

JUNE 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,

It seems like only yesterday that I was appointed to Wesley United Methodist Church. I had been out of the local church for eight years, slaving away as District Superintendent, and I was nervous about coming back into pastoral ministry. What if I'd forgotten how to be a pastor? What if y'all didn't like me? What if nothing ever got done?!?

Well, those fears turned out to be unfounded. You have been gracious and kind; I was able to dust off my clergy skills after all; and as far as getting anything done...Man! Look at this list of just some of the things we've accomplished with God's help since 2021!

- ◆ We've welcomed our brothers and sisters around the world by providing a home for a local Hispanic congregation, and by sponsoring the Petrov and Pukhov families in our midst.
- ◆ We've reignited our worship life by re-starting a Sunrise Service and a yearly outdoor worship service and picnic.
- ◆ We've also enriched our worship life by adding new elements like the Easter Vigil, and the outdoor Christmas Caroling service.
- ◆ We engage the community at our Blessing of the Pets service, the Blue Christmas service, and the 'drive-by' ash imposition on Ash Wednesday.
- ◆ We've developed the traditions of All Saints' banners to remember our cloud of witnesses, and Alms Bags, to observe the Lenten season in a deeper way.
- ◆ We've deepened our discipleship through a Lectionary Bible Study, a Women's Bible Study, and other small groups.
- ◆ We've gotten our administrative side in order by streamlining committee meetings, using an Owl for more accessible Zoom meetings, gotten onto a better financial footing, and embracing a new mission statement for our congregational life together.

We've been busy as we've responded to God's call, and our faith and community have been strengthened. These days, Wesley UMC is humming right along. I anticipate that you'll still be humming along-to a new tune-as you welcome Rev. Michael Burge as your pastor. May God continue to bless you all!

Cordially,

Pastor Martha



Would you like to make Martha's communion bread at home?

Here's the recipe!

Cuban Bread

- 5-6 cups flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 2 ¼ teaspoons yeast
- 2 cups warm water (120-130 degrees)

Mix 4 cups of the flour, the sugar, salt, and yeast together in a large bowl. Add the water; mix well. Add the remaining flour a half-cup at a time until a non-sticky, cohesive dough forms. Knead until dough is smooth and elastic. Place dough in a greased bowl, cover and let rise in a warm place until it doubles in size, a half- hour or so.

Divide dough into two pieces. Knead briefly, form into round shapes, then place each on a greased baking sheet. Score the loaves with a sharp knife, and let rise another 15-20 minutes. Bake in a 400 degree oven for 40-45 minutes. The bread is done when rapping the bottom of the loaf creates a hollow sound.

Wesley United Methodist Church invites you to celebrate the retirement of Reverend Martha Ognibene

**Sunday, June 28, 2026
Worship Service: 10:30 am
One Service Only**

(Plan to wear something green—it's Martha's favorite color)

Memories and Gifts for Martha...

Please email any pictures of Martha you want to be included in a slideshow and memory book

*email pics to Kristi DeLeurere at intrigue329@yahoo.com

Deadline: May 31, 2026

and/or

Monetary donations and cards will be received to be included in a Pastor's Gift from our congregation

**Card Basket will be in the back of the sanctuary to place any cards brought to service*



Let's have a picnic!!

Lunch will be provided by the church immediately following the service
(Davis Gym)

Menu to include: Hot Dogs and all the fixins', chips, sides, cake, ice cream

503 North High Street Morgantown, WV 26508

wesleymorgantown@gmail.com

304-292-9485



Congregational Care ~ Greetings Cards of all kinds are needed!

Karen Kelley King is asking for cards of all kinds: birthday, sympathy, anniversary, blank...you name it and she will take it. These cards will be sent out to Wesley members, friends, and visitors as a loving reminder that you are welcome at Wesley and a part of a great church family! Donations of all greeting cards can be brought to the church office.

Wesley Fellowship Events ~ Make plans to join us!

Wesley Fellowship Events are for being together outside of worship and creating memories as a church family. Take a look at the events below and let us know what you would like to attend with your family, friends, or just yourself...all are welcome! More information will be announced for each event and you can notify us of your interest on your Sunday Connection Card or email the church office at wesleymorgantown@gmail.com.

