



Westchester

United Methodist Church Newsletter

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UMC Calls for An End to Columbus Day



The Native American International Caucus, which advocates for Native Americans both inside and outside of the United Methodist Church, is calling on lawmakers to get rid of Columbus Day.

To replace the federal holiday, the caucus is asking Congress to approve several bills formalizing Indigenous Peoples Day as a legal public holiday, according to a statement from the caucus posted on its website.

“While we respect the ethnic community of American Italians, we cannot accept or support the continued state-sponsored, public recognition of Christopher Columbus as a symbol of discovery, exploration, conquest since it continues to significantly harm all Native people both those within and outside the 570+ Native American tribal nations in the United States, who continue to live with the impact of systemic injustices and abuse began

by settler colonialism,” the statement reads.

A growing number of cities and states have begun recognizing the second Monday in October as Indigenous Peoples Day in addition to or instead of Columbus Day. In 2021, President Joe Biden also issued a proclamation recognizing Indigenous Peoples Day nationally for the first time.

That comes as advocates like the Indigenous Peoples’ Initiative aim to “tell a more positive and more accurate tale of Native Americans” than the one that begins with Columbus discovering the Americas in 1492.

Indigenous Peoples Day is a day to “celebrate our culture, affirm our human rights as sovereign tribal nations, and continue the work of repairing the damaging legacy of colonialism and racism,” according to the Native American Interna-

tional Caucus.

Congress’ approval of Indigenous Peoples Day would be a public recognition of “Native people’s human dignity and sacred worth,” according to the statement.

“We ask every United Methodist Agency and Board to prominently promote this effort with their networks and every UMC congregational member to contact their congressional representatives to advocate for this legislation now,” it reads.

The UMC has issued repudiations of the doctrine of discovery, the theological justification for the discovery and domination by European Christians of lands already inhabited by Indigenous peoples. The UMC has also acknowledged the role its predecessors played in the boarding school system that separated generations of Indigenous children from their families and cultures.

Article written by Emily McFarland Miller, RNS, <https://wordandway.org>

**“OCTOBER IS
A SYMPHONY
OF PERMA-
NENCE AND
CHANGE.” —**

**- BONARO W.
OVERSTREET**

Dates to Remember . . .

10/02—Communion Sunday

8 a.m.—Breakfast Church

10:00 a.m.—In Person Worship

YouTube Worship Service,

10/04—6:30 p.m.— Zoom Small Group Study

10/05—7:30 a.m.—Check-In Prayer

10/9—8 a.m.—Breakfast Church

10:00 a.m.—In Person Worship

YouTube Worship service,

10/11—6:30 p.m.—Zoom Small Group Study

10/11 & 10/12—Support a Missionary & Enjoy a Meal

10/12—7:30 a.m.—Check-In Prayer

10/16—8:00 a.m. - Breakfast Church

10:00 a.m.—In Person Worship, “The Prayer of Jesus”

YouTube Worship

10/16—Westside Food Bank’s Walk Against Hunger

10/19—7:30 a.m.—Check-In Prayer

10/20—Glaad Spirit Day

10/23—8:00 a.m.—Breakfast Church

10:00 a.m.—In Person Worship

YouTube Worship

10/23—Alive Together Walk for Suicide Prevention

10/25—New Zoom Small Group Study begins at 6:30 p.m.

10/26—7:30 a.m.—Prayer Check-In

10/30—8 a.m.—Breakfast Church

10:00 a.m.—In Person Worship

YouTube Worship

10/31—Halloween!

Alive Together—United to Prevent Suicide

*“Hope is hearing
the melody of the
future; faith is
dancing to that
melody here and
now.”*
- Rubem Alves

Westchester UMC is once again a sponsor of Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services’ “Alive Together—Uniting to Prevent Suicide” event. Thanks to your generosity, we are an “Ally” sponsor.

On Sunday, October 26th from 7:45 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Exposition Park, you are invited to take 2,160 steps (about one mile) to remember the approximately 2,160 lives lost each day worldwide to suicide, and then continue forward to pay tribute to survivors.

Puppy Pastor Molly and Pastor Lyda are the Team Captains for Team Westchester

UMC—they will be participating virtually this year.

After worship on Sunday, October 26th, Molly and Lyda will walk their 2,160 steps in the community surrounding the church—all are invited to walk with them on the 26th—or at the event in Exposition Park.

You can participate and/or support suicide prevention in a few ways: You can join team Westchester UMC; support a team member or the team; or donate directly to suicide prevention on the church website.

