



Wells United Methodist Church

This Week at Wells

Oct. 23, 2018

Pilgrim's Progress

God Gave Us the Growth in WellsFest 2018

“All things come of thee, O Lord; and of thine own have we given thee.”

1 Chronicles 29:14b.

This familiar verse is also found on page 588 of **The United Methodist Hymnal**. It is not uncommon to hear this sung as a doxology in many African-American churches. It is what I felt in my heart this past Sunday when Mark Hodges presented a check for \$55,000 to this year's WellsFest beneficiary, Growing Up Knowing.

The hard work of Wells and so many others who contributed to WellsFest 2018 is unmeasured. But, as we've stated before, we may plant and water, but God gives the growth. All things come of thee, O Lord and we are grateful!

In addition to a celebration worship service, nine people joined me at a 10 a.m. session on "Wells 101." Everyone on the same page, asking similar questions, and wondering what it means to take a step to grow deeper in their life of faith at Wells. We look forward to joining Sunday on Oct. 28.

As you prepare for the coming Sunday, I invite you to read and reflect on the following scriptures:

[Job 42:1-6, 10-17](#) (How do believers reconcile the disasters of Job with a good God?);

[Psalm 34](#) (Verse 8 states "Taste and see how good the LORD is! The one who takes refuge in him is truly happy!" When is the last time you felt TRUE happiness? Do you recognize the part God played?);

[Hebrews 7:23-28](#) (The high priest, in this case Jesus, "always lives to speak with God for them," i.e., those who approach God. What are some concrete ways we might thank our high priest for acting as our great intercessor?);

[Mark 10:46-52](#) (When Jesus asked "what do you want me to do for you?" Bartimaeus stood ready with an answer. Jesus asks us the same question every day. Are we ready with an answer?)

Deep Peace,
Heather



[Listen to Wells Services](#)

WellsFest



WellsFest 2018 Chair Mark Hodges presents a \$55,000 check representing the proceeds from this year's WellsFest, to Dana Larkin, executive director of Growing Up Knowing.

WellsFest Total is \$55,000 for Growing Up Knowing

WellsFest 2018 came to an official close on Sunday with the presentation of all of the proceeds — \$55,000 — to Growing Up Knowing.

WellsFest Chair Mark Hodges presented the traditional WellsFest "big check" to Growing Up Knowing Executive Director Dana Larkin during the worship services. Dana thanked the congregation for the "incredible gift of love from Wells Church."

It has been so amazing to me to witness this congregation authentically practicing your faith as you work to improve our community," Dana said. "You truly walk your talk."

Dana said the WellsFest funds will bolster the programming of Growing Up Knowing as it helps children and families "make healthier life decisions, communicate with each other and prevent abuse and bullying."

Growing Up Knowing works with children and their families and caregivers to help prevent abuse and unwanted teenage pregnancy. She said Growing Up Knowing continues to implement its middle-school comprehensive sex education program at afterschool clubs and faith institutions and introduced its My Body My Boundaries program for elementary-age children and their parents this past March. It also has implemented this abuse prevention program 19 times, including here at Wells Church.

"Your investment in Growing Up Knowing is helping us reach a wider audience with the goal of spreading across the state to educate Mississippi's families," she said.

Dana said WellsFest not only has provided financial assistance, but has helped raise the profile of the non-profit in the community with all of the promotion in the media. She said being WellsFest beneficiary has helped open doors to other funding sources. She thanked Wells for joining with Growing Up Knowing to help solve significant problems in our community.

"In my faith, we call this Tikkun Olam, which translates to doing our part to repair the world," she said. "In this vein, we promise to be great stewards of this donation."

Mark recalled that Keith Tonkel would always say that others would tell him that a church the size of Wells could not do an event as large and complicated as WellsFest.

"They tell me every year we can't do this, and every year somehow with God's blessing we do this," Mark quoted Keith as saying. "With all the prayers for good weather and all the hard work from everybody, including Dana and her board, we had a successful year."

Mark now turns the reins of WellsFest over to Ken Simon as work begins on WellsFest 2019. Applications for next year's beneficiary are due by the end of November.

Thanks to Mark, all the WellsFest Committee members, the Growing Up Knowing board, staff and supporters, and to everyone who volunteered, contributed and had a part making WellsFest 2018, our 35th, so successful.