

Wesley Grove Messenger

February 2023

From the Pastor's Desk...



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

By the time you receive this newsletter, it will be February 1 -- the first day of the month in which we celebrate Valentine's Day. When I was little, I made handmade paper valentine cards for my friends and family while many of my classmates brought the mass-produced variety. Either way, they were all filled with silly messages of friendship and love.

I recently found out that February 1 is also National Freedom Day. This day honors the anniversary of the approval of the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery in 1865. It's not a federal holiday, but President Harry Truman recognized National Freedom Day in 1949 and urged citizens to pause to celebrate its significance. In 1976, the entire month of February was designated as Black History Month, to remember the history of race and racism, to celebrate what has been accomplished by civil rights leaders, as well as to recommit ourselves to the cause of liberty and justice for all.

February is also the month in which we celebrate Ash Wednesday as we begin Lent — the season in the church's life when we remember the life and death of Jesus. On Ash Wednesday, we will be marked with an ashen cross, to remind us that "we are dust, and to dust, we shall return." Lent reminds us that "for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (*John 3:16*)

What do Valentine's Day, National Freedom Day, Black History Month, and Lent all have in common? In a word, LOVE. When we remember and celebrate these important days, we are called to recommit ourselves to loving our neighbors, all of our neighbors.

In his 1956 sermon, "Paul's Letter to American Christians," Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. called Christians then and now to remember who we are and whose we are:

"The greatest of all virtues is love. Here we find the true meaning of the Christian faith and of the Cross. Calvary is a telescope through which we look into the long vista of eternity and see the love of God breaking into time. Out of the hugeness of His generosity, God allowed His only-begotten Son to die that we may live. By uniting yourselves with Christ and your brothers through love, you will be able to matriculate in the university of eternal life. In a world relying on force, coercive tyranny, and bloody violence, you are challenged to follow the way of love. You will then discover that unarmed love is the most powerful force in all the world."

And so, during this month of February, let us remember that we are the beloved children of God, worthy of love and respect, and that God is using us to change the world. Furthermore, let us recommit ourselves to our Christian calling: "Beloved, let us love one another, because all love is from God. If we love one another, God lives in us and His love is perfected in us." (*1 John 4:7, 12*)

In Christian love,
Pastor Karen

Lectionary Readings



February 5, 2023

Isaiah 58:1-12
 Psalm 112:1-10
 1 Corinthians 2:1-16
 Matthew 5:13-20

February 12, 2023

Deuteronomy 30:15-20
 Psalm 119:1-8
 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
 Matthew 5:21-37

February 19, 2023

Transfiguration Sunday

Exodus 24:12-18
 Psalm 99
 2 Peter 1:16-21
 Matthew 17:1-9

February 26, 2023

First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17: 3:1-7
 Psalm 32
 Romans 5:12-19
 Matthew 4:1-11



February Birthdays

- 1 Barbara Kunkle
- Eleanor Park
- 9 Namela Miller
- 12 YouJung Jung
- 13 Daniel Hottinger
- 14 Joel Ketchum
- Abby Horner
- 15 Susan Boyko
- 22 Shelby Kepner
- 23 Stephen Lewis
- 25 Jonathan Works



December 2022 Financial Report

Rick Monarch, Treasurer



Expenses

BWC Mission Share	\$1,281.91
Pastor's Salary (1/3 of total salary)	\$1,503.25
Associate Pastor's Salary (1/3 of total salary)	\$389.86
Church Secretary's Wages	\$1,288.22
Substitute Musician	\$100.00
Choir Director's Salary	\$0.00
Worker's Compensation Insurance	\$0.00
Payroll Taxes	\$98.55
Capital Improvement Costs	\$3,243.00
Grass Cutting Costs	\$3,240.00
Snow Plowing Costs	\$0.00
Groundskeeper Costs	\$895.00
Custodian's Salary	\$350.00
Programs	\$276.46
Property Insurance	\$1,694.25
Administrative Expenses	\$221.01
Charge Treasury - Parsonage Expenses	\$375.83
Charge Treasury - Professional Expenses	\$113.92
Charge Treasury - Medical Insurance Cost	\$286.67
Charge Treasury - Retirement Contribution	\$319.44
Charge Treasury - Administrative Costs	\$12.50
Trustees - Maintenance Costs	\$2,757.25
Miscellaneous Church	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$18,447.12