May event coming up is trip to the WVU planetarium Thursday, May 7 at 5:30 p.m. It's not too late to let us

Everyone can join
in on all events!

MONTHLY EVENTS

Look for event details in
upcoming bulletins & newsletters!

JUNE
BOTANICAL GARDENS

WV BOTANIC GARDEN
Sunday, June 14th
(1061 Tyrone Road)
Directly following the second service on Sunday, June 14th make plans to meet up with your church family and friends for lunch at WV Botanic Garden Cafe located in the Visitor's Center then

just a short drive down the hill (park in gravel area) to meet at the vine covered shelter for a tour by Wesley's very own, Linday Bagby, of the gardens starting at 2:00 p.m. This tour should take about two hours. Light rain won't cancel the tour, but thunderstorms could!

JULY
MON COUNTY SYMPHONY

Mon County Symphony Orchestra
presents the
CELEBRATION OF AMERICA
Thursday, July 2nd
~ 7:30 PM
Hazel Ruby McQuain Amphitheatre

Talented musicians from Mon County, including Wesley's very own performing artists John and Carolyn Hendricks and Maddie Nguyen, will present music that celebrates America's 250th semiquincentennial!

AUGUST
BLACK BEARS GAME

SEPTEMBER
BOWLING

OCTOBER
FOREST FESTIVAL

NOVEMBER
BOARD GAMES

DECEMBER
WHITE ELEPHANT BINGO

JANUARY
PAINT BOWLS FOR EMPTY BOWLS

FEBRUARY
WVU WOMENS BASKETBALL

MARCH
ESCAPE ROOM

Way to go Karen Davis!!

Monongalia County Schools with WV Department of Environment and Eastwood Elementary

BLACKBEAR PRIDE FOR KAREN DAVIS

West Virginia Environmental Teacher of the Year!

Karen, your Wesley Church family is proud of you!




West Virginia Conference
The United Methodist Church

**EXPERIENCING
GOD'S RENEWAL**

2026 Annual Conference Session



The 2026 session of the West Virginia Annual Conference will be held June 10-13 at West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon. At Conference, friendships are made and renewed, fantastic worship experiences are shared, and business (such as reviewing our work over the last year and plotting a course for the next; approving the conference budget; deciding resolutions; setting conference officers; commissioning and ordaining new clergy; and naming pastoral appointments for the coming year) is conducted. You are invited to attend conference either as a guest in person, or online through the livestream on the conference website: wvumc.org. See what's going on-check out Annual Conference!

