

# Woodside World

NEWS of CONGREGATION and COMMUNITY

*Woodside Church is a progressive Christian community  
committed to nurturing freedom, honesty and diversity,  
where members and friends live Jesus' way of social justice.*

a Congregation of the United Church of Christ and American Baptist Churches

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## FROM THE PASTOR - *Called to Care*

A woman goes about her daily work. A stranger, a man from another country – a country hostile to her and her people – gets in her space, gets in her business. There's no one else around she can turn to. Then, she is suddenly surrounded by several of *his* friends, all closing in.

How can we possibly spin that into something that sounds less than creepy, something that can maybe even sound caring?

Would it sound different if I tell you that the story is from the bible, from the gospel of John, and the man is Jesus? that the woman is a Samaritan, living across the border from Jesus' own Jewish nation? Would it sound different if I tell you that the men who joined them were Jesus' disciples? Maybe it sounds different if I tell you the questions Jesus asked were life-affirming. And it sounds different if I tell you that the woman doesn't shrink from him, but engages in theological banter, in perhaps life-changing theological banter.

Context is everything, they say.

Tuesday this week, we began a 7-week training for what will become Woodside's Care Team, a group of folks who have been asked to consider offering themselves to the well-being of our congregational community. We talked about this story, about the way Jesus was able to enter into the life and reality of a stranger, able to offer love and care to her, able to hear her and honor her.

Then, we talked about us, the way we want to love. We talked about the ways we can enter each other's spaces, extend care, respond to need, honor each other's humanity and dignity.

And we talked about Woodside.

We are a congregation of old and young, of a sometimes startling array of life circumstances. We are people facing illness and hardship, emotional highs and lows, people responding to the chaos in our world in a variety of ways, people for whom family may be warm and embracing, or estranged and unpredictable.

We are also people wired to respond to different kinds of approaches. Some of us are huggers; some are not. Some like visitors to drop in; others would prefer an appointment. Some appreciate a card in the mail; others would be moved by a thoughtful text or email. Some like shared moments of prayer; some would find the holy in a shared poem. Sacred communion is for some in bread and wine, but for others in a cup of coffee.

We need conversation, expressions of support, a meal, a ride

someplace, a bridge over an unexpected financial gap. We need the quiet companionship of someone who will sit in the silence when there are no words; we need the ongoing companionship when life's challenges are chronic. We need to know we're not forgotten, not alone. "It is not good for the human to be alone," said God, in the early days of the creation story. We belong to each other.

And, as our congregation faces a pretty substantial transition in the coming months, we need to be especially attentive to the glue that holds us together. We're going someplace, Woodside Church, someplace geographical, someplace theological, someplace that takes us away from the comfortable and familiar. The journey will be interesting and frightening and joyful and challenging, and maybe confusing. There will be new people and new traditions and new opportunities to express our hope and declare our vision – God's vision – of a just and healed world. We're on a road; it matters that we all feel welcome and included. But that's hard, and some things can fall through the cracks. When the future is big and undefined, we especially need one another.

The Care Team trainees began our session this week by each sharing a story of a moment of feeling small – small as a part of something immense, or small as if powerless. We discovered those moments can be somewhat constant. We want this congregation to feel connected, a place not only where folks are welcome, but where people feel like they matter.

So, a Care Team. Not to be in each other's business. But to help us remember that we matter. To help us feel connected. To honor the breadth of who we are and embody the vision of who we can be. Life-affirming human connection in the Spirit we share.

We'll gather for several weeks, and using UCC training materials, we'll learn about issues, practice skills, read scripture a new way.

Then, after a few weeks of training and discernment, the ones in the group who feel "called," that is, those who find joy and satisfaction in responding to the need, will be commissioned in our worship on a December Sunday, and will be introduced to the congregation in a new way. As they take on the mantle for a year, we'll begin identifying the next class who will train and swell their ranks – or take their place. Then the next and the next.

This is the beginning of a new day at Woodside in so many ways. I'm thankful for the folks willing to consider this ministry, and thankful for this congregation willing to be on a journey together.

With you on that journey,

*-pastor deb*

## MICAH'S TABLE:

### WE'RE DOING JUSTICE, LOVING KINDNESS...

Find more here: [www.facebook.com/woodsidechurchofflint](http://www.facebook.com/woodsidechurchofflint).

**INDIVISIBLE** is a nationwide resistance movement with lots of local chapters. The next meeting date of Indivisible-Southern Genesee County is Mon, Oct 16, 6:30 pm, John's Pizzeria, Fenton.

**THE EQUALITY CAUCUS OF GENESSEE COUNTY** works to make life safe and good for the LGBTQ community. The monthly business meeting is Tue, Oct 17, 6 pm at UAW Region 1-D on Atherton Rd.

**VOTER REGISTRATION** for the Nov 7 election ends Oct 10. You can register at the Secretary of State offices or online at <https://webapps.sos.state.mi.us/MVIC>.