Income

Weekly Collections	\$9,124.00
Cell Tower Rental Fee - Sprint	\$2,167.34
Use of Hall	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$0.00
Total Income	\$11,291.34





Education News



Tammy Monarch, Chair

Our one-room, multi-age Sunday School class is currently on hiatus for the month of February. We plan to resume meeting at 9:30 am on Sunday, March 5 with our brand new book study of Amy-Jill Levine's book titled *Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week*. We'll read and discuss this book during the six weeks of Lent leading right up to Easter Sunday. Please feel free to join us any Sunday as we would always welcome any newcomers!

Or if you would like to participate in this book study, but would prefer a weeknight session, we've got you covered! This same book study will also be shared on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm via Zoom. Just let Tammy know that this is how you want to join the group, and she will be sure that you receive the Zoom link each week during the Lenten Season.



Fellowship News

Becky Lewis, Chair

Calling all Cupid's Helpers... now that you've got your name in hand, don't forget to do something special for your Covert Cupid on or near Valentine's Day, February 14. Send them a card, make them a treat, or do anything else you wish to let them know they're loved by their Wesley Grove Family.

Otherwise, February is a quiet month for fellowship activities, but the Christian Fellowship Committee met in January and came up with a list of dates to help keep all of us busy during the coming months. The calendar is complete through the end of May, and while some dates have been set for later in the year as well, there will be more to come

after the Committee meets again on June 1. Suggestions for additional activities are welcome throughout the year.

A complete list of dates, including a couple of amendments added at the request of the Worship Committee, appears below. Get out your calendars and start writing, so you don't miss a single event!

Week of February 12: Covert Cupid activities

Sunday, March 12: Coffee and Conversation; hosts - Tammy and Rick Monarch

Saturday, March 25: Games Night at the Monarchs' home, 7 pm

Sunday, April 9: Sunrise Breakfast, following 6:30 am worship service; hosts - Becky and Brian Lewis

Saturday, April 15: Dinner & Movie Night at the Fellowship Hall, 6 pm

Sunday, May 7: Coffee and Conversation for Invite a Friend Sunday; hosts - Becky and Brian Lewis

Saturday, May 13: Spring Community Yard Sale; setup 7:30 am, sale hours 9 am - 2 pm, cleanup 3 pm

Sunday, May 14: Mother's Day Breakfast; hosts - Brian Lewis & Men of the Church

Sunday, June 4 or Sunday, June 11: Coffee and Conversation for Christian Education Sunday; hosts - Cathy and Bob Burke

Sunday, June 18: Father's Day Breakfast; hosts - Becky Lewis & Women of the Church

Saturday, September 16: Fall Community Yard Sale; setup 7:30 am, sale hours 9 am - 2 pm, cleanup 3 pm

Sunday, September 17: Outdoor Worship Service and Picnic; service 10 am, lunch and activities to follow

Saturday, November 11: Holly Days Craft Bazaar and Luncheon, 9 am - 3 pm

Thursday, November 30: Community Christmas Tree Lighting, 7 pm





Administrative Council Meeting

Monday, January 9, 2023

In Attendance:

Steven Arndt, Bob Burke, Cathy Burke, Linda Chatterton, Pastor Karen Davis, Judy Hughes, Jim Kemp, Becky Lewis, Rick Monarch, and Tammy Monarch.

Opening:

* Meeting was begun by Bob at 7 pm.

Devotions:

* Cathy shared a prayer titled "A Faithful Servant."