ALTAR GUILD - ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATIONS

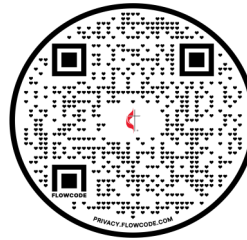
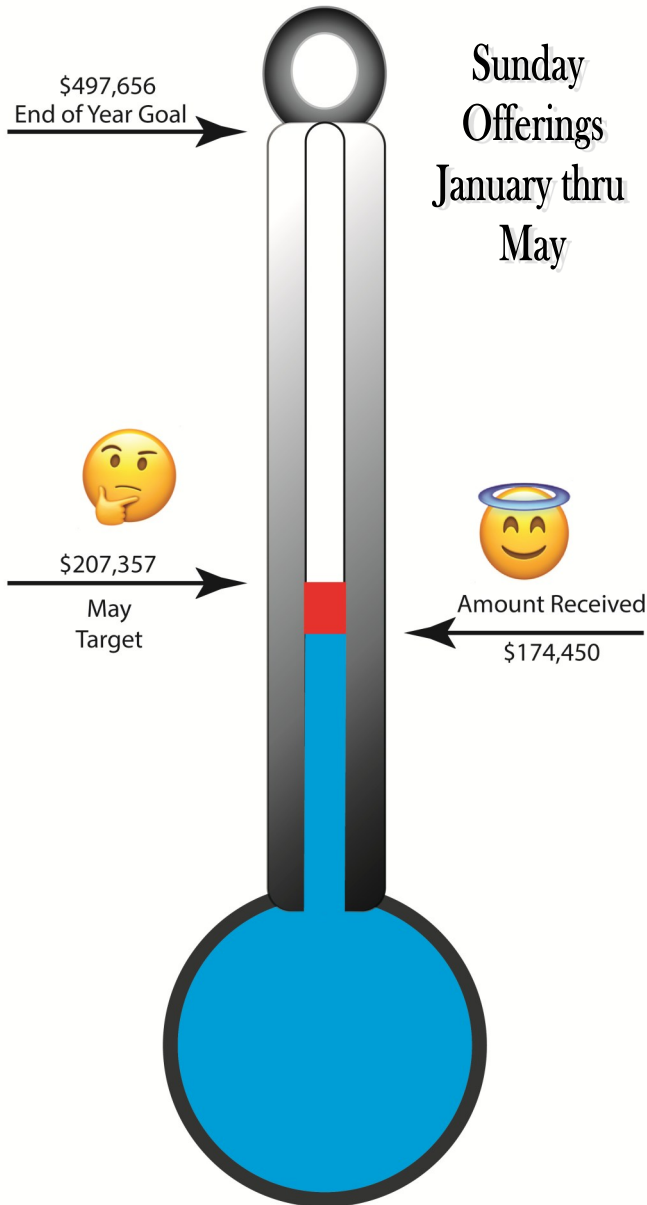
Would you like to dedicate flowers to someone special in your life? Sunday altar flowers can be given in loving memory of in honor of your loved ones or a special occasion (birthday, anniversary, baptism, etc.,). Altar Guild member Michelle Smith handles all flower arrangements. To place a dedication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

OPEN DATES: June 7th and 21st

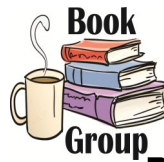
Wesley Fellowship Event . . . A Trip to the Planetarium



2026 Finance Budget Thermometer



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



Book Wesley Book Club - Zoom Only
7:30 PM - 1st & 3rd Tuesdays
(June 2nd & 16th)
Book Club Leader - Mary Ragland

The Wesley Book Club will continue throughout the summer, meeting every first and third Tuesday at 7:30 PM via Zoom. We will begin a new book, Sinners in the Hands of a Loving God by Brian Zahnd, on June 2. Join us! Please contact the church office wesleymorgantown@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

Summer is here!

This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

PSALM 118:24



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.

Social Group Events - wesley Adults & friends are welcome!

All Wesley adults are welcome to join us for fun, food, and fellowship! Listed below are the dates of upcoming Social Group Events. Details of each event will be announced in upcoming bulletins and newsletters. This is your invitation to have fellowship with your church family! Contact Doris Pitman at 304-599-4844 / maduwa1@yahoo.com if you would like to attend.

June 26th (Sunday) ACCA Avian Conservation Center of Appalachia hosted by Mike and Linda Bagby

July 24th (Friday) Trip to Arthurdale – 1:00 p.m. (\$10 per person) hosted by Doris Pitman

August Presentation on the History of WV with Ron Lewis hosted by Mark Reasor

Sept 18th (Friday) WVU Planetarium hosted by Mark Reasor

October 18th (Sunday) Lunch at Tygart Lake and enjoy the Fall weather and colors!

November 20th (Friday) Eat-n-Park breakfast at 9:00 a.m. followed with a service project at Wesley hosted by Mary Ragland

December 11th (Friday) – Christmas Party

Welcome to Wesley!



Children's Vision Rehabilitation Program DAY CAMP 2026

For students who are blind and visually impaired, ages

When: June 7-9

Where: Morgantown, WV

Camp Location: Wesley United Methodist Church

Students from around West Virginia come to work on skills that foster independence and friendships. This year will have a culinary twist!

WVU's CVRP Program will be at Wesley UMC both Monday, June 8th and Tuesday, June 9th 8:00 a.m.—2:30 p.m. 36 kids signed up to come from 20 different counties in WV! Wesley's parking lot will have bagged meters to accommodate staff and parent volunteers attending camp.

