

Join us for a special screening of

SCREEN AGERS

WOOSTER UMC
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29 @ 6:00P
FREE ADMISSION

If you have children or grandchildren and are concerned about their screen time, this award-winning documentary explores how we can help kids navigate the digital world and find balance.

PRESENTED BY WUMC AND OHUDDLE

WUMC WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Women's Retreat | February 7-9
 Camp Wanake Savage Retreat Ctr.
 Cost: \$136
 (includes 2 night's lodging and 5 meals)
 You'll enjoy Saturday activities, Sunday church service, and quiet time for personal reflection.
 Sign up at the What's Up table by January 19. See Jane Braddock for more information (braddockjeb@gmail).

LASER TAG

Looking for a way to get out and moving in the new year?
 Join us for Laser Tag January 5 at Acres of Fun. We will meet at 3:00p and play 3 games of laser tag.
 Cost is \$10/person. Please let Ali know if you plan to attend (avizzo@woosterumc.org).



Circuit Rider

January 2025

WOOSTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH connect • grow • serve

NEW WUMC OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday
 9:00a - 3:30p

Effective Monday, December 2

GRIEF SHARE

A GriefShare support group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. Through this 13-week group, you'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's "normal" in grief. Since there are no neat, orderly stages of grief, you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief, in all its unpredictability—and gain solid support each step of the way. A new GriefShare session will begin at WUMC on January 7; pick up a brochure and sign up at the What's Up Table in Wesley Hall. (griefshare.org)

FUNERAL MEALS



WOOSTER UMC VALUES DISCOVERY WORKSHOP

WHO WE ARE • WHY WE EXIST • WHERE WE WANT TO GO

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25 | 9:00A-3:00P

YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!

Save the date! Make plans to attend the WUMC Values Discovery Workshop and help shape WUMC's future as we discover who we are, why we exist, and where we want to go. We'd like as many congregation members to participate as possible! Coffee and donuts will be provided in the morning and there will be a break for lunch.

Sign up to attend at the What's Up Table in Wesley Hall or call the church office.

PIZZA WITH THE PASTOR

Pastor David is eager to meet with anyone wanting to learn more about connecting at Wooster UMC. Whether you're new to the congregation, wondering about membership, or ready to be more involved at WUMC, this lunch is for you!

We'll schedule 1/2 hour for a building tour and 1/2 hour for lunch and conversation.

Register to attend at the What's Up Table or call the church office!

LUNCH BUNCH

Wednesday, January 15 · Noon
 Pizza and beverages provided!
 Bring \$5 towards pizza.
 Bring a side or snack to share if you wish!
 All are invited!

The WUMC Funeral Dinner Team prepares a meal made with love for those facing the loss of a loved one. Several volunteer teams rotate to help with preparation and serving.

If you'd like to learn more about serving on a team, contact the church office (office@woosterumc.org or 330.262.5641).

Wooster UMC • 243 N. Market St. • Wooster OH 44691 • 330.262.5641

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Pastor David Rittgers drittgers@woosterumc.org
 Office Manager, Stacy Rutt office@woosterumc.org

The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Pastor's Ponderings: "Where Are We Headed Now?"

I hope you've found our journey to Bethlehem, this Advent and Christmas season to be meaningful and engaging. I've enjoyed journeying with you to the place where "the Word became flesh," while learning more about the deeper meaning of several places that played a large part in the Christmas story, such as Rome, Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Persia.

As we move into the New Year, we will return to "The Story" 31-week worship series which we began back in September. When we resume in early January, we'll find ourselves "halfway" through the major Old Testament stories, in the time of the early kings: Saul, David, Solomon. I hope you will continue to take part in worship, weekly readings, and small groups. If you've not yet engaged with "The Story," it's not too late to jump in!

As a brief aside – our family journey has taken an unexpected turn. You could think of it as a detour of sorts. The hip repair surgery that my wife, Beth, was originally scheduled to have back in November was delayed by five weeks to Friday, December 27 as a result of IV saline shortage. We're thankful for those of you who have reached out and kept Beth in your prayers.