Prayer Requests & Updates:

* Ralph and Chan Ketchum as well as Terri Sherwood are all much better from Covid.
 * Louise Burdette is very ill with the flu.
 * Lois Kemp is at home with a broken ankle.
 * Barb and Clark Kunkle both need prayers for illnesses and Clark also for heart problems.
 * Carol Gardner lost her brother, Jimmy, recently. The memorial service will be on January 28.

Minutes:

* Rick recommended that we approve the minutes from our November 2022 meeting as they were printed in the December newsletter; Linda seconded; and all were in favor.

Good News:

* The Christmas Season from the Craft Bazaar and our Tree Lighting to our Holiday Luncheon and Caroling Caravan all went well.
 * Our worship services on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were exceptional with the addition of both pastors and live music.
 * Our new addition of a New Year's Celebration Luncheon went well.
 * We've had three new guests attend worship on the last two Sundays – both in-person and on Zoom!

Old Business:

* The Boy Scout settlement with the UMC has finally come to closure. Several from WG met with Cub Scout Pack 1438 Leader, Matt Johnson, on December 30 to sign a Joint Affiliation Agreement.

New Business: None

Committee Reports:

Communications

* Since November 19, 23 cards have been mailed to church family members in need.
 * Josh and Tammy have our website up to date.
 * Brian has added current pictures to the Photo Gallery.

Education

* Sunday School has finished reading and discussing *Christianity and World Religions* by Adam Hamilton. We'll review what we've learned from it during our classes this month.
 * We will not meet during the month of February.
 * We'll resume class on Sunday, March 5 with our Lenten book study, which will also be offered via Zoom on Wednesday nights throughout Lent to anyone preferring a weeknight book study.

Fellowship

* We made a profit of about \$4,000 from this past fall's craft bazaar.
 * The calendar for the first half of the year and some of the second half has been set. Look in the "Fellowship News" on page 3 for details.
 * Sign up in the vestibule to participate in "Operation Covert Cupid" during Valentine's Week.

Finance

* All bills and mission shares have been paid for 2022.
 * Our church is in good financial standing, with about \$30,000 currently in our general checking account.

* Unfortunately, our spending has been more than our income recently. This is mainly due to the high cost of heating oil and electricity as well as the cost of renovations on our rental property and the lack of rent on this property for the past six months.

Lay Leadership

* All positions for 2023 were filled with the addition of Becky as our new SPRC Chairperson at our annual Charge Conference in late November.

Missions

* Our Holiday Giving Project went well, with Linda and Judy delivering wrapped gifts and grocery gift cards to three local families the week before Christmas.
 * We will serve at the Lord's Table Soup Kitchen on Monday, January 30 at 1 pm.
 * We are currently asking for monetary donations to support the Lord's Table. Collection bucket will remain in the vestibule until 2/5.

SPRC

* Annual evaluations for both pastors were completed by the December 1 due date.
 * Their new professional goals for 2023 will be reviewed at our next meeting later this month.

Trustees

* Great strides have been made in completing the renovations on our rental property. We are still working to get the new heating system regulated, and new flooring and carpeting will be installed within the next few weeks.
 * We are in contact with the company that works on the outdoor signboards and hope that they will finish the refurbishing of both boards in the near future.
 * The drooping HVAC return in our SS room has been repaired.
 * Annual snow removal contract has been signed for church, hall, and parsonage for this winter. Stakes have been placed to mark the edges of our driveways and parking lots.

Worship

* We are meeting this coming Sunday to plan our worship services through June.
 * We have had no interest in our Music Director position.
 * Our choir is on hiatus until March.

Pastors' Reports:

Pastor Karen: She shared that every day is a gift, so live and enjoy each and every one. She has made lots of phone calls and some home visits recently to our sick, injured, and shut-ins. This is the first goal on her list of 2023 professional goals.
Pastor Nick: He was unable to attend this meeting, but sent a written report in his absence. He states that he has also started working on his 2023 professional goals by contacting some folks on our inactive list and asking several others to share their own personal testimonies during upcoming worship services.