~ Prayer Shawl Ministry ~
Tuesday, June 2nd
10:00 AM - Lecture Room
If you can knit, crochet
or would like to learn
please join us!

June Committee Meetings

Finance Meeting
No Meeting

Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, June 9th — 7:00 PM

Administrative Council
Next Meeting Monday, August 17th — 7:00 PM
SPRC Meeting—TBA / Staff Meeting—TBA

Church Office Hours

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursday, and Fridays

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

Tuesdays Closed (phone calls only) *access to building will be available*

June Lectionary Scriptures

Wednesday Lectionary Study is on summer break

June 7th-Second Sunday after Pentecost

Gen 12:1-9
Ps 33:1-12
Rom 4:13-25
Matt 9:9-13, 18-26

June 14th-Third Sunday after Pentecost

Gen 18:1-15
Ps 116:1-2, 12-19
Rom 5:1-8
Matt 9:35-10:8

June 21st- Fourth Sunday after Pentecost Father's Day

Gen 21:8-21
Ps 86:1-10, 16-17 or Ps 17
Rom 6:1b-11
Matt 10:24-39

June 28th-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost John Wesley's Birthday (1703)

Gen 22:1-14
Ps 13
Rom 6:12-23
Matt 10:40-42



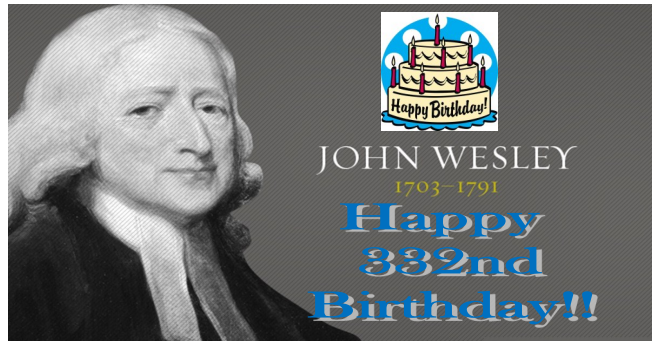
Friday, June 5th
7:00 PM

The King's Brass, comprised of professional musicians from across the country who desire to use their instruments to lead others in praise and worship! Come out and celebrate their 47th Anniversary Season!!

Woodland UMC
 1846 Mileground Road
 Morgantown, WV 26505



JUNETEENTH
 FREEDOM DAY
 JUNE 19



Sunday, June 21st



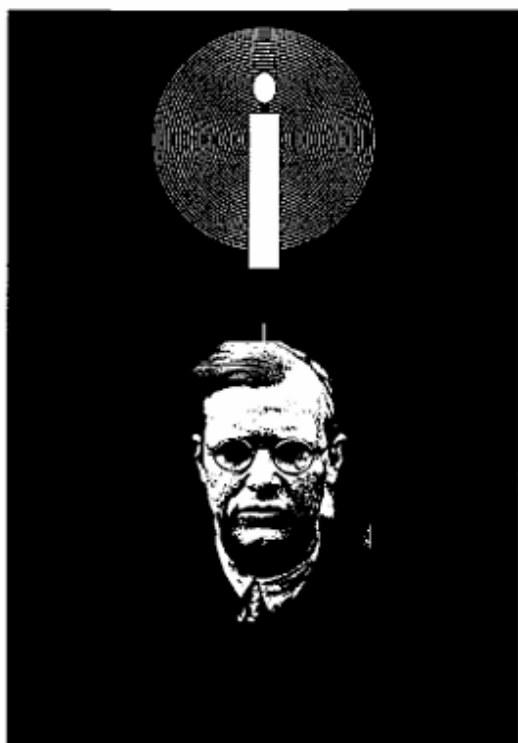
Concerts In The Loft
 Wesley UMC
 503 N. High Street
 304-292-9485
 wesleymorgantown.org

Concerts start at 5:00 PM	2026 Concert Series		Concerts start at 5:00 PM
	July 5	October 4	
	Miss Freddy's Trio	Jeff Miller	
	August 9	November 8	
	Schnell & Paris	Lady D	
	September 13	December 13	
	Kittens Ain't Biscuits	Jenny & Nathan	

CONCERTS & PARKING are FREE
 ~ Compliments of Wesley UMC ~



Reminder to please wear your nametag at worship service. It's a wonderful way for our church family to get acquainted with each other. Thank you!