Please visit www.didihirsch.org or the church website, www.wucmla.org for more information.

Together we can continue to make a difference!



**ALIVE
TOGETHER**
UNITING TO
PREVENT SUICIDE

Prayer ... New Book Study & Worship Series

In September, we began an exploration of The Lord’s Prayer using Adam Hamilton’s book, “The Lord’s Prayer—the Meaning and Power of the Prayer Jesus Taught.” Beginning **Tuesday, October 25th at 6:30 p.m.**, our Zoom small group will explore prayer using Chris Folmsbee’s DVD/Book study, **“The Wesley Prayer Challenge.”** This is a 3 week study.

The Wesley Covenant Prayer has been used in Methodist services around the world since John Wesley introduced it in 1755. Wesley expected that people would pray this prayer as a way of remembering, renewing, and surrendering themselves in complete trust to God. When we pray

it, we are to remember what living like Jesus looks like and what loving God with all our heart, soul, and mind and loving our neighbor as ourselves requires of us.

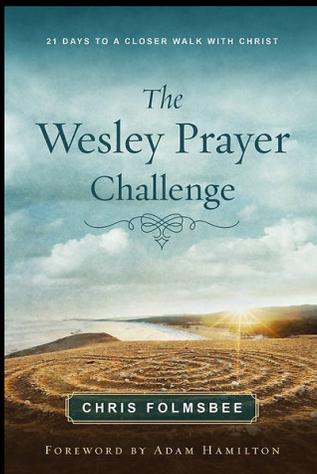
We are invited to consider words from the Wesley Covenant Prayer each day for three weeks while reflecting on their meaning in the context of the larger piece.

Each day’s reading will include scripture, prayer, and a challenge for daily life. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Pastor Lyda at lyda@wumcla.org for the Zoom link. Books are available from your local bookstore and on Amazon.

Worship Series

And speaking of prayer ... **our new worship series, “The Prayer of Jesus” begins on October 16th.** Using Adam Hamilton’s book, “The Lord’s Prayer,” we will explore this prayer that Jesus taught, delving deeply into each phrase and discovering how praying the Lord’s Prayer can have an impact in our lives and help us make a difference—for the better—in the world today.

Each week we will focus on a different part of the Lord’s Prayer ... “Our” Father; Whose will be done?; Our Daily Bread; Forgive; Temptation; and “Thine” is the Kingdom.



Support a Missionary and Enjoy a Meal

WUMC's restaurant fundraisers to support Missionary Rev. Krista Givens are starting back up this month! On October 11th and 12th, you can eat in or order take out food at the California Pizza Kitchen (CPK) in Marina del Rey and support Rev. Krista's missionary work.

Simply order your food for take-out or dine in and show your server the church coupon, and a percentage of your purchase will come back to Westchester UMC to support Rev. Krista.

Rev. Krista is serving as pastor for international ministry with La Siesta Evangelical Church in Alicante, Spain. This English language church has offered a great opportunity for an evangelical presence in the Alicante area. The city of Torrevieja and nearby communities have a large English speaking population due to migration, vacations and retirements. Having an English language church is a way of sharing the gospel and accompanying people who now live in this area of the country.

This month, enjoy "pizza with a purpose" at CPK in the Marina Center!

Here is a picture of Rev. Krista's church in Alicante, Spain!



Westside Food Bank Hunger Walk

The Hunger Walk is virtual **and** in-person this year! You can join the 32nd Annual 5K on October 16th at Santa Monica's Ocean View Park on 2701 Barnard Way, or you can participate virtually to help raise money to fight hunger in West Los Angeles County.

Puppy Pastor Molly and Pastor Lyda are proud to be this year's Team Westchester UMC Team Captains!

Westside Food Bank's mission is to end hunger in our communities by providing access to free nutritious food through food acquisition and

distribution, and by engaging the community and advocating for a strong food assistance network.

The WFSB provides nutritious food for over 200,000 individuals in need and their families with the help of nearly 60 member agencies throughout their service area—our local LAX Food Pantry is one of them.

Puppy Pastor Molly & Pastor Lyda will be participating virtually this year—after worship on October 16th, they will be logging their steps in the neighborhood! All are invited to join them!



To register, join team Westchester UMC, or to donate, you can visit our website: www.wumcla.org and look for "Westside Food Bank" or visit the Food Bank's website at: www.wsfb.org. You can also text "WSFBHUNGER" to 50155 to contribute to the Westside Food Bank's overall goal.