Lay Delegate's Report:

* Annual Conference of the BWC will be in-person this year for the first time in three years. It will be held in Baltimore from June 1-3. Resolutions are being accepted until February 1.
 * Disaffiliation and acceptance of all people are still very "hot" topics within the United Methodist Church.
 * We, at WG, need to have several courageous conversations between now and June 1 to make sure that everyone's voice is heard within our congregation.

Next Meeting:

* Scheduled for Monday, March 13 at 7 pm.
 * Devotions will be led by Pastor Nick.

Closure:

* Bob adjourned the meeting at 8:16 pm.



February 2023

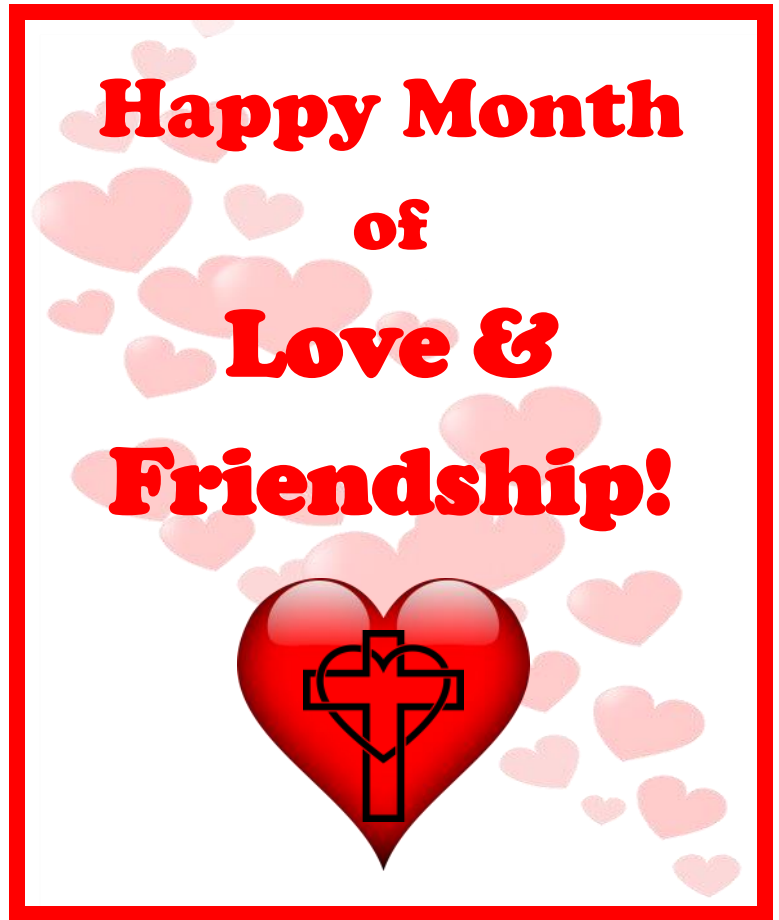


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5 No Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service with Communion	6	7 6:45 PM— Lions Club Dinner and Meeting	8	9	10	11
12 No Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service	13	14 ♥HAPPY <i>Valentine's</i> DAY♥	15 12:00 PM— Lunch Out @ Ledo's in Damas- cus	16	17	18
<i>Week of Operation</i> Covert Cupid →						
19 No Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service	20	21 6:45 PM— Lions Club Dinner and Meeting	22 7:00 PM— Ash Wednesday Worship Service (Location TBD)	23	24	25
26 No Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service	27 <i>March Newsletter Deadline</i>	28	1 7:00 PM— Lenten Book Study, ch. 1, via Zoom	2	3	4

 **Wesley Grove
United Methodist Church**
Church Phone: 301-253-2894
Email: wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org

As a congregation that covenants to walk together in Christ's love, believes that all persons are created equal before God, and affirms the inclusive love of Jesus Christ, we welcome to our work and worship all regardless of race, gender, age, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or economic circumstance.

We're on the Web!
wesleygroveumc.org



To unsubscribe, please call the Wesley Grove UMC Office (301-253-2894) or email wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org

Wesley Grove United Methodist Church
23640 Woodfield Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20882