOUP - any type **2. CUP OF NOODLES** - any flavor

3. CANNED RAVIOLI OR PASTA IN SAUCE (Chef Boyardee types)

Monetary donations are accepted too! Cash or checks (memo: Souperbowl Sunday)

Lampstand Team ~ Outreach Ministry



Would you like to help our shut-in members feel more a part of our community? Then you should join the Lampstand Team! Our Lampstand Team members make it a point to stay in touch with those who cannot attend worship in person through regular cards, calls, visits, and small gifts. If you would like to be a part of this caring ministry, or if you would like to be added to the list of persons for whom the team cares, contact

Martha today.

First meeting for 2026 Sunday, February 1st 2:30 p.m. (Zoom Only)

Notify the church office of your interest and we will send you the Zoom link

Confirmation or Become a NEW Member!

Are you interested in exploring church membership, and faith, and church history, and the United Methodist Church? Are you 10 years old or older? Then sign up for Confirmation Class this spring! Pastor Martha will teach the class, which will meet from 9:30-10:30 on Sunday, March 22, Sunday, March 29, and Sunday, April 12. New members will be received on April 19. Come learn where we come from and who we are...and join us on the way! Contact Martha for more information.

FAITH FORMATION at Wesley UMC

Sunday School is an integral part of our Christian life and the growth of our faith as we stretch our minds and search for deeper meaning in community with others.

All classes begin at 9:30 am following the 8:30 am Sunday worship service

Children - Room 301 on the 3rd floor

Children's Sunday school is available for children ages three years through fifth grade. Children experience the Bible through stories and hands-on-activities.

Middle & High School - Room 313 (3rd floor)

Both Middle & High School Sunday school helps our young link what they learn from the Bible to their real-life experiences.

This class equips young adults to know Jesus, build a relationship with Him, and grow in their faith and knowledge of scripture.

FaithSeekers - Room 203 (Haden Chapel) 2nd floor

The FaithSeekers class explores a variety of topics from scripture to Christian fiction.

Guideposts - Room 202 (2nd floor)

The Guideposts class meets weekly for study and discussion of the adult Bible study curriculum.

NEW Berean Class (2nd Floor Classroom)

All Wesley adults are welcome to join our class which is led by Brian Woerner. This class is both a study and discussion of Scriptures.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR GROUP

Kristi DeLeurere is starting a new group called Love Your Neighbor. Since Wesley UMC has a special heart for immigrants, this group will help them to adjust to life in the United States. Next Meeting TBA. Please join us in brainstorming ways to help our immigrant neighbors and then implementing those ideas. We will be meeting in person and via zoom. See Kristi for more information.

PRAYER TEAM IS LOOKING FOR PRAYER WARRIORS!

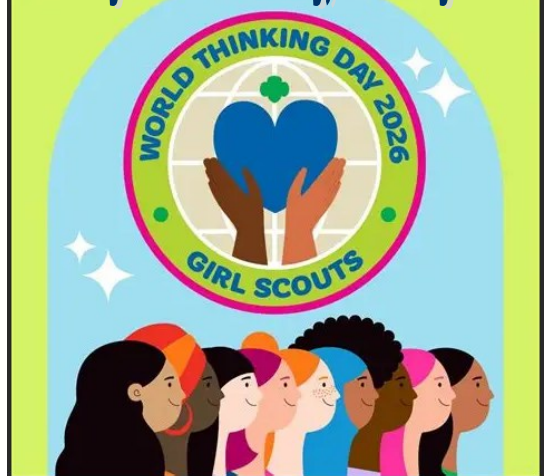


THE PRAYER TEAM -



women and men who receive prayer requests via email and devote time to praying about them. It is personal choice as to where, how long and when in the day or night a member prays. For more information, please contact Rachel Beach at rplybonbeach@gmail.com.

Wesley UMC - Saturday, February 21st



Bible Study Fellowship

~ Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. Choir Room 3rd FL ~

All Wesley women are welcome
to join this weekly bible study.

Anyone interested please contact

Ann Gore at 304-673-4124

A message from Bishop Deborah Wallace-Padgett

Wesley Church Office Hours & Contact Info:

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Monday - Friday)
304.292.9485 / wesleymorgantown@gmail.com
website: wesleymorgantown.org

WESLEY STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION:

Martha Ognibene, Pastor

304-813-7214 / mlsognibene@gmail.com

Marianna Miller, Church Office

304-685-6883 / wesleymorgantown@gmail.com

Lya Stroupe, Director of Music & Children's Ed.

304-290-5436 / lyastroupe@comcast.net

Colton Davis, Media Tech Coordinator

304-685-3609 / Wesleyintermedia@gmail.com

Albert Kaminsky, Building Custodian

724-812-7916 / kaminskydoug@yahoo.com

Rebekah Bledsoe, Bus Driver

304-276-0320 / rebekahbledsoe@juno.com

Ann Gore, Organist

304-673-4124 / musicannconcord@yahoo.com

Joe Andria, Accompanist

304-288-1330 / sax711@hotmail.com

Coleman Guenther, Bookkeeper

304-216-0353 / wesleymorgantownfinance@gmail.com

Dear Friends,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus, the Light of the World. I am grateful for you and your ministry.

I ask for your leadership in inviting participation in a denomination-wide survey authorized by the Council of Bishops. This survey is designed to listen to United Methodists across our connection about the present and future of our Church. The insights gained from the listening will directly inform the 2026 Leadership Gathering as we seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in this Kairos moment.

The ten-minute survey opened on January 15 and will continue until February 15, 2026. It is accessible by the link or QR code found below. I encourage you to announce it in worship, include it in bulletins, and share it through congregational websites and social media. Findings will be shared with the wider Church in the months leading up to the October gathering.

[Link to the Survey](#)



Wesley United Methodist Church
503 N. High Street
Morgantown, WV 26505

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage Paid

Morgantown, WV

Permit No. 178

Mailed from Zip Code 26505