



Westchester

United Methodist Church Newsletter

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MARCH 2023

Women's History Month

**WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH**
MARCH 2023



“YOU MAY SHOOT ME WITH YOUR WORDS. YOU MAY CUT ME WITH YOUR EYES. YOU MAY KILL ME WITH YOUR HATEFULNESS. BUT STILL, LIKE AIR, I’LL RISE.”

- MAYA ANGELOU

Women's History Month is celebrated every March in the United States and in countries around the world. It's a time to honor the trailblazers of the past—including suffragists, politicians, inventors, and artists—as well as discuss the pressing issues women face today.

Theresa Malkiel, an activist who served on the women's committee of the Socialist Party of America, established the first “National Women's Day” on February 28, 1909. She was joined by a crowd of more than 2,000 at a theater in Manhattan for speeches on equal rights and some spirited singing.

In 1978, the Sonoma, California, school district organized a “Women's History Week” in an effort to correct the dearth of women-focused material in the existing K-12 curriculum. The idea caught on, and the following year saw similar celebrations across the country.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter declared that Women's History Week would be recognized during the week of March 8th. While the celebration remained just a week at the federal level (and had to be requested by Congress every year), nearly a third of U.S. states took it upon themselves to extend the recognition to a full month by 1986. As more and more states moved to create Women's History Months of their own, the federal government followed suit. In 1987, six years after the first Women's History Week, Congress officially designated Women's History Month as a permanent event.

Women's History Month's goal is to both commemorate and encourage the “study, observance, and celebration of the vital role of women in American history.” While programs and celebrations are organized around the country,

they're led at the federal level by the Library of Congress, National Archives, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Gallery of Art, National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution, and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Every year, the National Women's History Project announces a theme for the year's Women's History Month. This year, the theme is “Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories,” which honors “women, past and present, who have been active in all forms of media and storytelling including print, radio, TV, stage, screen, blogs, podcasts, and more ... who have devoted their lives and talents to producing art, pursuing truth, and reflecting the human condition decade after decade.”

For a list of Women's Month activities, you can visit: womenshistory-month.go.

Dates to Remember . . .

03/1—6:30 p.m.—The Gathering

03/05—2nd Sunday of Lent

8 a.m. Zoom Breakfast Church, Communion is offered

10 a.m.—In-Person Worship, “Lookin’ for Love” worship series continues, Communion offered.

03/07—6:30 p.m.—Lenten Small Group Study

03/08—7:30 a.m. Zoom Prayer
12n—Crafters Group

03/11—10:30 am—Preschool Drum & Music Time

03/12—3rd Sunday of Lent—**Spoiler Alert: there will be chocolate at in person worship!**

8 a.m. Zoom Breakfast Church

10 a.m.—In Person Worship

03/14—6:30 p.m., Lenten Study

03/15—7:30 a.m. Zoom Prayer

12n—Crafters Group

03/19—4th Sunday of Lent
UMCOR Sunday

8 a.m.—Zoom Breakfast Church

10 a.m.—In Person Worship

03/21—6:30 p.m., Lenten Study

03/22—7:30 a.m. Zoom Prayer

12n—Crafters Group

03/26—5th Sunday of Lent

8 a.m.—Zoom Breakfast Church

10 a.m. — In person Worship

03/28—Lenten Study

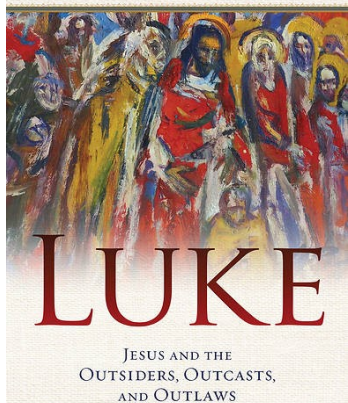
03/29—7:30 a.m. Zoom Prayer

12n—Crafters Group

Luke: Jesus & the Outsiders, Outcasts & Outlaws

ADAM HAMILTON

Author of John, The Walk, and 24 Hours That Changed the World



*“Jesus’ resurrection
is the beginning of
God’s new project not
to snatch people away
from earth to heaven
but to colonize earth
with the life of
heaven.”*

- N.T. Wright



Our small group Book/DVD study for Lent is “Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws.” Our Lent small group study began on Tuesday, February 28th, and will continue through Tuesday, April 4th. All sessions begin at 6:30 p.m., and will take place on Zoom. Jesus came to lift up the lowly. Throughout his ministry to his final days on the road to the cross, we find stories of his relationships with ordinary, flawed, and unexpected people. He met, dined, and traveled with people who were not perfect. Many of them were

struggling, some were outsiders or even outlaws. Whoever they were, from those he healed to the outlaws with him at his crucifixion, Jesus brought the good news of God’s kingdom to those who most needed to hear it.

In Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws, pastor and bestselling author Adam Hamilton explores the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus as told in the Gospel of Luke. Through Luke’s stories we find Jesus’ care and compassion for all as he welcomes sinners and outcasts. As we study Luke and

see Jesus’ concern for those who were considered unimportant, we hear a hopeful and inspiring word for our lives today.

To RSVP and/or reserve your book, please email Pastor Lyda. A limited number of books are available at the church for \$11.50 or you can purchase a book on Amazon.com. No one will be turned away for a lack of funds.

Holy Week

During Holy Week, we offer the following experiences for expressions of worship and exploration:

Palm Sunday

On Sunday, April 2nd, all are invited to witness The Passion of the Rebel Jesus during worship. The Passion of the Rebel Jesus is a Reader’s Theatre experience based on the Gospel of Mark. Journey together this Palm Sunday to experience the Passion of the Rebel Jesus during worship.

Maundy Thursday

On Thursday, April 6th at 6:30 p.m., we are holding a Service of Reflection and Shadows in the sanctuary. After the service, we will share a simple Lenten soup

together in the Fellowship Hall. We request that RSVPs for the meal should be received by Friday, March 31st. To RSVP, please email Pastor Lyda at Lyda@wumcla.org.

Easter

On Sunday, April 9th, you can worship two ways:

8:00 a.m.—Zoom Breakfast Church. Breakfast Church is an information time of facilitated discussion and wonderings on a focus scripture reading. There is a time of prayer and virtual Communion will be offered.

10:00 a.m.—In Person Worship in the Sanctuary. In the end (or is it the beginning?), love wins. All things of this world pale in comparison to

what resurrection looks like in our lives. New-found meaning, purpose, attention, wholeheartedness, wellbeing, peace: these are the things that matter — the things the Teacher shows us. And no matter how many “wrong places” we’ve looked for love, the graves give way to the light of a new day as we learn to love as Christ loves us.

After our celebratory Easter worship, we will “break out” our Easter Pinata and take turns “breaking out” the candy & treats inside for both young and old alike!

100% of our **Easter offering** is donated to **Suicide Prevention & Awareness** programs at Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services.

UMCOR Sunday –March 19, 2023

On Sunday, March 19th, Westchester United Methodist Church will participate in honoring United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) Sunday. As followers of Jesus, we are called to respond in the world with extravagant grace. Through UMCOR, we are able to make a difference in the lives of communities and individuals whose lives

have been turned upside down by war, storms, fires, displacement, and climate change. Offerings taken on this special Sunday undergirds UMCOR’s “cost of doing business,” allowing UMCOR to keep the promise that 100% of any gift to a specific UMCOR project, such as humanitarian efforts in the Ukraine, or earthquake relief in Syria and Turkey, will go towards that project

UMCOR was established in 1940 as a response to the devastating global effects of World War II. UMCOR was created to respond to the needs of human anguish by working globally and locally to offer hope and healing. UMCOR is devoted to the alleviation of human suffering without regard to race, religion, origin or gender.

Lookin’ for Love Worship Series

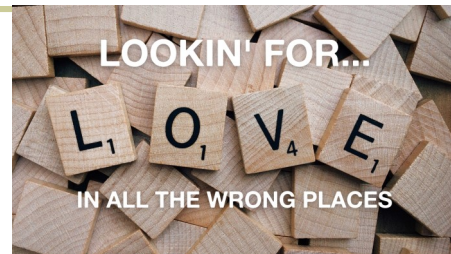
The Christian scriptures offer many images of where love, grace, forgiveness, righteousness, and healing can REALLY be found. And it is not in the “usual” places. It’s as true for us today as it was for the scriptural authors. We often look for wholeness and happiness in places that offer only temporary good feelings and satisfaction.

