

What is Wesley Connects?

Our Outreach program was created to help Wesley United Methodist Church build meaningful, visible connections throughout the community. At its heart, this ministry is about sharing care, compassion, and Christ's love in practical ways that reach beyond the walls of the church. Each part of the program gives us an opportunity to meet people where they are, support neighbors in times of need, and strengthen relationships that remind our community they are seen, valued, and loved.

Blessing Box Ministry

One meaningful part of our outreach is the Blessing Box, a small pantry located just outside the church's back doors. Though simple in size, it serves as an important source of care for neighbors who may need a little extra help. It is stocked with donated items, including groceries collected in bags provided by Kroger, and we also maintain a pantry closet in the church office to help keep supplies available. Volunteers refill the Blessing Box as often as possible so that this small ministry can continue making a big difference.

HomeTouch Ministry

Our HomeTouch ministry reflects the importance of staying connected with those who can no longer attend church in person, including congregants who are at home or living in nursing facilities. These also include the High Street members, whom we've adopted. Through regular visits, check-ins, and simple acts of care, this ministry helps remind each person that they remain a valued part of our church family. At this time, three dedicated volunteers are serving the 16 people currently on our list. So, if you want to get involved there's a need!

School Outreach

Our outreach also extends into the local school, where we are working to build caring and lasting relationships with both faculty and students. Recently, we served breakfast to about 40 teachers and administrators at the junior-senior high school during Teacher Appreciation Week. Acts of encouragement like this help open doors for connection and show appreciation for those who invest so much in the lives of young people each day.

We also served cookies after the last two band concerts at the school, where the response was very positive. While these gestures may seem simple, they help create a welcoming presence in the community and build trust through small but meaningful acts of kindness.

Looking ahead, we hope to expand our school outreach in two meaningful ways:

1. **Summer camps:** We would like to explore serving a meal to the athletic and non-athletic camps held during the summer.
2. **Back to School Bash:** We would like to participate in this year's "Back to School Bash" on Aug. 5. Our plan is to host a booth and canopy and hand out reflective keychains featuring our church name and Fostoria Elementary's theme, "Learn, Lead, Love." This would give us another opportunity to support local families and strengthen our connection with the school community.

Brown Bag Dinner Initiative

We have also been preparing for our Brown Bag Dinner, which will take place on June 11. Through this effort, we will provide a shelf-stable brown bag dinner to 47 daycare families and 14 employees, offering both practical support and a reminder that they are being cared for by their church community. Several local businesses were invited to sponsor the initiative, and the CMC Giving at Heart program contributed \$200 towards making this outreach possible. We will be preparing the meals on Wednesday June 10th from 2pm-4pm if you are interested in helping. If you are able, we have lists on the table in the narthex of items that are needed to finalize the meals.

Our hope is to continue growing this ministry so we can serve even more areas of our community. In time, we would love to offer a free summer meal each week or provide a monthly meal for Wesley Village. The opportunities to care for others are many, but we cannot do this alone. We need your support through prayer, giving, and volunteering as these efforts continue to grow. There is a place for everyone to serve, regardless of age or mobility! We welcome anyone who would like to be part of this work. Everyone has something to give. If you feel called to help, please let us know—we would be grateful to serve alongside you.