### HELPING YOU GET WHAT YOU NEED

**LA PLACITA FOOD PANTRY**, a program of the Genesee County Hispanic/Latino Collaborative (GCHLC) is 9am-7pm Wednesdays at Woodside. You must make an appointment by Tuesday. Call 810-874-2752 or email [laplacitafoodpantry@gchlc.org](mailto:laplacitafoodpantry@gchlc.org). Tell your friends in need.

**MOBILE FOOD PANTRY.** The Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and Michigan DHHS are taking a mobile food pantry to various neighborhoods in Flint. The schedule for Oct is not posted as yet. Check out <https://www.fbem.org/programs/mobile-pantry-distributions/#food-pantry>.

## JUMP RIGHT IN

**SUNDAY READERS.** Can you bellow? Are you comfortable reading aloud in a group? If you would could imagine reading the scriptures and prayers in our Sunday worship, please call the office to let us know. We'll even coach you on the bible words!

**WOODSIDE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.** Did you know that, through your gifts, we provide emergency assistance to neighbors and community members? Yep, your generous support let's us help a lot of people. Funds for The Minister's Discretionary account are getting low. So your offerings will be appreciated in the weeks to come. If you can make a gift, just make it to Woodside and mark it "Discretionary Fund. We'll take it from there. *Thank you!*

**DELEGATE NEEDED!** The Michigan Conference UCC Annual Meeting is Friday evening and all day Saturday, Oct 13-14, at St Stephens Church in Lansing, and Woodside needs a delegate. This is how we shape the policies and protocols of the conference and national church. You can be a change agent! Call the church office or talk to Jay Cummings. (Spoiler alert: Woodside has a resolution on the floor...)

**BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP** is also 9:30 am Sundays, reading *Brand® New Theology: The Wal-Martization of T.D. Jakes and the New Black Church* by seminary professor and former Flint resident, Dr. Paula McGee. Clif Turner extra copies to loan, or it is available on Amazon and Kindle. This week: chapter 2!

## UPCOMING WEEK AT WOODSIDE (10/8 TO 10/14)

SUN, OCT 8	9:30 am	Member Info Session 2 Book Group
	11 am	Worship then conversation/coffee
MON, OCT 9		Office Closed
TUES-FRI	8 am-6 pm	Wildroot at Woodside
SAT, OCT 14	8-noon	Wildroot at Woodside
	4 pm	Cooper/Cavender Wedding

## SUNDAY HELPERS THIS MONTH

**10/8 Ushers/Greeters— Team E:** Virgil and Sheryl Cope, Linda Lee, Renee Harrison and Dee Johnson. **Counters:** Sharrie Creasey and Patti Pagels.

**10/15 Ushers/Greeters—Team A:** Jim Abbott, John Crouch, Jay Cummings, Al Nickens, Don Harbin and Liz Perkins Harbin. **Counters:** Donald Harbin and Jim Hazen.

**10/22 Ushers/Greeters—Team B:** Linda Worstenholm, Ron & Jan Brown, Keith Crane. **Counters:** Linda Angus and Joe Eufinger.

**10/29 Ushers/Greeters—Team C:** Carol Higgins and Pat Perrine, Sharrie Creasey and Shannon Loesel Thorpe, Jim Hazen, Clif Turner. **Counters:** Virgil Cope and Jim Abbott.

**11/5 Ushers/Greeters—Team D:** Jim Richardson, Sharon and Ted Bolander, Joe and Laura Eufinger, Ron Fader and Jeff Springgay. **Counters:** Carol Higgins and Shannon Loesel Thorpe.

## IN OUR CONGREGATION

**WOODSIDE INFORMATION SESSIONS** continue at 9:30 am this Sunday. This 5-week series is the path for *new or renewed membership*. Week 2 will be led by Karen Eaton. Please call the office if you will need child care.

**LEADERSHIP RETREAT.** Woodside's Board of Directors is on retreat this weekend, our annual fall getaway to build camaraderie, whet our imaginations, and look together at the road before us. We'll begin with dinner Friday, work all day Saturday (except for a negotiated football break), then close our time Sunday with worship at 11 am, with you in spirit if not in proximity. Please keep us in prayer, as we will certainly keep you.

**TRANSITION PLANNING: WATCH THIS SPACE.** Next week, after our board retreat, Woodside World will include reports on many aspects of our transition planning, as comprehensive a report as we can make it. Afterward, if you have questions that haven't been answered, please email Pastor Deb ([debc@woodsidechurch.net](mailto:debc@woodsidechurch.net)) or our Moderator, Linda Angus ([llangus@hotmail.com](mailto:llangus@hotmail.com)).

**WOODSIDE WORLD gets a minor makeover.** You have noticed that some weeks we publish a full newsletter with an editorial, and some weeks just a sheet of announcements. Beginning in two weeks, those will have different names. "Woodside World" will be once a month with as much thought-provoking content as we can manage, including transition updates; the other weeks, "Woodside Briefs" will contain short announcements of upcoming events and reminders. These are both available three ways: as an email attachment (usually on Thursday), by USPS (mailed on Friday), or by pick-up, available on Sundays in the racks and tables. Let us know how you'd like to receive it. And if you aren't getting it the way you'd like, please tell Annie or jot a note in the attendance register.