Lent is a wonderfully reflective time to reassess where we are searching for meaning and purpose. We’ll move through stories

of Jesus to find out who offers the “real deal.”

Each week, we will explore scripture and where love can be found. Our weekly themes are:

- Look for the Resister
- Look for the Helper
- Look for the Thirst-Quencher
- Look for the Shepherd
- Look for the Liberator
- Look for the Unexpected
- Love Looks for Us & Love wins.



“Yet even now,” says the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting... rend your hearts and not your clothing.” — Joel 2: 12-13

All are invited to look for love, meaning and purpose through scripture, prayer and song.

Flowering the Easter Cross

Beginning on Friday, April 7th, Westchester UMC’s Easter Flower Cross will be in front of the sanctuary—ready to be decorated with flowers from your garden or from your favorite place to find flowers!

“Flowering” the Easter Cross is a tradition for many during the Easter season, and a well loved tradition here at Westchester UMC. The Flowering of the Easter Cross usually takes place on Easter Sunday, but

we decided that this beautiful tradition would begin a little bit early this year. Everyone is invited to bring flowers or greenery and place them on the cross.

The “Flowering” of the Easter Cross transforms a symbol of death and loss into a symbol of hope and new life.

All are welcome to find a special spot on the cross for your flowers. You don’t have to be a church goer or a member of this congregation to be a part of Flowering the Cross.

All are welcome to co-create this wonderful reminder that the story is not over, and that sorrow does not have the final word.



Westchester United Methodist Church

a place where love works

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Easter is April 9th! We look forward to
seeing you online and in person!



We are a Reconciling church!
ALL are welcome here.



From Pastor Lyda . . .

Sometimes it feels like COVID-19 has been with us forever. The pandemic brought with it great sorrow and loss, but it also taught us how important caring for others and offering places of healing and welcome are. During the pandemic, we explored different ways faith communities can offer welcome, hope and wellness to the broader community. We asked ourselves the question, “Right now, in this place and time, **what is our ‘why’?**” We answered, “To serve God by embracing the belovedness and humanity of all people, to strive for justice and peace, and to embrace Christ’s message of love in the world today by caring for mind, body and spirit. To be a place where love works.” Out of this wondering, an idea was born . . . “Rhythm & Food.”

Rhythm & Food’s “why” is to feed bodies, minds and spirits through a meal, and group empowerment drumming, using an evidenced-based whole person strategy called Health Rhythms®. Health Rhythms® promotes socialization and ensures a healthy non-strenuous workout. Group drumming builds bridges while fostering nurturing, support, camaraderie, self-respect and respect for others, im-

provement in mood states, reduction in stress and anxiety, and unites all people, regardless of their challenges, backgrounds, ethnicity, or ability.

Hunger and mind-body wellness hit home during the pandemic. 1 in 5 people experience food insecurity, 2 in 5 adults experience depression and anxiety, and for older adults, loneliness and feelings of isolation puts them at risk for dementia and other serious medical conditions.

In a 2020 report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, there is strong evidence that many adults aged 50 and older are socially isolated or lonely in ways that put their health at risk. Recent studies found that: Social isolation significantly increased a person’s risk of premature death from all causes, a risk that may rival those of smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity; social isolation was associated with about a 50% increased risk of dementia; and poor social relationships (characterized by social isolation or loneliness) was associated with a 29% increased risk of heart

disease and a 32% increased risk of stroke. Loneliness in older adults was also associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide.

Our “why?” journey has many paths, and our first Rhythm & Food path is to offer the opportunity to find that center in your soul where your heart is strengthened by joy, celebration, rhythm and food. We are excited to announce our first **Rhythm & Food for Seniors Health Rhythms®** program, which will begin on **Tuesday, April 11th at 10:30 a.m.**

Our **Rhythm & Food—Seniors** offers lunch and recreational group drumming to boost elements of our body’s natural defense mechanisms, improve mood states, and promote a feeling of community on the **second Tuesday of the month**. No experience required! We will start the fun at 10:30 a.m., with lunch at 11:15 a.m.

Seniors & Older Adults—put your hand on your heart—feel the beat—we all have a drum within us! Be a part of groove on April 11th at 10:30 a.m.