Going through our Advent journey together may have prompted some questions in us. One of those questions might be, "WHERE are we headed next?" Specifically, "Where are WE headed as a congregation?" I have some good news. During the first half of 2025, we will be taking some significant steps in answering that question. In fact, we will engage in a process of answering three questions:

- WHO are we? (Our Shared Values)
- WHY do we exist? (Our Purpose)
- WHERE are we headed? (Our Vision)

Vision is about having a picture of God's preferred future. Our goal is to arrive at a "clear and compelling vision" for our church which will give us direction for years to come as a congregation. "Clear" in the sense that the vision will be easy to remember and explain; "Compelling" in the sense that the vision will motivate us to take purposeful action.

I've been talking with our church leadership, and they're ready and excited to engage in this process. At the same time, they (and I) want you, the congregation, to know that your participation is vital to making this process successful and useful.

Our first step will be a Values Discovery Workshop that will be held on Saturday, January 25 from 9:00a-3:00p here at the church. A lunch break will be included. This workshop will work best when a large portion of the congregation is involved. You may not feel that you have much to say or offer, but each one of you has something important to share in the process. I'm very excited to see what answering these questions can do for our church.

With Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love in the Newborn King,

Pastor David Rittgers (drittgers@woosterumc.org)



Kind words

Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul, and health to the body. Proverbs 16:24

Thanks to all who have remembered me as person of the week. I am most appreciative of the cards and the beautiful poinsettia. Dianne Sleek.

Dear Friends, Thank you for your support during Dick's illness and beyond. Rev. Rittgers was "on call" during the difficult moments and even now. It certainly helps to have strong Faith. Our 64 years together were a great blessing. Love and blessings to all, Betty Smith

Thanks to Wooster UMC for remembering me on my birthday! Thanks for the beautiful orchid plant, to honor me as Person of the Week. I'll try to take good care of it - no green thumb here! Thank you again & God Bless. Lucy Rindfleisch

WUMC Staff would like to thank our SPRC Team for providing us with a delicious holiday luncheon on December 17. We enjoyed our time of fellowship together and appreciate SPRC thinking of us.

"My heart is filled with such great "Joy" when I come to work on Thursdays. The staff & congregation here are the BEST, warm and friendly. Always supporting our mission to "feed the need". Thank you for all of the donations. This year we will be supporting Wayne counties newest day center & warm shelter, Homeward Bound. We will be delivering meals on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays through April. Volunteers are needed. We have the BEST volunteers ever. Thank You God. I couldn't do this without them.

Pat Merrill, Meals Together Director

Please keep the church informed of illness and hospitalization of any person who may need a caring visit or phone call.

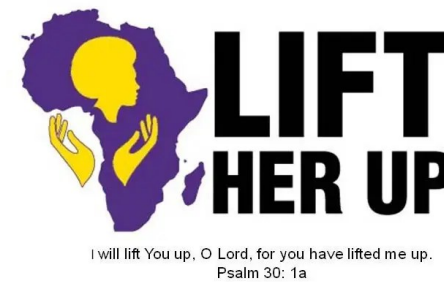
Recently ill/hospitalized: Recent deaths: Amanda Roller



Photo Gallery



Above: WUMC parents enjoyed a free evening as WUMC youth planned activities for the kiddos at Parents Night Out!



Wooster United Methodist Church participated in a 2019 initiative to build a women's dormitory on the campus of Africa University. Once the dorm became a reality, the next step was funding education for African women in the Tongogara refugee camp who otherwise would not have the means to attend university. The "Lift Her Up" campaign was born with the purpose of raising \$28,000 to enable a female student to enter Africa University and pursue a Bachelor's degree. This amount would cover her tuition, fees, housing, food and personal items. Half of this amount has already been raised by WUMC congregation members.

WUMC now has a specific student to sponsor—meet Kinyanya Consolate Dacosta (pictured). Kinyanya says, "Getting an education is the only way for me to realize my goals and dreams, but as a refugee, I have no one to help me pay for my university education. I am appealing for your support to enroll in the medical laboratory sciences program because I want to contribute to making sure that medications and chemicals are used as intended. I also want to identify illnesses and the medications used to treat them. I am confident that if I am given the chance to receive a scholarship, I will be able to change and improve the world."

WUMC is also confident she will be able to do just that and looks forward to supporting her educational journey!