PRAYING WITH BONHOEFFER

A Spiritual Retreat on Prayer, Psalms, and the Presence of Christ

"When your words fail you — the Psalms will carry you."

Saturday, August 22, 2026
10 AM - 3:30 PM

Through silence, guided Psalm prayer, spiritual direction, and communal worship, discover a deeper way of praying inspired by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Hosted by Pastors Mike Estep, Bart Thompson, and the Center for Spiritual Renewal

In a world overflowing with noise, anxiety, outrage, and exhaustion...
what if prayer was never meant to begin with *your words*?

Join Pastors Mike Estep and Bart Thompson for a deeply reflective spiritual retreat inspired by the life and teachings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer — pastor, theologian, resistor, and martyr.

Through the Psalms, silence, guided prayer, spiritual direction, and honest conversation, we will discover a different way to pray:

Not performing.
Not pretending.
Not trying harder.
But learning to let Scripture pray within us.

Retreat Theme

"The richness of God's Word... not the poverty of our heart... shapes prayer."
— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Throughout the day participants will:

- Pray the Psalms slowly and contemplatively
- Explore how Christ speaks through the Psalms
- Practice silence and sacred listening
- Wrestle honestly with anger, grief, waiting, confession, and trust
- Write a personal Psalm
- Experience communal prayer rooted in ancient Christian tradition

This retreat is designed for:

- Pastors and church leaders

- Spiritual seekers
- Prayer groups and small groups
- People carrying grief, questions, exhaustion, or longing
- Anyone who has ever struggled to find words for prayer

No expertise is needed.

Only openness.

Retreat Highlights

Morning Session

“Who Is Praying?” — Praying with Christ

Discover Bonhoeffer’s radical insight that in the Psalms, *Christ himself prays with us and for us.*

Midday Silence

Participants will spend guided time praying with Psalms of:

- Trust
- Waiting
- Confession
- Being Known

Afternoon Session

“Praying What We Avoid”

A courageous exploration of difficult emotions in prayer: anger, fear, lament, and honesty before God.

Closing Worship

A communal Psalm prayer reminding us: *We are never praying alone.*



Pre-class assignment -

Bonhoeffer (2003) Full HD Documentary <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrFxclPnXzc>

- **Saturday, August 22**
- **9:30 AM - Gathering**
- **10 AM – 3:30 PM (Lunch Provided)**
- **Location: LIFE United Methodist Church, 3000 Technology Dr, Fairmont, WV 26554**

Register here: <https://bit.ly/PrayingBonhoeffer>

Suggested donation: \$50.00

Online donation - <https://pushpay.com/g/lifeumc?campusId=&clickOrigin=&itemId=>

Or day of event

Contact: Mike Estep, pastormike@lifeumc.org or 304-288-5220



Concerts in the Loft

CAROL MARKSTROM

Multi-Award-Winning- Singer-Songwriter

"...where American folk music washes gently against Americana"

with SPECIAL GUEST
Seth Maynard

RECENT AWARDS

Album of the Year: Native Style (*Seekers*) and Best Song Awards, Red Carpet Awards in Europe

Silver Arrow Award for Contributions to Native American Music, Spirit Wind Records

Western Album of the Year, *Mile After Mile*, Academy of Western Artists

Female Vocalist of the Year, Academy of Western Artists

Best Music Videos, *Jeffords' Secret & Bandida*, Wild Bunch Film Festival

GREAT MUSIC ↔ FELLOWSHIP ↔ REFRESHMENTS

SUN * JUNE 14 * 5PM

Concert & Parking compliments of
Wesley UMC

503 North High St. 304-292-9485 wesleymorgantown.org

Welcome Burge Family!
Rev. Michael, wife, Alexia
& children, Johnny and Ailigna



Sunday, July 5th

Meet Rev. Burge at his
first and ONE service at
Wesley!