#Spirit Day

Spirit Day began in 2010 as a way to show support for LGBTQ youth and take a stand against bullying. Following a string of high-profile suicide death of gay teens in 2010, GLAAD worked to involve millions of teachers, workplaces, celebrities, media outlets, and students in going purple on social media, or wearing purple, a color that symbolizes spirit on the rainbow flag.

Spirit Day now occurs every year on



the third Thursday in October, during National Bullying Prevention Month, and has become one of the most visible days of support for LGBTQ youth.

This year, GLAAD will celebrate Spirit Day on **Thursday, October 20th** when we will all stand together: communities, corporations, faith groups, sports leagues, schools and so many, many more, to send a message of solidarity and acceptance to LGBTQ youth.

You can get involved in Spirit Day too! The first step is to pledge to go purple! Visit the GLAAD website at: glad.org/spiritday to learn more.

Join Pastor Lyda, Puppy Pastor Molly and the folks at Westchester UMC as we pledge to wear purple on Thursday, October 20th — and on Sunday, October 23rd during Zoom & In-Person worship! We support LGBTQ youth and we take a stand against bullying!

Westchester United Methodist Church

a place where love works

www.wumcla.org

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We are a Reconciling church!

ALL are welcome here.



From Pastor Lyda . . . Eduardo—Part 1

On a recent Friday, I was finishing up the last preparations for Sunday worship, when the church office doorbell rang. I opened the door and the man standing there said, “Inglesia?” I repeated it and he nodded and said again. Inglesia? Then it dawned on me—he was looking for a church—Inglesia.

Little did I know that “being the church—being Inglesia” would take me on a five hour journey with my new friend Eduardo, a journey that would invite me to experience things I had only heard about in the news.

I am ashamed to share that my Spanish is rudimentary at best, so we both got out our phones and started typing phrases into Google translate – which, while a good thing, was a bit frustrating. With the help of a wonderful preschool teacher named Angie, our three-way conversation uncovered that Eduardo was from Venezuela, he was seeking asylum in the United States, and he needed help getting to Utah. At this point, my brain exploded and I was like – “What? I can’t get you to Utah – the church can’t get you to Utah. Why do you need to go to Utah? And why are you in Los Angeles when you arrived in the U.S. in Texas and apparently have to be in Utah?”

His story unfolded. It took him 39 days to get to Texas. He went through Bogota, Columbia, and too many places to share. He traveled by river, paid horrific amounts of money to human traffickers, and hiked for 8 days through a jungle. There were

many days when there was no food or water. He finally made it to Mexico, where he paid another large fee to immigration officials and the police to get papers so that he could begin the process of asylum. At this point, he was only allowed a small backpack for his belongings, he had no money, and they took his identification to process him. He had his phone and his immigration papers. He made it to Texas ... but in Texas, he was told they were only taking women and children. With only the clothes he was wearing, his empty backpack and his phone, the immigration officials gave him two Subway gift cards and his papers that said he needed to be in Utah to be processed. They told him that when he arrived in Los Angeles, he should call “211,” an emergency services line, and they would help him.

After landing he called 211 over and over again, but no one answered. He spent two nights sleeping on the streets, bewildered, hungry, and cold, looking for Inglesia.

Over the next several hours, I was able to secure a Greyhound bus ticket to Utah, found a Western Union service where Eduardo received \$100 from his family, and got enough money together to pay for his bus ticket, buy him lunch, and give him some money to help him on his journey to Utah.

While we walked back from Western Union, Eduardo shared more of his story with me. He showed me pictures of his journey from Venezuela to Texas ... the conditions, docu-

menting the 8 days in the jungle, the boat rides – and pictures of his family.

I read about people like Eduardo in the news ... nameless immigrants and asylum seekers being moved around like chess pieces, offering them impossible odds of surviving and thriving in this, the country of their dreams. Eduardo endured things I can’t even imagine ... but still he was kind and so very hopeful that his life would be better here, even after the inhumane way he was treated throughout his journey..

As we were waiting for the Lyft driver to take him to the Greyhound station, he told me that in a year, he would come back to see me and show me that he was not the man he is right now – at least 30 pounds thinner than the man in the photos – hungry, lost, needing help.

He showed me the rosary he always wore under his shirt. He said his mother gave it to him and told him that in his life, if he ever needed help, to find Inglesia. To find Church. And there he would find help.

I am grateful he found Inglesia that Friday. I am hopeful that he will end up where he needs to be, and that he will be safe. I am sickened at the brokenness in this world which caused him to flee his country and the brokenness of an immigration system that ignores the humanity of another.

May we all find Inglesia ... may we all be Inglesia ... may we see God in everyone.