10:30 a.m.

ONE SERVICE ONLY.

Sunday, July 12th



8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Worship Services



Let's celebrate Rev. Burge AND his
BIRTHDAY!! Fellowship time - we will
celebrate with cake and refreshments!

Getting to know Rev. Michael Burge

Age:	35 (July 12)
Hometown:	Bridgeport, WV
Home Church:	Bridgeport United Methodist Church
College:	BA, Political Science & Business Administration (2013) West Virginia University
Seminary:	Master of Divinity (2020) & Certificate in Leadership (2020) Asbury Theological Seminary
Status:	2022 – Elder in Full Connection 2019 – Provisional Elder 2017 – Full Time Local Pastor 2013 – Certified Lay Servant
Appointments:	2023 – First (Shinnston)/Lamberts Run/Ziesing/Gypsy Charge 2019 – Stealey/Temple Charge (Clarksburg) 2017 – Stealey UMC (Clarksburg)
Leadership:	Board of Ordained Ministry, Annual Conference Rules Committee, Annual Conference Program Team, Annual Conference Safe Sanctuaries Team, MonValley District Committee on Church Building and Location.
Spouse:	Alexia Biafore Burge 34 years old (March 12) BSBA (2013) & MSIR (2019), West Virginia University Assistant Director of Human Resources, The Thrasher Group
Children:	Johnny (4 years old, January 22) Ailigna (6 months old, August 15)
Pet Cats:	Simba & Duper
Fun Facts:	Fire Chaplain, Clarksburg Fire Department Fire Chaplain & Firefighter, Shinnston Volunteer Fire Department Member, Federation of Fire Chaplains Past Chair & Treasurer, Harrison County Ministerial Association Executive Officer in West Virginia, DeMolay International Licensed Real Estate Associate Broker/REALTOR® Member, Bridgeport High School Alumni Band Former Percussion Instructor, Bridgeport High School Bands Fan of the Pittsburgh Penguins and all things WVU Mountaineers! Love to travel with Alexia and the kids Amateur golfer and fisherman

My Vision and Passions for Ministry

I believe that ministry should be Christ-centered, community-focused, and collaboration-driven. Whether it is a ministry that nurtures and grows a congregation, reaches out to meet the needs of neighbors and community, or calls God's people together for worship and fellowship, we should recognize that we are all God's children and Christ is for all people. As the people called Methodists, we live by three general rules: do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God.

I also want to affirm the vision statement by the Council of Bishops, *"The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections."*

My passions for ministry are building young disciples, growing one another in the knowledge and wisdom of God, serving the community, congregational fellowship, and worshipping God together through praise, prayer, song, and the sacraments. What I enjoy most about ministry is the positive impact it has on people and communities. It brings transformation, hope and healing, grace and forgiveness, and not just life, but abundant life. In our liturgy for the sacrament of Holy Communion we are reminded that the Spirit of God anointed Christ "to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people. He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners." As a people called to fulfill the Great Commission, we continue to embody that work begun by Christ in all that we say and do. And in all of this, we give thanks and glory to God.



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

Vacation Bible School - SAVE THE DATE
Wednesday, July 15th - SSUMC host church
5:30 p.m. Dinner - 6:00 p.m. Learning Time
Classes for Children, Youth, and Adults!



School Supply Drive

Scott's Run Settlement House

Donation baskets will be in the Lecture Room starting Sunday, July 5th.

Wesley Church will collect school supplies for Scott's Run Settlement House families starting Sunday, July 5th thru Sunday, July 26th. Scott's Run distributes over 200 backpacks filled with school supplies and appreciates all donations. Listed below are just a few of the supplies that are needed. *Copies of the School Supply List are in the Lecture Room.* Place all donations in the Lecture Room.

Just a few of the supplies that are needed:

- Backpacks ~ pencils ~ crayons ~ glue sticks ~
- scissors ~ notebooks (wide ruled & college ruled) ~
- loose leaf paper (wide ruled & college ruled) ~
- markers ~ colored pencils ~ composition book ~
- folders & more

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

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage Paid

Morgantown, WV

Permit No. 178

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